



WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

SUB CATEGORY: Human Resources

POLICY GOAL

To protect the health and safety of all employees, parents and visitors to the centre by providing and maintaining safe workplaces and equipment. To ensure employees are supported when injured at work.

RATIONALE

"In 2011, Safe Work Australia developed a single set of WHS laws to be implemented across Australia. These are known as 'model' laws. For the model WHS laws to become legally binding, the Commonwealth, states and territories must separately implement them as their own laws.

The model WHS laws include:

- *the model WHS Act*
- *the model WHS Regulations*
- *model Codes of Practice.*

The model WHS Act forms the basis of the WHS Acts that have been implemented in most jurisdictions across Australia.

The main object of the Act is to provide for a balanced and nationally consistent framework to secure the health and safety of workers and workplaces. It does this by:

- *protecting workers and other persons from harm by requiring duty holders to eliminate or minimise risk*
- *providing for fair and effective representation, consultation and cooperation*
- *encouraging unions and employer organisations to take a constructive role in promoting improvements in WHS practices*
- *promoting the provision of advice, information, education and training for WHS*
- *securing compliance with the Act through effective and appropriate compliance and enforcement measures*
- *ensuring appropriate scrutiny and review of actions taken by persons with powers or functions under the Act*
- *providing a framework for continuous improvement*
- *maintaining and strengthening national harmonisation of WHS laws and facilitating a consistent national approach to WHS."*¹

Safe Work Australia are responsible for maintaining the model WHS laws but don't regulate or enforce them. Further information can be found at: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/>

State Specific requirements and contacts can be found at:

- Queensland – Workplace Health and Safety Electrical Safety Office Worker's Compensation Regulator <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/>

¹ Safe Work Australia website – Model WHS Laws (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/law-and-regulation/model-whs-laws>

The following provides background into the requirements under the Act as outlined in the “*Summary of The Model Work Health and Safety Bill*”;

Duties and Responsibilities

“Duties imposed on a person to ensure health or safety (‘health and safety duties’) require the person:

- *to eliminate risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable, and*
- *if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate risks to health and safety, to minimise those risks so far as is reasonably practicable.*

The duty of a person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of:

- *workers engaged, or caused to be engaged by the person, and*
- *workers whose activities in carrying out work are influenced or directed by the person, while the workers are at work in the business or undertaking.*

A person conducting a business or undertaking must also ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of other persons is not put at risk from work carried out as part of the conduct of the business or undertaking.”

Health and safety duties must be discharged so far as is ‘reasonably practicable’.

The term ‘reasonably practicable’ means that which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring health or safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including:

- *the likelihood of the hazard or risk occurring*
- *the seriousness of the risk*
- *what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about the hazard or the risk, and ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, and*
- *the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk.*

After assessing these matters, the cost of ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk, may also be taken into account.

Primary Duty

Persons conducting a business or undertaking (alone or with others, and whether or not for profit or gain) have work health and safety duties unless they conduct the business or undertaking solely as a worker in, or as an officer of, that business or undertaking.

The duty of a person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of:

- *workers engaged, or caused to be engaged by the person, and*
- *workers whose activities in carrying out work are influenced or directed by the person, while the workers are at work in the business or undertaking.*

Workers duties

Workers must:

- *take reasonable care for their own health and safety,*
- *take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons, and*
- *comply, so far as the worker is reasonably able with any reasonable instruction given by a person conducting a business or undertaking to allow the person conducting the business or undertaking to comply with the model WHS Bill, and*

- *cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the person conducting the business or undertaking which relates to work health or safety and that has been notified to workers.*

Other person duties

Other persons at the workplace have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and to take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons. They also must comply, so far as they reasonably can, with any reasonable instruction given by the person conducting the business or undertaking to allow the person to comply with the model WHS Bill.

Duty to consult workers

Persons conducting a business or undertaking must, so far as is reasonably practicable, consult with workers who carry out work for the business or undertaking who are, or are likely to be, directly affected by a matter relating to health or safety at work. Consultation must be in accordance with any procedures agreed between the person conducting the business or undertaking and the workers.

Nature of consultation

Consultation means:

- *sharing relevant information*
- *giving workers a reasonable opportunity to express their views, raise issues and contribute to decision making*
- *taking workers' views into account, and*
- *advising workers of the outcome of the consultation in a timely manner.*

If the workers are represented by a Health and Safety Representative, the consultation must involve that representative.

When consultation is required:

Consultation is required:

- *when identifying hazards and assessing risks arising from work*
- *making decisions about ways to eliminate or minimise those risks*
- *making decisions about the adequacy of facilities for the welfare of workers*
- *proposing changes that may affect the health or safety of workers*
- *making decisions about the procedures for resolving health or safety issues, monitoring the health of workers or workplace conditions, information and training or consultation with workers, and*
- *when carrying out any other activity prescribed by the model WHS Regulations*

Health and Safety Representatives

The model WHS Bill provides for the appointment, powers and functions of Health and Safety Representatives. Health and Safety Representatives represent work groups, being groups of workers within a business or undertaking. Provision is also made for Health and Safety Representatives to operate across multiple businesses or undertakings by agreement between all relevant parties.”²

Codes of Practice

There are a range of Codes of Practice, these are practical guides to achieve the standards of health and safety required under the model Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act and model WHS Regulations.

² “Summary of The Model Work Health and Safety Bill”, Safe Work Australia (accessed on-line April 2020) https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1702/summary_model_work_health_safety_bill_may10.pdf

Approved Providers and Nominated Supervisors should keep up to date with current versions and use these when assessing and minimising risk in the workplace.

- First Aid in the Workplace
- Hazardous Manual Tasks
- How to Prevent Falls at Workplaces
- Labelling of Workplace Hazardous Chemicals
- Managing Noise and Preventing Hearing Loss at Work
- Managing the Work Environment and Facilities
- Work Health and Safety Consultation Cooperation and Coordination
- How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks
- Managing Electrical Risks in the Workplace
- Managing Risk of Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace
- Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces

The Risk Management Process

Effective systematic management of risks improves worker health and safety, as well as productivity.

Eliminating and controlling risks in the workplace helps to:

- *prevent and reduce the number and severity of workplace injuries, illnesses and associated costs*
- *promote and improve worker health, wellbeing and capacity to work, and*
- *helps to foster innovation and improve quality and productivity of work.*

The model Code of Practice: How to manage work health and safety risks provides practical guidance for a PCBU about how to manage WHS risks.

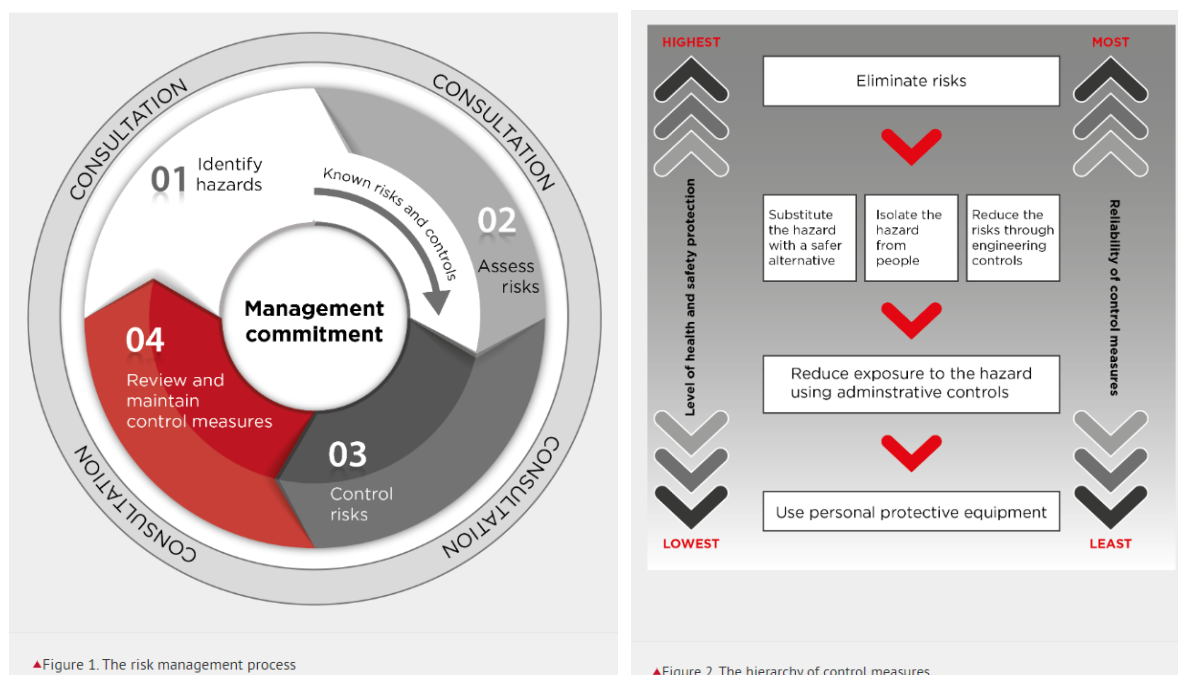
A step-by-step approach to managing WHS risks

Risk management is a proactive process that helps you respond to change and facilitate continuous improvement in your business.

It should be planned, systematic and cover all reasonably foreseeable hazards and associated risks.

The four steps for managing WHS risks are:

- *Step 1 - Identifying hazards*
 - *find out what could cause harm.*
- *Step 2 - Assessing risks*
 - *if necessary- understand the nature of the harm that could be caused by the hazard, how serious the harm could be and the likelihood of it happening.*
- *Step 3 - Controlling risks*
 - *implement the most effective control measure that is reasonably practicable in the circumstances and ensure that it remains effective over time*
- *Step 4 - Reviewing control measures*
 - *Review the control measures to ensure they are working as planned.*



Controlling risks using the hierarchy of control measures

The ways of controlling risks are ranked from the highest level of protection and reliability to the lowest. This ranking is known as the hierarchy of control measures.

The hierarchy of control measures can be applied in relation to any risk.

You must always aim to **eliminate the risk**, which is the most effective control. If this is not reasonably practicable, you must minimise the risk by working through the other alternatives in the hierarchy.

Administrative controls and **PPE** are the least effective at minimising risk because they do not control the hazard at the source and rely on human behaviour and supervision.

Deciding what is reasonably practicable

Deciding what is reasonably practicable to protect people from harm requires taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including:

- the likelihood of the hazard or risk occurring
- the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or risk
- knowledge about the hazard or risk, and ways of minimising or eliminating the risk
- the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk, and
- after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, the cost associated with available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

Further information is available in the Guide: How to determine what is reasonably practicable to meet a health and safety duty and the model Code of Practice: Work health and safety consultation, cooperation and coordination.³

³ "Identify, Assess and Control Hazards" Safe Work Australia website (accessed on-line April 2020) <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/risk>

Hazard Manual Tasks

Working in early education and care involves the lifting of children, this risk must be managed appropriately to avoid injury. The following information is from the Hazardous manual tasks – Code of Practice October 2018;

“The term ‘MSD’ refers to an injury to, or a disease of, the musculoskeletal system, whether occurring suddenly or over time. It does not include an injury caused by crushing, entrapment or cutting resulting from the mechanical operation of plant. An MSD may include:

- *sprains and strains of muscles, ligaments and tendons*
- *back injuries, including damage to the muscles, tendons, ligaments, spinal discs, nerves, joints and bones*
- *joint and bone injuries or degeneration, including injuries to the shoulder, elbow, wrist, hip, knee, ankle, hands and feet*
- *nerve injuries or compression, for example carpal tunnel syndrome*
- *muscular and vascular disorders as a result of hand–arm vibration*
- *soft tissue injuries including hernias, and*
- *chronic pain.*

An MSD can occur in two ways:

- *gradual wear and tear to joints, ligaments, muscles and inter-vertebral discs caused by repeated or continuous use of the same body parts, including static body positions, or*
- *sudden damage caused by strenuous activity, or unexpected movements such as when loads being handled move or change position suddenly.*

Injuries can also occur due to a combination of the above mechanisms.

A hazardous manual task is a task that requires a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person, animal or thing involving one or more of the following:

- *repetitive or sustained force*
- *high or sudden force*
- *repetitive movement*
- *sustained or awkward posture*
- *exposure to vibration.*

These hazards directly stress the body and can lead to an injury.

Handling people

No worker should fully lift a person, other than a small infant, unaided. This task should be assisted with mechanical aids, assistive devices or assistance from another worker. All people-handling activities are a potential source of injury and you must eliminate or minimise the risks associated with this hazardous manual task so far as is reasonably practicable, in accordance with the hierarchy of control measures.

The health and safety of the person being handled needs to be considered as well as the health and safety of the workers involved in the task. This involves assessing the physical condition and characteristics of the person being handled as well as their non-physical characteristics. For example, how the activity is undertaken and the risks involved may be affected by the ability of the person being moved to:

- *understand and communicate and their behaviour, and*
- *assist workers moving them.”⁴*

⁴ Hazardous manual tasks – Code of Practice October 2018, Department of Justice and Attorney-General (Accessed on-line April 2020)

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/model-code-practice-hazardous-manual-tasks>

“Work health and safety Acts in Australian states and territories place a duty of care on people conducting a business or undertaking to ensure the health and safety of workers and others as far as is reasonably practicable, including where there is potential for the spread of infectious diseases. Employers should ensure that educators, other staff and students are not placed at risk in their workplace.

All educators and other staff should be aware of the education and care service’s policy on health issues and their own duty of care to contribute to a safe work environment. This includes following appropriate infection control and vaccination policies as part of their employment and reporting their infectious status. If educators or other staff are feeling unwell, they should not go to work.

People conducting a business or undertaking in education and care services have a duty of care to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the work health and safety of educators and other staff who are at risk of exposure to diseases that are preventable by vaccination. Immunisation of educators and other staff is an effective way to manage the risk in education and care services, because many diseases are infectious before the onset of symptoms.”⁵

Notifiable injuries, illness and incidents

“A ‘notifiable incident’ is:

- *The death of a person*
- *A serious injury or illness, or*
- *A dangerous incident*

The WHS law requires: • a ‘notifiable incident’ to be reported to the regulator immediately after becoming aware it has happened • if the regulator asks—written notification within 48 hours of the request, and • the incident site to be preserved until an inspector arrives or directs otherwise (subject to some exceptions). Failing to report a ‘notifiable incident’ is an offence and penalties apply

Call 000 if there is an immediate risk to life.

Serious Injuries or Illness

“Serious injury or illness must be notified if the person requires any of the types of treatment:

- o *Immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital (require admission, not if an out-patient in emergency section of a hospital)*
- o *Immediate treatment for*
 - o *the amputation of any part of the body*
 - o *a serious head injury*
 - o *a serious eye injury*
 - o *a serious burn*
 - o *the separation of skin from an underlying tissue (degloving or scalping)*
 - o *a spinal injury*
 - o *the loss of a bodily function*
 - o *serious lacerations*
- o *Medical treatment within 48hrs of exposure to a substance, including*
 - o *Chemicals*
 - o *Airborne contaminants*
 - o *Human and/or animal blood and body substances*

Notification is also required for the following serious illnesses:

⁵ *“Staying Healthy 5th Edition Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services” (updated June 2013), Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council*

• Any infection where the work is a significant contributing factor. This includes any infection related to carrying out work:

- (i) with micro-organisms
- (ii) that involves providing treatment or care to a person
- (iii) that involves contact with human blood or body substances
- (iv) that involves handling or contact with animals, animal hides, skins, wool or hair, animal carcasses or animal waste products. •

The following occupational zoonoses contracted in the course of work involving handling or contact with animals, animal hides, skins, wool or hair, animal carcasses or animal waste products:

- (i) Q fever
- (ii) Anthrax
- (iii) Leptospirosis
- (iv) Brucellosis
- (v) Hendra Virus
- (vi) Avian Influenza
- (vii) Psittacosis

'Immediate treatment' means the kind of urgent treatment that would be required for a serious injury or illness. It includes treatment by a registered medical practitioner, a paramedic or registered nurse.

'Medical treatment' refers to treatment by a registered medical practitioner (a doctor). Even if immediate treatment is not readily available, for example because the incident site is rural or remote or because the relevant specialist treatment is not available, the notification must still be made.

Dangerous incidents including 'near misses'

Some types of work-related dangerous incidents must be notified even if no-one is injured. The regulator must be notified of any incident in relation to a workplace that exposes any person to a serious risk resulting from an immediate or imminent exposure to:

- an uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance
- an uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire
- an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam
- an uncontrolled escape of a pressurised substance
- electric shock: examples of electrical shock that **are not notifiable**
 - shock due to static electricity
 - 'extra low voltage' shock (i.e. arising from electrical equipment less than or equal to 50V AC and less than or equal to 120V DC)
 - defibrillators are used deliberately to shock a person for first aid or medical reasons
- examples of electrical shocks that **are notifiable**
 - minor shock resulting from direct contact with exposed live electrical parts (other than 'extra low voltage') including shock from capacitive discharge
- the fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or thing
- the collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, any plant that is required to be design or item registered under the Work Health and Safety Regulations, for example a collapsing crane
- the collapse or partial collapse of a structure
- the collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation
- the inrush of water, mud or gas in workings, in an underground excavation or tunnel, or
- the interruption of the main system of ventilation in an underground excavation or tunnel.

- *A dangerous incident includes both immediate serious risks to health or safety, and also a risk from an immediate exposure to a substance which is likely to create a serious risk to health or safety in the future, for example asbestos or hazardous chemicals.”⁶*

Key terms explained

- **Hazard** refers to a situation or thing that has the potential to harm a person. Hazards at work may include noisy machinery, a moving forklift, chemicals, electricity, working at heights, a repetitive job, bullying and violence at the workplace.
- **Risk** is the possibility that harm (death, injury or illness) might occur when exposed to a hazard.
- **Risk control** means taking action to eliminate health and safety risks so far as is reasonably practicable, and if that is not possible, minimising them so far as is reasonably practicable. Eliminating a hazard will also eliminate any risks associated with that hazard.

The following policies cover specifics around protecting workers from other identified risks:

- Health and Hygiene Policy
- Immunisation Policy
- Handwashing Policy
- Nappy Change and Toileting Policy
- Dangerous Product Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Infectious Diseases Policy
- Sun Protection Policy
- Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy
- Pregnancy and CMV Policy
- Etiquette and Grooming Policy
- Emergency Evacuation Policy

Refer also to “*Staying Healthy 5th Edition Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*” (NHMRC)

IMPLEMENTATION

Risk Management Approach

- All persons are required to take all reasonable steps to meet requirements of relevant occupational health and safety legislation.
- Nominated Supervisors in consultation with educators should undertake risk management to fulfil duties arising from the regulations:
 - **identify** the hazard (find the problem)
 - **assess the risk** to health and safety from the hazards (work out what could happen and how likely it is to happen)
 - **control** the risk (fix the problem), and
 - **review control measures** the control measures to ensure on-going safety (check regularly that the problem is still fixed or that there are no new problems).
- Employers must eliminate all reasonably foreseeable risks. Where this is not reasonably practicable the risk must be controlled. There are five main ways to control risks. In order of effectiveness these are:

⁶ “*Incident Notification Information Sheet*” Safe Work Australia (accessed on-line April 2020)

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1702/incident-notification-fact-sheet-2015.pdf>

- substituting the hazardous substance, machine, process or task with a safer alternative
- isolating the hazard from people
- minimising the risk by engineering means
- minimising the risk by administrative means, for example, by adopting safe working practices or providing training, instruction or information. If administrative measures are used, all workers should be trained and supervised so that they follow them
- using personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE should only be used when no other controls are practical or when it will be used in combination with another control.
- You may need to use a combination of the above controls to get the best result.

Notification of Incidents

- All serious incidents or illness must be reported to the Approved Provider.
- Nominated Supervisor must notify their state regulatory body as soon as they become aware of a notifiable incident. Refer to the Rationale for definitions.
- State Specific requirements and contacts can be found at:
 - Queensland – Workplace Health and Safety Queensland <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/>
 - New South Wales – SafeWork NSW <http://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/>
 - Victoria – WorkSafe Victoria <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/>
- Nominated Supervisors should contact their local regulatory authority if unsure. More information and examples can be found in the *“Incident Notification Information Sheet”* Safe Work Australia <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1702/incident-notification-fact-sheet-2015.pdf>

Educators should;

- Make daily checks of equipment and play areas in the course of setting up equipment and operating within the program.
- Record any damaged/missing equipment or degraded play areas on a Damaged Equipment Log and remove from use, accidental or otherwise.
- Notify the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or WHS Representative of any equipment and/or area that is not clean or in a safe condition, remove the equipment from use and complete the details on the Damaged Equipment Log
- Record all injuries, illness and incidents, including ‘near-miss’ incidents and those with the potential to cause harm on the Workplace Incident Form.
- Ensure chemicals are stored securely and SDS are available for all products. Risk assessments must be completed for all hazardous chemicals. See Dangerous Products Policy
- Ensure safety switches are tested every 3mths and every 12mths by a competent person (electrician) and recorded.
- Use wet floor signs when floors are mopped or have become wet or dangerous to avoid a slip, trip or fall incident
- Wear gloves at all times when there is a possibility of coming into contact with Bodily Fluids

Nominated Supervisors and Approved Providers should ensure that;

- Fire extinguishers and related fire safety equipment must be tested in accordance with legislation. Extinguisher (including bus) must be tested every 6mths.
- Nappy change steps should be used to reduce lifting of older children to reduce manual handling
- Adults are provided with and encouraged to use adult size chairs
- Adults are provided with wide-brimmed hats and sunscreen for sun protection – refer to Sun Protection Policy

- Adults are encouraged to be immunised as per recommendations – see Immunisation Policy
- Adults who are pregnant or planning to become pregnant are advised of the risk of CMV and may be moved from rooms with children under 2yrs – refer to Cytomegalovirus (CMV) Policy
- Where Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) is required such as gloves, eye goggles etc, they will be provided and maintained where applicable
- The centre has an Evacuation Procedure (refer to policy) which employees are trained on within 2 days of commencing employment and again annually.
- They familiarise themselves with the legislation and associated Codes of Practice.

All persons should take the following steps to promote a safe and healthy environment;

General

- Identify unsafe or unhealthy practices or items in your workplace
- Decide what is highest risk and needs to be fixed first, and how to go about fixing it
- Take action to fix the unsafe or unhealthy workplace problems
- Check the problems are fixed and won't happen again
- Conduct a health and safety induction
- Implement specific training to do work safely
- Make sure personal protective equipment (PPE) is used, where provided.

Biological Hazards

- Follow the Immunisation Policy
- Wash hands regularly, especially after contact with urine and saliva and after removing disposable gloves.
- Wear disposable gloves for all contact with blood and body fluids.
- Cover cuts with water-resistant dressings.
- Exclude children and staff with contagious infectious diseases in accordance with recommended minimum exclusion periods.
- Maintain high standards of hygiene and cleanliness.
- Implement hygienic nappy changing and toileting practices.
- Clean up blood and body fluid spills promptly and using protective equipment.
- Train workers in infection control and hygiene practices.
- Instruct workers, upon employment and annually to inform their employer if they are pregnant or expect to become pregnant, refer to the Pregnancy and CMV Policy.
- Provide information to workers about CMV risks during pregnancy and work practices to reduce the risk of infection. Keep training records.
- Advise workers to discuss CMV risks with your doctor if pregnant or planning pregnancy.
- Relocate workers who are pregnant, or who expect to become pregnant, to care for children aged over two years of age.
- Seek advice from their local Public Health Unit if there is an outbreak of an infectious disease.
- Regularly clean surfaces and items that are soiled with urine and saliva, including nappy change mats, potties and toys.

Emergency preparedness and response

- Follow the Emergency Evacuation Policy
- Make fire extinguishers available and ensure testing is current.
- Make sure an emergency plan covering a range of emergencies such as fire and chemical spills, is available.
- Brief workers on emergency evacuation plan within 2 days of commencement.
- Ensure all exits are clear and maintained.

Equipment

- Make sure relevant equipment (such as playground equipment, including soft fall material) complies with the relevant Australian Standard, where applicable when purchased.
- Inspect equipment regularly and maintain these in good condition, record on checklists.
- Repair or dispose of equipment that is damaged or no longer safe to use.
- Use equipment only for intended purpose.
- Make sure shelving is secure and not overloaded, conduct risk assessment of furniture regularly.
- Make sure equipment, such as televisions, fish tanks etc are secure and will not topple over.
- Make sure guards (where fitted) are in place when equipment is in use.
- Insert power point covers into power outlets when not in use

Hazardous Substances

- Follow the Dangerous Products Policy.
- Do not store chemicals in food or drink containers.
- Keep chemicals out of the reach of children and unauthorised persons.
- Ensure Safety Data Sheets (SDS) available for substances in the workplace.
- Read the label and SDS and follow relevant instructions.
- Label chemical containers to meet the Global Harmonised System of labelling.
- Conduct risk assessments for hazardous substances and implement safe work practices for their handling and use.
- Ensure safety equipment such as gloves, aprons and protective eyewear are available.

Manual tasks

- For work involving hard physical effort:
 - organise work to reduce the physical force needed to lift, carry, move, hold or restrain items, such as positioning items as close as possible to where work is done
 - provide, use and maintain adequate mechanical and assistive devices, such as trolleys, to minimise effort
 - where possible, make sure flooring does not impede the use of wheeled equipment.
- For work involving awkward working positions, workers should:
 - work in the straightest forward-facing position
 - work with their arms close to their body not reaching away or overhead
 - vary their position frequently, don't stand, sit, kneel or squat for long periods
 - minimise bending and over reaching, by installing and encouraging toddlers to use purpose-built stairs to change tables, storing frequently used items between hip and shoulder height, and providing adult sized chairs and tables for workers in children's areas.
- For work that is highly repetitive or involves tasks of long duration, workers should:
 - take regular breaks
 - work at a slower pace for tasks repeated frequently or done for long periods
 - use vary work duties or working positions for example, alternate between standing and sitting activities
 - change work practices or obtain equipment to avoid repetitive actions or prolonged tasks.
- Instruct all workers clearly and ensure they have been trained to perform the task safely.

People Handling

- "People handling" refers to any workplace activity where a person is physically moved, supported or restrained
- No worker should fully lift a person, other than a small infant, unaided. (That is, without assistance from, for example, mechanical aids, assistive devices or another worker/s.).
- The following should be observed when lifting, especially children as they may move suddenly;

Plan the lift

- know what you are lifting, weight, any sharp edges etc
- check the travel route, is it clear, will you fit through doorways, is there somewhere to unload safely?

Get help if needed

- use a mechanical aid such as steps, trolleys etc
- do you need more than one person to safely lift?
- don't overload, take more trips if needed

Get a good grip

- plan the best way to grip the object securely

Lift with your legs

- assume a comfortable stance
- bend your legs not your back
- lift smoothly, don't jerk
- keep the load close to the body
- do not twist your body, move your feet to be front on

Unload Safely

- use the same as when you were lifting
- bend with your legs to lower the load
- if there enough room for your fingers and toes when the load is set down
- check the load is secure where you placed it and won't fall
- Store heavy items between knee and shoulder height

The following lifting tips are specific to working with children;

Cots:

- Put sides down when lifting children into and out of cots
- Use chairs to keep your back straight if you are required to pat children to sleep, put your arm through the cot sides instead of over the top of the rail to reduce the stretch.

Nappy Change:

- Use steps or other devices to reduce lifting older children
- Ensure everything is ready and within easy reach to avoid reaching and twisting.
- Centre yourself front on and keep one hand on the child to avoid sudden movements
- Do not twist back, turn with whole body

Picking up toys/other items:

- Crouch or sit on the floor.
- Do not stoop or bend over.

Toddler and Object Lifting Technique:

- Avoid bending from the waist to reach children or objects located at ground level.
- Squat with feet shoulder width apart, keeping your back straight, and pushing your buttocks out to bring yourself as close to the child as possible, while holding the child securely.
- When holding toddlers, you should avoid placing them on one hip.

Other Ways to Reduce Risk of Back Injury When Caring for Children:

- Store frequently used or heavy items in an easily accessible area and at waist height.
- Avoid bending down at the waist to interact with children. Instead use a squatting or kneeling position.
- If possible when sitting on the floor, sit against a wall, or furniture to support your back.
- Minimize repetitive bending and stooping when cleaning up toys, etc. Incorporate this into children's routine.

All educators must receive information about safe lifting techniques and the risks involved with manual handling. The Hazardous Manual Task Identification and Risk Assessment Worksheets must be completed in consultation with the team annually or after an incident, change in task or equipment or other time deemed appropriate to do so.

Reduce Occupational Stress and violence by:

- Assign appropriate amounts of work to workers.
- Monitor work demands and control over work.
- Provide support systems for talking about difficult situations at work.
- Provide clear work structures, particularly through times of change.
- Recognise and reward workers.
- Keep control measures in place to manage any specific risks associated with children with challenging behaviours.
- Implement adequate hand-over practices.
- Provide and instruct workers to use PPE appropriate to the level of risk.

Personal protective equipment

- Provide and instruct workers to use PPE, where identified through risk assessment, service policy or manufacturers' instructions, e.g. use of latex gloves.
- Use eye goggles, gloves and aprons where SDS list as PPE.

Slips, Trips and Falls

- Make sure contaminants and spills on the floor are cleaned up or removed promptly.
- Use slip-resistant flooring in areas likely to become wet or contaminated.
- Ensure regular and adequate cleaning of floors.
- Keep working areas clear and tidy.
- Maintain floor surfaces in a good order (e.g. free from holes, curled carpet edges etc).
- Make sure walkways are adequately lit and clear of clutter.
- Consider the physical characteristics of people and the activity being undertaken.
- Ensure footwear is suitable for the type of work and work environment.

Managing a workplace incident

- Approved Providers will ensure appropriate workers compensation cover is available to all employees of the service and that employees understand the importance of reporting injuries or illness which occur during the course of their work.

- When employees are involved in an accident resulting in an injury the following process must be followed at all time;
 - Secure the area to ensure the safety
 - Appropriate first aid to be administered by trained person
 - Medical attention to be sought if required
 - Complete Workplace Incident Form
 - Contact Approved Provider to advise
 - Provide the employee with Work Cover Forms and assist in completing these
 - Support the team member to return to work

Uniform and Grooming

What is worn in the workplace serves both to promote you as a professional educator and to protect you from elements in the workplace which may pose a potential hazard.

Where uniform items are provided by your employers you are required to wear these unless you have written approval not to based on legitimate reasons, one such example may be for pregnant employees who need to wear maternity clothing.

Where a uniform is not provided educators must present themselves in a professional manner and clothing, including footwear and headwear must comply with suitable WHS legislation to minimise risks. Specifically:

- Shirts must provide protection from the sun and have the following elements;
 - collar or high neck such as a skivvy,
 - sleeves to cover shoulders or long sleeve shirts,
 - close weave fabric such a cotton, polyester/cotton and linen
 - is dark in colour to absorb UV radiation
 - covers as much skin as possible and is long enough to cover torso and not reveal skin at the waist.
- Hats which are;
 - broad-brimmed and provide good protection for the face, nose, neck and ears, which are common sites for skin cancers (caps and visors do not provide adequate protection and are not acceptable options)
 - made with closely woven fabric – if you can see through it, UV radiation will get through.
- Footwear:
 - Educators must wear suitable closed-in flat shoes while working at all times except in specific situations such as when they are involved in sand or water play when bare-feet might be more appropriate.
 - Shoes should have a tread that will reduce the risk of slipping
 - Shoes removed for sand/water/messy play then must be immediately put back on prior to walking around the playground or centre
 - The following footwear are not acceptable options as they do not offer the necessary support or coverage to minimise risks in the workplace: clogs, thongs, sandals or any type of shoe where the heel or toe of the foot isn't enclosed and covered. These are not considered safe in our early childhood setting.
- Grooming:
 - Obtrusive, excessive jewellery that might catch and cause injury to a child or themselves must not be worn. Excessive jewellery hinders effective handwashing and must be avoided.

- Hair should be tied back where possible so it doesn't get caught up in day to day duties with children, especially babies and does not pose a hazard to food handling practises.
- Educators should ensure that bodily odours and perfumes are not intrusive to others.
- Nails should not appear to present a safety risk to a child by being excessively long or sharp.
- Facial piercings are to be removed or covered if they cannot be removed, these may be torn by a child or may pose a choking hazard if displaced.
- Tongue rings are to be removed if they impede with your speech in anyway.

COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

- Educators and families will have access to this policy at all times.
- Educators and families will be provided with opportunities to be involved in the review of this policy.
- Educators will be provided with Workplace Health and Safety information at the time of commencement and regularly throughout the year.

RELATED FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

- Workplace Incident Form
- All policies, procedures and forms which relate to health and safety
- Educator Induction Checklist
- Annual Induction Refresher Checklist
- **Hazardous Manual Task Identification Worksheet**
- **Hazardous Manual Task Risk Assessment Worksheet**

SCOPE AND ENFORCEMENT

The failure of any person to comply with this policy in its entirety may lead to;

- Performance management of an employee which may lead to termination

RECOGNISED AUTHORITIES AND DOCUMENTS WHICH GUIDE POLICY

- "Lifting Technique Training: Is it Effective" Qld Government Department of Justice and Attorney-General (accessed on-line April 2020)
https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/25659/factsheet-lifting-technique.pdf
- "Children's services Occupational Health and Safety compliance kit" Work Safe Victoria (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/childrens-services-occupational-health-and-safety-compliance-kit>
- "Skin Cancer and Outdoor Work – A Work Health and Safety Guide" Cancer Council (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.cancerouncil.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Skin-cancer-and-outdoor-work-booklet-Oct2018-v2.pdf>
- "Sun Safety for Outdoor Workers" Workcover Qld (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/tourism/articles/sun-safety-for-outdoor-workers>
- Safe Work Australia website – Model WHS Laws (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/law-and-regulation/model-whs-laws>

- The following websites accessed April 2020
 - Safe Work Australia <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/>
 - Workplace Health and Safety Queensland <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/>
 - SafeWork NSW <http://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/>
 - WorkSafe Victoria <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/>
- Hazardous manual tasks – Code of Practice October 2018, Department of Justice and Attorney-General (Accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/model-code-practice-hazardous-manual-tasks>
- “Identify, Assess and Control Hazards” Safe Work Australia website (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/risk>
- “Staying Healthy 5th Edition Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services” (updated June 2013), Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council
- “Incident Notification Information Sheet” Safe Work Australia (accessed on-line April 2020)
<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1702/incident-notification-fact-sheet-2015.pdf>

DATE CREATED: November 2011

REVIEW DETAILS:

Review Date	Details of Changes
January 2013	Additional information about people handling and safe lifting tips in rationale and also implementation. Sources updated as applicable. Conduct Risk Assessment with team annually and provide educators with relevant information on manual lifting of children.
January 2014	No changes made, sources updated where applicable
June 2015	No changes made, sources updated where applicable
December 2015	Includes uniform and grooming information and associated factsheet
January 2016	Name change of policy to Workplace Health and Safety to reflect legislation
May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sources updated. Reference to other policies to prevent illnesses ● Rationale content updated in line with new Codes of Practices and resources. ● Inclusion of new Workplace Incident Form, Hazardous Manual Task Identification Worksheet and Hazardous Manual Task Risk Assessment Worksheet ● Included under Hazardous substance, new GHS labelling and safety equipment to be supplied <p>As this is a substantial policy with a lot of important information and changes, it is recommended that it is provided to educators and discussed as a team.</p>
May 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updated sources and weblinks – no content change
May 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updated sources- no content change.
April 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updated sources and weblinks ● Update quotes and diagrams in Rationale as per changes to WorkSafe Australia website <p>Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Added to step 4 – Review control measures that they are not just reviewed but maintained ● Added additional uniform safety measures to make Etiquette and Grooming Policy.

