

**Children’s Health and Safety – NQS2**

**Water Safety**

**Policy Statement**

At Liwara Catholic Outside School Hours Care (the Service), learning experiences are planned to encourage children to explore and experience the awe and wonder of the natural environment. This includes the use of water as a medium for play in both the indoor and outdoor environment.

Supervision plays a key role in ensuring that children’s safety is protected when participating in learning experiences that involve water and for those that are conducted in close proximity to water.

All vessels used for water play and discovery are emptied immediately after use and will be stored in a way that prevents collection and storage of water.

**Rationale**

Water play provides many opportunities to enhance children’s learning and development. Through water play children have the opportunity to learn the many uses of water and discover its elements from aesthetic, sensory and calming, to cognitive and conceptual. Water play provides a valuable opportunity to explore water as a “precious resource and to honour the created universe as a gift from a loving Creator God given in trust for all” (A Sense of the Sacred).

Despite the value of this play, the Service recognises that children have the fundamental right to be protected and kept safe when they attend an education and care service and safety remains a key concern in planning for these experiences

**Procedures**

For the purpose of this policy, water play refers to indoors or outdoors learning experiences that involve water. Water play may include paddling or wading pools, water slides, water trolleys, buckets of water and sprinklers.

Water based activities refer to swimming or experiences conducted in a body of water such as a swimming pool, beach, lake, fun park, dam, creek and stream. Our service does not offer any water based activities.

**Water Safety for Water Play**

This Service’s environmental risk management plan is utilised to identify general risks, and strategies for ameliorating risk, related to water play and water in the environment.

A risk assessment is to be completed for each incursion or experiences that focuses on water play.

Learning opportunities involving pooled water occur only under the direct supervision of an educator. Containers are emptied onto garden or lawn areas after use.

**Health, Safety and Hygiene**

Children are supervised at all times in and around any body of water including water troughs, ponds and toilets.

Educators explain safety precautions to children including the need to clean up spilt water promptly. Spilt or splashed water will be cleaned up promptly to reduce the risk of children and educators slipping.

Buckets of water used for cleaning and vessels used for water play are not left unsupervised near children and are emptied immediately after use.

Play areas are checked each morning to ensure that no containers or pools of water are accessible to children. If rain occurs during the day, outdoor play areas will be checked for safety prior to the children entering the outdoor environment. Pooling water does not prevent children from accessing the area but influences supervision requirements.

The thermostat for hot water outlets, which is accessible to children, is set to a temperature to ensure children are not able to scald themselves.

Water for pets at the Service is changed regularly and not accessible to children unless supervised by an adult.

**References**

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**Document History**

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**Risk assessment form for water activities**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Risk assessment factor | Points | Score |
| 1. Children’s swimming ability | | |
| * Unknown | 10 |  |
| * Mixed swimming ability | 3 |
| * Certificate up to level 5, issued by RLSSA or the Department of Education | 2 |
| * Certificate level 6 or higher, issued by RLSSA or the Department of Education | 1 |
| 1. Number of people using the venue | | |
| * up to 50 | 1 |  |
| * 51 to 100 | 2 |
| * more than 100 | 3 |
| 1. Water visibility | | |
| * bottom is clearly visible | 0 |  |
| * bottom is not visible | 2 |
| 1. Water movement | | |
| * no water movement | 0 |  |
| * slight water movement (up to 0.5 m swell) | 1 |
| * moderate water movement (more than 0.5 m to 1 m swell) | 3 |
| * high water movement (more than 1 m swell) | 5 |
| 1. Wind speed | | |
| * calm to light breeze (up to 6 knots) | 1 |  |
| * gentle to moderate breeze (more than 6 knots to 16 knots) | 2 |
| * fresh to strong breeze (more than 16 knots to 24 knots) | 5 |
| * strong wind warning (more than 24 knots) | 15 |
| 1. Swimming area | | |
| * purpose built | 1 |  |
| * natural, with change rooms, toilets, telephone similar infrastructure | 2 |
| * natural, with no change rooms, toilets, telephone or similar infrastructure | 3 |
| 1. Lifesaving facilities | | |
| * Available | 0 |  |
| * Not available | 1 |
| 1. Signs or other evidence of danger or health risk | | |
| * Including “No swimming sign”, rips, algal bloom, amoebic meningitis risk, boating activity and dangerous marine life | 16 |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Total score*** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Low risk | 0 to 10 points |
| Medium risk | 11 to 15 points |
| High risk | 16 points or more |