Emergency and Evacuation

POOSH Care Inc.
POLICY STATEMENT

We will provide an environment that ensures the safety and well-being of the children at all times ("My Time, Our Place" 1.1, 3.1). All children and educators will be aware of, and practised in emergency and evacuation procedures. In the event of an emergency, natural disaster or threats of violence these procedures will be immediately implemented. In implementing the practise sessions of emergency procedures with children, educators will encourage children to discuss possible scenarios where emergency procedures may be required and support children to come up with solutions and ideas for improving on the procedures or discussing ways to avert emergency situations ("My Time, Our Place" 4.2). Opportunities for older children to access and use the written emergency procedures to orientate new children prior to an emergency drill will be provided by educators on a regular basis prior to carrying out the emergency drill ("My Time, Our Place" 5.1 and 5.2)

PROCEDURE

Emergency evacuation procedure will be clearly displayed near the main entrance/exit of the k/1, 2/3, and 4,5,6 rooms. A portable emergency procedure will be taken when other rooms are in use. The Coordinator will prepare/ review a risk assessment annually to refine emergency procedures.

All staff, including relief staff, will be informed of the procedure and their specific duties identified in their orientation to the Centre. Staff will make arrangements as to duties undertaken in the absence of other staff.

Educators will discuss the emergency procedures with the children and the reasons for practising the drills prior to each emergency drill being undertaken. Following each drill, children should be reassured and their suggestions and comments welcomed for how the drill might be improved to provide them with a sense of control and understanding of the process.

Children and staff will practice emergency procedures two sessions a term every term in both before and after care to ensure all staff and the majority of children that attend the service practice the procedure. This procedure is also conducted by the school twice annually so all children are exposed to this routine.

- All emergency drills will be recorded with date, time and length of time it took to leave building. Additional comments on recommendations for improvements can also be included in the record.
• Drills will be conducted more regularly when there are new children. No child or staff member is to go to their bags to collect personal items during an emergency evacuation. This would lead to confusion and delays.

Fire extinguishers will be installed and maintained in accordance with the Australian Standard 2444 on portable fire extinguishers. Staff will be instructed in their operation.

Staff will only attempt to extinguish fires if the fires are small, there is no threat to their personal safety and they feel confident enough to operate the extinguisher. The children must already have been evacuated from the room.

• The service will maintain a fire blanket and smoke detectors and have them checked regularly as per the manufacturer’s instructions.

• Educators should be aware of bush fire danger and if relevant have appropriate training on the necessary procedures. SERVICES IN BUSH FIRE PRONE AREAS MUST HAVE A PLAN.

• The Local Fire Authority should be contacted for advice and training on fire safety and this plan included in your procedures.

The evacuation plan will include: (see attached plan)
  ▪ Routes on leaving the building suitable for all ages and abilities. These should be clearly mapped out.
  ▪ Plan of where the fire extinguishers are located displayed in a public place.
  ▪ A safe assembly point away from access of emergency services (Bannockburn Oval)
  ▪ An alternative assembly point (main entry gates, Crown Rd side of school) in case the first one becomes unsafe.
  ▪ List of items to be collected and by whom.
  ▪ List of current emergency numbers.
  ▪ Staff duties in the emergency.

Staff members will be nominated to:
  ▪ Make the announcement to evacuate, identifying where and how.
  ▪ Collect classroom key, children's attendance records, mobile phone, emergency medication and parents contact numbers.
  ▪ Collect emergency services numbers.
  ▪ Collect the first aid kit.
  ▪ Check that building, all alternate rooms and playground are empty and that all the doors and windows are closed as securely as possible to reduce the spread of fire.
  ▪ Supervise the children at the assembly area and take a roll call of the children, staff and visitors.
  ▪ Make the phone call to ‘000’ or another appropriate service. Management Committee and parents as required.
When Emergency Personnel arrive, the centre coordinator is to liaise with them and identify any children who may be unaccounted for.

No person is to re-enter the premises until the all clear is given by Emergency Personnel.

**Lockdown (see attached procedure)**

Centres are required to lockdown when there is a foreseeable threat of harm to staff, children or visitors caused by but not limited to the following:

- Bad weather
- Toxic/chemical spills
- Dangerous and/or threatening persons
- Unwanted/uninvited visitors
- Violent, intoxicated and/or drug affected persons
- Dangerous animals
- Unidentified external disturbance

Lockdown procedure will be clearly displayed near the main entrance and exit of each room used by the Centre.

All staff, including relief staff, will be informed of the procedure and their specific duties identified in their orientation to the Centre. Staff will make arrangements as to duties undertaken in the absence of other staff.

Children and staff will practice lockdown procedure at least twice a term, in both before school care and after school care.

All drills will be evaluated and documented. Such documentation will be kept for a minimum of 2 years.

The lockdown plan will include:

- List of items to be collected and by whom
- List of current emergency numbers
- Staff duties in the emergency
- Plan of the area in the Centre least visible from outside.

Staff members will be nominated to:

- Make the announcement to lockdown, identifying where and how
- Collect classroom key, children’s attendance records, mobile phone, emergency medication and parents contact numbers
- Collect emergency services numbers
- Collect the first aid kit
- Ensure all doors are secured, windows locked and blinds pulled shut
- Supervise the children at the nominated lockdown area and take a roll call of the children, staff and visitors
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- Make the phone call to ‘000’ or another appropriate service. Management Committee and parents as required.

**Nuisance Animals**

The Centre’s activities can occasionally be disrupted with snakes, dogs, cats, birds, wasps, bees and other nuisance animals
- Quietly have the children leave the playground or other affected area and calmly move them inside the building (if not affected)
- Close all doors and open windows if the children are inside
- Sudden screaming or shouting will frighten a snake or larger animal and it may scatter in the direction of the children
- Report to pest exterminator, local council or other appropriate body for treatment.

**Severe storms**

Before the storm season:
- Report any tree branches overhanging the Centre to the school
- Have a portable radio and torch, both with fresh batteries
- Have a portable first aid kit
- Report any loose objects hazards to the school
- Have masking tape (for glass), plastic sheeting and large garbage bags for rain protection.

As the storm approaches:
- Listen to the local radio for information
- Shelter children
- Disconnect all electrical appliances
- Mark roll and check that all children and staff are accounted for and under shelter
- Fill clean containers with water.

When storm strikes:
- Stay inside and shelter children well clear of windows
- If necessary, cover children with foam mats, blankets or tarpaulin under tables
- Remain calm and comfort any distressed child
- Do not use any fixed line communication during the storm.

**Power Failure**

Determine if the power failure is Centre based or covers the surrounding suburban area:
- Keep the children inside if the power failure is due to fallen power lines nearby
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- Contact Energy Australia for emergency service if the cause of the failure has been determined. Inform them that it is a child care service with children in the building. This will permit them to allocate priority to their response
- Replace any mains powered phones with phones powered by the phone line
- After sundown, ensure the entry steps are lit whenever anyone needs to use them
- Keep the children calm and any distress immediately comforted by staff.

**Bushfires**

- Ring ‘000’ if required
- Evacuate if possible
- Listen to the radio
- Attempt to contact the local Emergency Service and local Police who should be able to inform you of any threat to the centre.

If there is plenty of time to evacuate:

- Notify the police of the location where you are evacuating
- Take the roll, contact phone numbers, first aid kit, radio and plenty of drinking water with you.
- If you have a mobile phone, advise police of the number.

Safety measures for Centre:

- Fill buckets and basins with water
- Hose outside of building
- Douse nearby shrubs and grass with water
- Have a potable radio and torch, both with fresh batteries
- Have a portable first aid kit
- Close all doors
- Listen to radio
- Place children under tables with wet blankets on top of tables and down sides and stay there until fire has passed.
- Remain calm and comfort any distressed child.
- Mark rolls and check that all children and staff are accounted for and under shelter.

**Floods**

Procedures if required:

- Ring ‘000’ if required
- Know your local highest ground level area
- If possible evacuate children to higher ground. Notify police of the location to where you are evacuating. If you have a mobile phone, notify the Police of the number.
- Take the roll and first aid kit with you.
- Take radio and torch, both with fresh batteries.
• Candles and waterproof matches
• Listen to local radio and TV stations regarding flood warnings.
• Turn off electricity
• Fill clean containers with water
• Close all windows and doors
• Remain calm and comfort any distressed child
• Mark rolls and check that all children and staff are accounted for and under shelter.

**Harassment and threats of violence**

If a person/s known or unknown to the service harasses or makes threats to children or staff at the Centre, or on an excursion, staff will:

• Calmly and politely ask them to leave the service or the vicinity of the children.
• Be firm and clear and remember your primary duty is to the children in your care
• If they refuse to leave, explain that it may be necessary to call the police to remove them
• If they still do not leave, call the Police
• If the Centre Coordinator is unable to make the call another staff member should be directed to do so. Educators should liaise with team members in advance to determine a code phrase that will alert another team member to a threat situation arising and prompt them to contact police.
• Where possible, educators must endeavour to calmly move the children away from the person and this may be achieved quickly with the use of another code phrase that will encourage word of mouth transmission between children to move quickly from the area to another safer environment without causing them alarm
• No educator should attempt to physically remove the unwelcome person, but try to remain calm and keep the person as far as possible from the group while waiting for the police
• Where verbal or physical contact is made, staff must endeavour to protect the majority from harm. Usually a non-custodial parent does not intend harming his/her own child but if the parent persists, release child if necessary. Every effort should be made to contact the custodial parent, Police and Department of Family and Community Services as soon as possible
• Staff should be aware of any unfamiliar person on the premises and find out intentions as quickly as possible and try to discourage them from entering the Centre
• In the event that the situation escalates, threatening the safety and wellbeing of those present at the Centre, a lockdown may be necessary.

*Emergency involving a staff member*
In case of emergency/incident incapacitating a staff member, senior students (years 5 or 6 only) will be asked for their cooperation in alerting other staff members via the walkie talkies.

- Senior students are to take control of the ‘walkie-talkie’ and alert staff at the centre that an emergency has occurred.
- Staff will give instructions to the students to move their peers away from the staff member while they are waiting for another staff member to arrive and assist.
- If necessary, contact ‘000’
- Senior students are to assemble other children away from the emergency and wait for further instruction from Centre Coordinator or other staff members.
- Children will be brought back to the centre once another staff member has arrived to assist.

CONSIDERATIONS

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