



### PURPOSE

This policy will provide a framework for:

- the development of specific emergency and evacuation procedures, practices and guidelines at Highvale Preschool
- raising the awareness of everyone attending Highvale Preschool Association Inc. about potential emergency situations and appropriate responses

### VALUES

**Highvale Preschool is committed to:**

- providing a safe environment for all children, staff and persons attending the preschool
- having a plan to manage emergency situations in a way that reduces risk to those present on the premises
- ensuring effective procedures are in place to manage emergency incidents at the service
- ensuring an appropriate response during and following emergency incidents to meet the needs of the children, their families, staff and others at the service

### SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Centre Supervisors, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Highvale Preschool including during offsite excursions and activities.

### BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

#### *Background*

The Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 define an emergency in relation to an education and care service as any situation or event that poses an imminent or severe risk to the persons at the service premises e.g. flood, fire or a situation that requires the service premises to be locked down.

Comprehensive emergency management includes prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Services are required to have policies and procedures in place detailing what needs to be done in an emergency, including an emergency and evacuation floor plan. These policies and procedures must be based on a risk assessment that identifies potential emergencies relevant to the service (Regulation 97).

Early childhood services have a duty of care to all attending the facility including the children, staff, volunteers, students, visitors, and contractors, . It is also a requirement under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 that employers provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

All services in Victoria are required to have an Emergency Management Plan (EMP) as part of their everyday 'best practice' operations.

**Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:**

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 including Regulations 97, 98, 168(2) (e)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

### LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

### DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.



**Attendance record:** Kept by the preschool to record details of each child attending the service including name, time of arrival and departure, signature of person delivering and collecting the child or of the Nominated Supervisor or educator (Regulation 158(1)).

**Country Fire Authority (CFA):** CFA respond to a variety of fire and emergency incidents. They are also involved in a range of other activities including:

- fire safety building inspections
- delivering community awareness, education and safety programs
- post-incident analysis and fire investigation
- fire prevention planning and land use planning at a municipal level.

**Duty of care:** A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.

**Emergency:** Includes any situation or event that poses an imminent or severe risk to the persons at the premises e.g. flood, fire or a situation that requires the service premises to be locked down (National Regulations, page 5).

**Emergency Management Plan (EMP):** A written set of instructions to assist the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators and staff to deal with incidents or situations that could pose a threat to life, health or property. Emergency Management Plan Guidelines and an Emergency Management Plan template are available on the DET website (refer to Sources below).

**Hazard:** A source or situation with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these.

**Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record:** Contains details of any incident, injury, trauma or illness that occurs while the child is being educated and cared for by the service. Any incident, injury, trauma or illness must be recorded as soon as is practicable but not later than 24 hours after the occurrence. Details required include the:

- name and age of the child
- circumstances leading to the incident, injury, trauma or illness (including any symptoms)
- time and date
- details of action taken by the service including any medication administered, first aid provided or medical personnel contacted
- details of any witnesses
- names of any person the service notified or attempted to notify, and the time and date of this
- signature of the person making the entry, and time and date of this.

These details must be kept for the period of time specified in Regulation 183. A sample Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record is attached to the Injury, Trauma and Illness policy.

**Planned closure:** When services identified as being at high bushfire risk are directed by DET to close on days declared a Code Red Fire Danger Rating day.

**Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV):** provide a fire and rescue service and are the first to respond to specific medical emergencies. The FRV aims to reduce the incidence and impact of fire and other emergencies on the community. This is achieved through the delivery of educational strategies, including:

- fire safety building inspections, and checking firefighting equipment
- delivering community awareness, education and safety programs.

**Notifiable incident:** An incident involving workplace health and safety that is required by law to be reported to WorkSafe Victoria. Notification is required for incidents that result in death or serious injury/illness, or dangerous occurrences.

**Risk management:** A structured approach to managing uncertainty related to a threat; a sequence of activities including the identification, assessment and prioritisation of risks followed by co-ordinated and economical application of resources to minimise, monitor and control the probability and/or impact of those risks.



**Serious incident:** A serious incident (regulation 12) is defined as any of the following:

- the death of a child while being educated and cared for at the service or following an incident at the service
- any incident involving serious injury or trauma while the child is being educated and cared for, which
  - a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner; or
  - the child attended or ought reasonably to have attended a hospital e.g. a broken limb\*
- any incident involving serious illness of a child while that child is being educated and cared for by a service for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital e.g. severe asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis\*
- any emergency for which emergency services attended. NOTE: This means an incident, situation or event where there is an imminent or severe risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a person/s at an education and care service. It does not mean an incident where emergency services attended as a precaution
- a child appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for at the service
- a child appears to have been taken or removed from the service in a manner that contravenes the National Regulations
- a child was mistakenly locked in or out of the service premises or any part of the premises.

Examples of serious incidents include amputation (e.g. removal of fingers), anaphylactic reaction requiring hospitalisation, asthma requiring hospitalisation, broken bone/fractures, bronchiolitis, burns, diarrhoea requiring hospitalisation, epileptic seizures, head injuries, measles, meningococcal infection, sexual assault, witnessing violence or a frightening event.

**State Emergency Service (SES):** Volunteer-based organisation responding to emergencies and working to ensure the safety of communities around Victoria.

**State of emergency:** A situation in which the government is granted special powers, by constitutional or legal provision, to deal with a perceived threat to law and order, or public safety.

**WorkSafe Victoria:** The manager of Victoria's workplace safety system.

- strives to prevent workplace injuries, illness and fatalities
- provides benefits to injured workers and helps them to return to work
- enforces Victoria's occupational health and safety laws
- provides reasonably priced workplace injury insurance for employers
- provides an emergency response service 24 hours per day.

## SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

### Sources

- Australian Standards: Emergency control organisation for buildings, structures and workplaces (AS 3745–2002)
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, *Emergency Management Plan Guidelines* and *Emergency Management Plan*: [www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/support/Pages/emergency.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/support/Pages/emergency.aspx)
- Fire Rescue Victoria: <https://www.frv.vic.gov.au/>
- Country Fire Authority: [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au)

# EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION POLICY

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- State Emergency Service: [www.ses.vic.gov.au](http://www.ses.vic.gov.au)
- WorkSafe Victoria: [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au)

### **Related Policies**

- *Administration of First Aid Policy*
- *Administration of Medication Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Staffing Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

### **PROCEDURES**

#### **THE APPROVED PROVIDER AND PERSONS WITH MANAGEMENT OR CONTROL ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:**

- completing the DET Emergency Management Plan (refer to Sources) and attaching a copy to this policy
- conducting a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that the service may encounter (Regulation 97(2)) (refer to attached Emergency Management Plan)
- developing instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency (Regulation 97(1)(a)) (refer to attached Emergency Management Plan)
- appointing an Incident Management Team (IMT) to oversee safety at the service in the event of an emergency (refer to attached Emergency Management Plan)
- developing an emergency and evacuation floor plan (Regulation 97(1)(b)) (refer to attached Emergency Management Plan)
- ensuring that a copy of the emergency and evacuation floor plan and instructions are displayed in a prominent position near each exit at the service premises (Regulation 97(4))
- ensuring that the emergency and evacuation procedures are rehearsed at least once every 3 months by all at the service (Regulation 97(3)(a))
- ensuring that the rehearsals of the emergency and evacuation procedures are documented (Regulation 97(3)(b)) (refer to attached Emergency Management Plan)
- ensuring that those working at, or attending the service, have access to a phone for immediate communication with parents/guardians and emergency services (Regulation 98), and that phone numbers of emergency services are displayed
- identifying potential onsite hazards and taking action to manage and minimise risk (refer to attached Emergency Management Plan)
- ensuring all infrastructure and service equipment are regularly checked for condition and maintenance, including emergency exit lighting
- ensuring the location of first aid kits, fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment are clearly signposted
- ensuring all emergency equipment is maintained on a regular basis in accordance with requirements specified by regulations, such as the Australian Standards Building Code e.g. fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, evacuation kits, sprinkler systems and alarm or duress systems
- providing a fully-equipped portable first aid kit (refer to Administration of First Aid Policy)
- keeping lock-down areas in a state of readiness so they are safe for children, staff and visitors to be used
- developing a regular training schedule for staff to ensure that they are able to deal with emergency situations e.g. first aid, emergency management and OHS training
- regularly reviewing, evaluating and updating emergency management plans, manuals and procedures (at least annually or following an emergency incident)
- developing procedures to debrief staff following emergency incidents
- conducting checks of documentation and practices to ensure all requirements of this policy are being complied with
- notifying DET in writing within 24 hours of a serious incident (refer to Definitions)

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- completing the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record (refer to Definitions) where required
- notifying DET within 7 days of an incident that required the service to be closed, or a circumstance that posed a significant risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child attending the service (National Law: Section 174(2)(c); Regulations: 175(2)(b)&(c), 176)
- reporting notifiable incidents (refer to Definitions) in the workplace to WorkSafe Victoria
- engaging with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade and/or Country Fire Authority regarding fire safety awareness and training for the service, including demonstrations of fire equipment, basic fire safety, smoke alarm, fire blankets and escape plans
- identifying staff and children requiring additional assistance in the event of an emergency (refer to attached Emergency Management Plan)
- ensuring that emergency contact details are provided on each child's enrolment form and that these are kept up to date
- ensuring that an attendance record (refer to Definitions) is maintained to account for all children attending the service (Regulation 158)
- keeping a written record of all visitors to the service, including time of arrival and departure
- ensuring all staff, parents/guardians, children, volunteers and students on placement understand the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency
- ensuring there are induction procedures in place to inform new staff, including casual or relief staff, of the emergency and evacuation policy and procedures
- ensuring all staff, parents/guardians, children, volunteers, students on placement and others attending the service are accounted for in the event of an evacuation
- developing procedures to deal with loss of critical functions, such as power/water shut off.

### THE NOMINATED SUPERVISOR AND PERSONS IN DAY TO DAY CHARGE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- ensuring that the emergency and evacuation floor plan is displayed in prominent positions and that all parents/guardians, volunteers, contractors, staff and relief staff are briefed and aware of the procedures
- ensuring that children are adequately supervised at all times and protected from hazards and harm (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*)
- ensuring that the *Emergency Management Plan* (attached) is followed in the event of an emergency
- testing alarms and communication systems regularly, such as on a monthly basis
- keeping lock-down areas in a state of readiness so they are safe for children, staff and visitors to be used
- informing the Approved Provider of any serious or notifiable incidents (refer to *Definitions*) that must be reported to DET or WorkSafe Victoria.

### ALL OTHER EDUCATORS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- implementing the procedures and responsibilities in this policy and the service's *Emergency Management Plan* (attached)
- supervising the children in their care and protecting them from hazards and harm (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*)
- providing support to children before, during and after emergencies
- checking that the attendance record (refer to *Definitions*) is completed at the beginning and end of each session
- keeping lock-down areas in a state of readiness so they are safe for children, staff and visitors to be used
- checking that the emergency evacuation procedure is displayed in prominent positions and that all persons at the service are made aware of these (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*)
- rehearsing emergency evacuation procedures with the children at least once every 3 months (or more often, as required) and ensuring that these are documented (refer to attached *Emergency Management Plan*)
- providing feedback regarding the effectiveness of emergency and evacuation procedures to inform policy, procedures and manuals etc.
- completing the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record*, as required

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- informing the Nominated Supervisor or Persons in Day-to-Day Charge or, in their absence, the Approved Provider or Person with Management and Control, about any serious incidents or notifiable incidents (refer to *Definitions*) at the service
- attending first aid, emergency management and OHS training, as required
- communicating with parents about emergency procedures
- raising children's awareness about potential emergency situations and appropriate responses.

### ALL PARENTS/GUARDIANS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- familiarising themselves with the service's emergency and evacuation policy and procedures and the service's *Emergency Management Plan* (attached)
- ensuring they complete the attendance record on delivery and collection of their children
- providing emergency contact details on their child's enrolment form and ensuring that this is kept up to date
- reinforcing the service's emergency and evacuation procedures with their child
  
- following the directions of staff in the event of an emergency or when rehearsing emergency procedures.

### VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS, WHILE AT THE SERVICE, ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR FOLLOWING THIS POLICY AND ITS PROCEDURE

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- review the policy to determine whether it adequately addresses a range of potential emergency situations
- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness particularly following an emergency
- review procedures, including evacuation procedures, to determine their effectiveness, including timing and processes
- use information gained from spot checks and the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* to inform proposed changes to this policy
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required by legislation, research, policy and best practice
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy or its procedures.

### EVALUATION:

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- review the policy to determine whether it adequately addresses a range of potential emergency situations
- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness particularly following an emergency
- review procedures, including evacuation procedures, to determine their effectiveness, including timing and processes
- use information gained from checks on documentation and practices and the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* to inform proposed changes to this policy
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required by legislation, research, policy and best practice
- consult with emergency services such as the FRV and CFA, to ensure the policy and procedures meet current best practices
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy or its procedures unless a lesser period is necessary because of a risk.

# EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION POLICY

MANDATORY – QUALITY AREA 2



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## ATTACHMENTS:

**Attachment 1** Highvale Preschool Emergency Management Plan (see separate document Att.1 - Not available on Website for viewing)

## AUTHORISATION:

Adopted by Highvale Preschool Association Inc. 17th March 2022 and will take effect from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

**REVIEW DATE:** MARCH 2023

**ATTACHMENT 1. SEE SEPARATE DOCUMENT: EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN**