

Policy Document No: ELC21  
Category: Early Learning  
Topic: Occupational Health and Safety Policy



**Date Issued: May 2003**

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## Considerations

**Philosophy:** Mount Scopus promotes the need for a safe and healthy environment for all children and staff.

**Children's needs:** Children require a safe and healthy environment in which to play and learn.

**Parent's needs:** Reassurance that health and safety standards are maintained at the centre and their children are safe.

**Staff needs:** A safe and healthy workplace; clear guidelines about their responsibilities under Occupational Health and Safety Act.

**Management needs:** Clear guidelines about their responsibilities under Occupational Health and Safety Act; employees co-operation in following health and safety instructions.

## Background and Legislation

*Education and Care Services National Regulations Part 4, reg.97, 103, 168 (2.a), 168 (2.h)*

Ministerial Council For Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, 2011

*Education and Care Services National Law Act: section 167*

*Managing OHS in Children's Services – A model for implementing an OHS Management System in your Children's Service – Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Sydney*

*Worksafe website: [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au)*

*Reducing the risk of infectious diseases in child care workplaces – Worksafe*

Department of Employment & Workplace Relations Fact Sheets \_

[www.nohsc.gov.au/OHSInformation/NOHSPublications/factsheets](http://www.nohsc.gov.au/OHSInformation/NOHSPublications/factsheets)

*Standards Australia website – [www.standards.com.au](http://www.standards.com.au)*

*Guide to the National Quality Standard: elements 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.3, 3.1.2, 7.1.5*

*Staying Healthy in Child Care, edition 5 by National Health and Medical Research Council*

## Policy Statement

It is the objective of the Management of Mount Scopus Memorial College (MSMC) to provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment for its employees and anyone entering its premises.

## How the policy will be implemented - Specific Practices and Procedures

- A Health and Safety policy and procedure handbook concerning the Occupational Safety & Health (OSH) of the occupants and users of the Centre will be produced and followed. All staff and management will be provided with a copy of the handbook.
- The Operator will ensure that information about the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Regulations, Codes of practice and guidelines are made available to staff and parents of children attending the centre.
- Employee and Employer responsibilities for Occupational Safety and Health are included in the Occupational Safety & Health Handbook. These responsibilities are highlighted to new staff members as part of their induction. Management will ensure that young workers are given adequate supervision and on the job training to enable them to work safely.

- A training program will be organised every 12 months to ensure Management and staff can identify:
  - Key elements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, including the content in general terms, responsibilities that apply to them, and consequences of failing to comply.
  - The centres health and safety procedures and policies.
  - Safe and healthy workplace practices, including immunisations, hygiene practices etc.
  - How to report hazards.
  - How to have a say in safe work practices and procedures.

Every reasonable effort will be made by the centre to promote accident prevention, fire prevention and health preservation.

Identification and handling of the hazards will entail the following practices:

- Follow procedures and act in a healthy, safe manner at all times.
- Conduct a daily inspection of the area before children attend.
- Use a checklist to identify any possible hazards.
- Report any hazard to appropriate person as soon as possible.
- Take reasonable care of own health and safety.
- Follow up on reported works.
- Staff must report all incidents leading to risk of injury including those leading to high stress levels, and positive steps will be taken to remove hazards and understand and minimise stress suffered by individual staff members.
- Play areas and equipment will be checked daily by the staff to ensure they are in a hygienic, clean and safe condition and do not pose a hazard to children; and that soft fall surfaces under and around outdoor play equipment are adequate and evenly spread.
- Children will be encouraged to use the equipment appropriately and will be closely supervised at all times when using outdoor play equipment.
- Staff will notify the office or HSR of any equipment and/or area that is not clean or in a safe condition, and will write details on an OHS Incident/Accident Report.
- Staff will record their daily checks on a Daily Safety Checklist.
- All new equipment will be checked against Australian Standards.
- Management will ensure that furnishings and equipment are provided that will limit risk of injury or ill health in the workplace i.e. adult size chairs for staff, appropriate storage systems, safe electrical appliances and circuit breakers installed etc.
- Management will ensure that health and safety practices followed in the centre comply with the Education and Car Services National Regulations, Health Regulations, Australian Standards & Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, and will allocate sufficient resources in the annual budget to ensure a healthy and safe environment. This will cover direct costs such as provision of safety equipment, maintenance of buildings, fittings and equipment, purchase of safety and health advice, training and resources.
- Staff will record all injuries or illness (to children and adults) in the centres' Accident/Illness Record. Details entered will include: date, time, place of incident, injury or condition, brief description of events, adult witnesses, any anticipated treatment or outcome
- Injuries or illness to staff must be recorded on an Employee Incident/Accident Report.
- Staff will record all incidents with the potential to cause injury or illness on a Hazard Report Form.
- All work related injuries and diseases or 'near misses' will be investigated to determine the causes, and action taken to prevent similar events in the future.
- OHS issues and incidents will regularly be discussed at staff meetings.
- Management will ensure that appropriate workers compensation cover is available to all employees of the service, and that employees understand the importance of reporting injuries or illness which may occur during the course

of their work. Employees will also be informed about the time deadlines for completing workers compensation forms, and be provided with information about what can be compensated.

- Management will ensure that injured employees are provided with appropriate rehabilitation and health care services and that a flexible rehabilitation program is implemented in the centre until they are fully recovered.
- The centre is a non-smoking area. This includes all indoor and outdoor play areas and anywhere that is within sight of the children.

Szalmuk Family and Fink Karp Ivany Early Learning Centres follow the Mount Scopus College Emergency Management Plan. The Plan contains a detailed description of emergency procedures for the events of Fire; Siege; Intruders; Bomb threat; Gas leaks and any other circumstance requiring evacuation. Emergency procedure is determined in consultation with the College Head Security Officer.

- The service Evacuation Plan includes:
  - The determination of a safe assembly area, away from the building and access areas for emergency services, and it's own escape route.
  - Unobstructed routes for leaving the building which are suitable to the ages and abilities of the children (Special consideration must be given to the evacuation of children with disabilities).
  - The setting up of an emergency pack which is stored in an easily accessible place and includes items such as blankets, first aid kit etc.
  - Nominating who will collect the attendance roll, parents emergency contact numbers and staff roster and once at the assembly area check the roll and roster to ensure that all children and staff are present.
  - Maintaining a current list of emergency services contact numbers and nominating who will be responsible for phoning the relevant service.
  - Determining who will check the building is empty and close all doors and windows to contain the spread of fire.
  - How the children will be supervised at the assembly area.

## **Emergency Drills**

- Safety drills involving staff and children will be practised randomly without warning and at different times of the day.
- *An evacuation drill shall be carried out once a term.*
- A record of each drill of emergency procedures will be made on an 'Evaluation of Emergency Evacuation Drills' form, and retained for a period of 3 years from the day on which the record was made.
- Parents will be provided with a copy of the emergency evacuation procedures on request.
- Each staff member will be provided with a copy of the emergency procedures.

## **Evacuation into the Centre**

In some instances it may be decided to instigate a lockdown rather than an evacuation. If there is an ongoing external threat, or it is felt that there is an additional risk in evacuating, a lockdown, or evacuation into the centre, will be instigated, meaning that all children and staff are kept secure within the Centre. In this case, a lockdown instruction will be given over P.A. system. Evacuation into the centre may be for a variety of reasons including but not limited to bee swarm, rioting, snake, threatening person.

Where a situation arises which requires the bringing of the children into the centre in order to secure their safety, staff will:

- Gather children together into the building, in a safe and non-hurried manner and collect attendance roll, parent's emergency contact phone numbers, and staff roster. Once everyone is together, staff will check the roll and roster to ensure that all staff and children are present;
- staff will quietly and quickly walk around and lock doors and windows to secure the building;
- The senior staff member present will contact the police to advise them of the situation, including information about any missing children or staff.

## **First Aid**

- At least one staff member with a current first aid and CPR qualification will be on duty at the centre at all times children are on the premises.
- A fully equipped and properly maintained first aid kit will be kept at the centre in a locked cupboard which is out of reach of children but easily accessed by staff.
- A cold pack will be kept in the freezer for treatment of bruises and sprains.
- First aid will only be administered by staff holding appropriate first aid qualifications in the event of minor accidents or to stabilise the victim until expert assistance arrives. (See appendix 1 – Accident plan)
- Management will ensure that adequate funds are allocated in each annual budget to ensure that staff's first aid certificates are updated as required.
- The telephone number of the Poisons Centre will be displayed next to the telephone.

## **Fire**

- The centre will comply with relevant fire safety requirements of the Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Victoria.
- Fire extinguishers will be installed and maintained in accordance with Australian Standard 2444.
- Staff will be instructed in the operation of fire extinguishers. Staff will only attempt to extinguish fires when all of the following is assured:
  - The children have been evacuated from the room.
  - The fire is very small.
  - There is no danger to the person who will operate the extinguisher.
  - The operator is well trained and confident in the use of the extinguisher.
- Smoke detectors will be fitted in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and will be placed to provide adequate warning of smoke and so that staff will hear the alarm from anywhere within the child care premises. The Licensee will ensure that these devices are maintained in working order. A maintenance schedule will be kept to confirm regular checks occur.
- When the emergency services arrive the security staff will inform the officer in charge of the nature and location of the emergency and of any missing children or staff.
- No-one will re-enter the building until advised it is safe to do so by the officer in charge.

## **Storage of Potentially Dangerous Products**

- All staff will be made aware of which products may pose a danger to children in the centre and will do their best to minimise the use of these products without jeopardising the hygiene of the children or themselves.
- The centre will purchase and use less toxic substances whenever possible.
- The centre will maintain a register of all hazardous substances kept on the child care premises.
- All potentially dangerous products will be clearly labelled and stored in their original labelled containers with the relevant Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for that product, out of reach of all children, or unauthorised adults. Storage areas will be clearly labelled to assist relief staff.
- All hazardous products are used in accordance with the manufacturer's written instructions and specific workplace procedures, and dangerous chemicals are only used when children are not present at the centre.
- Flammable materials are stored separately from anything that constitutes or is likely to constitute a fire hazard.
- Staff will discuss the dangers of certain products with the children.

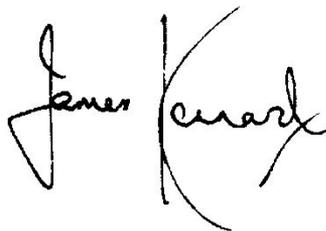
- Information about the safe storage of potentially dangerous products in the home will be displayed in the reception area and drawn to the attention of all parents/guardians on a regular basis.

## **Maintenance of Buildings, Equipment and Outdoor areas**

- The child care premises will comply with the requirements set out in the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- All perimeter fences and gates will be a minimum height of 1500mm. Gates that offer access to a hazard shall be equipped with an efficient self locking mechanism or lock. All fences and gates will be appropriately maintained to ensure the safety of children, staff, and visitors to the service.
- All requirements for electrical installations will be met. Power points will be to an approved safety standard and will be out of reach of all children, or fitted with approved safety shutters or with an earth leakage circuit breaker.
- Electrical appliances and cords will be kept out of reach of all children.
- The Centre will meet standards for glazing in public buildings set down in the Building Code of Australia and that windows when opened do not create a hazard to children.
- The Centre will ensure that hot water taps to which a child has access will be thermostatically controlled at less than 42 C or will be fitted with a device which prevents the operation of the tap by a child.
- The Centre will ensure that adequate furniture is available to meet the physical and developmental needs of children attending the service.
- Staff members who become aware of faulty or broken equipment will remove this equipment from use and advise the Convenor or head of campus of the need for its replacement or repair. All such incidents will be noted on a Hazard Report Form.
- The Centre will ensure that outdoor equipment does not pose a hazard to children because of its design, manufacture, installation or use. Staff will do a daily check of soft fall surfaces under climbing equipment to ensure it is adequate and evenly spread.
- All play equipment used for jumping and climbing will be placed on stable surfaces
- Sandpits will be covered at night and raked regularly to dispose of any animal faeces, other contaminants or potentially dangerous objects.
- The outside playing area will be checked regularly to ensure poisonous vegetation is not accessible to children.

This Early Learning Centre Specific policy is to be used in conjunction with the College's occupational health and safety policies and the Mount Scopus Memorial College Emergency Management Plan.

Approved by the College Principal:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Kenard'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping 'K' and 'A'.

Date: December 2016

**Please note** – any injury or trauma needing further medical attention from a registered medical practitioner, sustained at kinder must be reported to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) as soon as practical.

## Appendix 1 - Accident Plan

