

WODEN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT:

Woden Early Childhood Centre is committed to ensuring the safety of all adults and children in the Centre. Woden Early Childhood Centre endeavours to plan ahead for emergencies so that if they occur staff will approach them calmly with resulting in a smooth professional response.

Woden Early Childhood Centre defines an emergency as an unplanned event needing immediate action to ensure the safety of children, staff and families. These may include fire, bomb threat, missing child, intruders, snakes, damage to the building, burglary, natural disasters including storms and floods.

It is understood that there is a shared legal responsibility and accountability between, and a commitment by, all persons to implement the service's Emergency Policy, procedures and practices.

Woden Early Childhood Centre complies with OHS national standards, codes of practice and Australian Standards as well as best practice recommendations from recognised authorities.

The procedures relating to the Emergency Policy are laminated, clearly labelled and displayed in the foyer and each play room for families staff and visitors to read. This policy supports inclusive practices at Woden Early Childhood Centre. Please refer to the Inclusion Policy.

RATIONALE:

It is important for our Centre to be prepared to respond quickly in the event of an emergency (such as a fire) that poses a risk of harm to the children and staff. It is important that all staff are familiar with this policy and that drills are practiced regularly and calmly to promote confidence for children and staff.

SCOPE: this policy relates to all children, families, staff including volunteers and students. It is also relevant to any person visiting the Centre at any time.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

ACT Centre based Childrens Services Conditions August 2000 (4.7,4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 4.11)
Occupational health and safety (General) Regulation 2007 (74,75,76)

QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM:

Quality practices Guide 2005 (principles 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 6.1)

LOCATION OF INFORMATION:

this information is made available to families and staff on orientation through the provision of the Policy CD. Staff may access the Policy Cd on their room's laptop and print it as needed.

Source Documents:

<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au>
www.esa.gov.au
www.ascc.gov.au/ascc/HealthSafety
www.cit.act.edu.au/current/services/#counselling
www.ses.nsw.gov.au/topics/2012.html

Key Resources:

Fire Protection Association Australia (FPAA). (n.d.). Retrieved June 29, 2007, from <http://www.fpaa.com.au> Fire Protection Association Australia (FPAA). (n.d.). Retrieved June 29, 2007, from <http://www.fpaa.com.au>

Frith, J., Kambouris, N., & O'Grady, O. (2003). *Health & safety in children's centres: Model policies and practices* (2nd ed.). NSW: School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales.¹

McLeod, P. (2005). Health and safety information on the internet. *Putting Children First*, 15, 12-13.

Tansey, S. (2006). *Outside School Hours Care Quality Assurance Factsheet #3: Safety in children's services*. NSW: National Childcare Accreditation Council Inc.

Tansey, S. (2006). *Quality Improvement and Accreditation System Factsheet #2: Safety in children's services*. NSW: National Childcare Accreditation Council Inc.

Tarr, K. (2006). Electrical safety in children's services. *Putting Children First*, 18, 7.

Tarrant, S. (2002). *Managing OHS in children's services: A model for implementing an Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) management system in your children's service*. NSW: Lady Gowrie Child Centre.

LINKING POLICIES

Inclusion
Policy Development and Review
Safety in the Workplace
First Aid
Accident and Emergency

POLICY REVIEW

This policy is reviewed on a biannual basis both by the centres staff and then by families. Once the Policy has been reviewed and changes are made it goes to the management committee for ratification. Please refer to the Policy development and review policy.

Date endorsed by Committee: 24.3.09

Date to be reviewed: 24.3.10

Responsibilities of different Stakeholders

Please refer to the Occupational health and safety Policy. The committee is responsible for ensuring annual checks on fire extinguishers and blankets. The Director and senior staff are responsible for ensuring a regular drill program is carried out. Staff have the responsibility to follow their role in the evacuation drill procedures.

Occupational health and safety Representation and committee

The Staff elect a staff member to act as the occupational health and safety Representative for a period of two years. This staff member receives training through work cover and is the contact person for Occupational Health and Safety issues. Regular occupational health and safety checks are carried out to minimise the risk of injury to staff, children and families. Occupational Health and safety issues are discussed at a whole centre staff meeting held every month – 6 weeks.

Please refer to the Occupational Health and Safety Policy.

Risk management strategies

Please refer to the Occupational Health and safety Policy. The centre needs to be prepared to react to different types of emergencies.

emergencies that require first aid

These may result from fires, building damage, burglary, intruders, snakes

The centre is equipped with a full first aid kit kept in the office and accessed in the event that first aid needs to be given inside the centre. First Aid will be administered by a senior staff member holding a First Aid Certificate in a quiet area away from the group of children to ensure everyone remains calm.

In the event that we evacuate the Centre excursion first aid kits are taken by Nursery (in the evacuation pram) and Intro. If necessary families will be contacted once we evacuate and an ambulance called if needed.

emergencies that require us to stay inside the Centre

These may include : intruders, suspicious people outside the Centre, snakes, natural disasters and storms.

Senior staff will be involved in the decision making process. In some cases it may be enough to simply stay inside the Centre – as in a snake in the yard or natural disasters and storms whilst in other scenarios – intruders or suspicious persons outside the Centre it may be necessary to lock doors and windows to the Centre to prevent access whilst also calling the Police to attend the Centre stating in detail our concerns for the safety of children and staff whilst giving clear directions and our contact number 62813121. A mobile phone number may also be necessary.

In the situation where we had a human intruder Staff would ensure to the best of their ability that the children were kept in a room away from the intruder with their carers. Staff are to approach the situation calmly and follow the emergency procedures as displayed in each room.

The Police would be contacted and attendance requested. Families would be contacted by a senior Staff member to inform them of the situation. The safety of children and staff is paramount at all times and Staff will act with their best interests in mind.

Emergencies that require immediate evacuation.

Each staff member is assigned a responsibility in the event that we need to evacuate the centre. It is the role of all staff members at Woden Early Childhood Centre to ensure the safety of the children in their care.

- 1) All play rooms will be checked by the Room Leader or the senior staff member.
- 2) All staff will ensure there are aware of the Centre's Evacuation Procedures and carry them out appropriately.
- 3) Evacuation Procedures will be displayed in the Staff Room.
- 4) The Primary Evacuation Location will be the back exit gate.
- 5) The Secondary Evacuation Location will be the car park at the front of the Centre.

Evacuation drills

Emergency Evacuation Procedure details will be followed by all staff and children. At each evacuation the Director collects the emergency detail folder in case parents need to be notified. In the event that the Director is not here then this is done by the cook.

The responsibilities of each staff member are displayed in the Staff Room, Office and each Playroom. Room Leaders are responsible for making sure new staff members, relief staff, students, volunteers and other visitors to their room, are aware of the displayed procedures. Room leaders are also responsible for the direction of adults in their rooms.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures formulated after consultation with Fire Brigade - Fire Safety Section, and reassessed after each trial evacuation.

Refer copy of Emergency Evacuation Procedure, as attached.

The Director will plan emergency evacuation drills in advance. These drills will be practiced at least every six months or in the event of two or more child care staff changes. The dates of these drills will be recorded and the success of the procedures assessed. It is beneficial to carry out drills on different days and at different times of day

Emergency Assembly Points:

1. Inside playground near back Exit gate;
2. Car park opposite Centre.

Situations necessitating evacuation include Fire, Bomb Threat, Toxic Fumes and Snakes.

Fire Extinguishers are located in Pre-School Room, Toddler Room and Kitchen and are professionally inspected annually (Fire Fighting Enterprises). A Fire Blanket is displayed and easily accessible from the Kitchen.

A designated staff member is trained in the use of Extinguishers and Fire Safety.

If it is unsafe in the immediate area of the Centre, staff will be guided by the emergency authority in charge of the situation (Police/Fire Brigade). All measures will be taken to inform all parents of the children's whereabouts - personal phone calls, radio announcements....

Responsibilities of individual staff members

DIRECTOR -or second in charge

- 1) Contact **FIRE BRIGADE** as soon as alarm is raised. (If a real fire not a drill)
- 2) Sound the alarm to alert all staff.
- 3) Place '**DANGER**' notice on the front door. This can be found on the back of the office door.
- 4) Check staff room, bathrooms and foyer area.
- 5) Collect emergency contact book.
- 6) Proceed to assembly point at EXIT GATE or car park opposite.

PRE-SCHOOL

Teacher / Room Leader (or permanent staff member)

- 1) Check kitchen and children's bathroom.
- 2) Collect attendance book.
- 3) Group children together at exit door to playground.
- 4) Proceed to assembly point at EXIT GATE.
- 5) Check numbers of children against sign in sheet. Assess situation with other staff as to whether further evacuation is necessary,

ASSISTANTS (or relief)

- 1) Group all children from main play room at exit door to playground.
- 2) Proceed with them to assembly point at EXIT GATE.

NOTE: should fire be at playground side of building, exit through preschool front doors and assemble in car park opposite.

INTRO

ROOM LEADER (or permanent staff member)

- 1) Check children's bathroom.

- 2) Group all children into main playroom at playground exit door.
- 3) Collect attendance book, First aid kit and children's medications
- 4) Proceed to assembly point at EXIT GATE.
Check children against sign in sheet. Assess situation with other staff as to whether further evacuation is necessary,

ASSISTANT 1 (or relief)

- 1) ALERT PRE SCHOOL ROOM.
- 2) Group all children from main play area together at exit door.
- 3) Proceed with them to assembly point at EXIT GATE.

ASSISTANT 2 (or relief)

- 1) Assist with grouping all children from main play area together at exit door.
- 2) Proceed with them to assembly point at EXIT GATE
- 3) If safe to do so proceed to Nursery Yard and assist with evacuation of nursery children.
Let Room Leader know you are going.

NOTE:should fire be on or near curtains, exit through main foyer and assemble in car park opposite.

TODDLER ROOM

ROOM LEADER (or permanent staff member)

- 1) ***Alert Nursery.***
- 2) Check laundry and store room.
- 3) Collect attendance book.
- 4) Remove all children through playground exit.
- 5) Proceed with them to assembly point at EXIT GATE
Check number of children against sign in sheet. Assess situation with other staff as to whether further evacuation is needed.

ASSISTANT 1 (or relief)

- 1) Remove all children from main play area.
 - 2) Proceed with them to assembly point at EXIT GATE

ASSISTANT 2 and 3 (or relief)

Assist with grouping all children from main play area together at exit door.
Proceed with them to assembly point at EXIT GATE
If safe to do so proceed to Nursery Yard and assist with evacuation of nursery children

NOTE:should fire be on or near curtains, exit through toddler storeroom /playground door and assemble in car park opposite.

NURSERY

ROOM LEADER (or permanent staff member)

- 1) Check and remove children from cot rooms 1.
- 2) Fasten open door to playground and gate for easy exit.
- 3) Collect attendance book, and then proceed to playground exit.
- 4) Assemble at the EXIT GATE in the main play area
- 5) Check number of children against sign in sheet. Assess situation with other staff as to whether further evacuation is necessary.

ASSISTANTS (or relief)

- 1) Check and remove all children from cot room 2 & 3
- 2) Move labeled evacuation pram from cot room 3 into main playroom.
- 3) Place all children in pram.
- 4) Proceed with them through exit door and assemble at EXIT GATE in main area.

NOTE: should fire be at playground side of building, exit through toddler storeroom playground door and assemble in car park opposite.

COOK

- 1) ensure that all cooking appliances are switched off prior to leaving the kitchen
- 2) Alert Toddlers and Intro Staff if indoors
- 3) If evacuation occurs in the period of time when working in the kitchen go to the Nursery and assist them in evacuating.
- 4) If evacuation occurs in the afternoon when floating follow the floaters responsibilities

Staffing changes

There are on occasions when different styles of staffing needed at Woden Early childhood Centre. Our goal is to have a “supernumerary” staff member in each room. When this is the case we do not use floaters as breaks and programming are covered within the room.

However there may be times that it is necessary for us to revert to using floaters. **In which case the following responsibilities apply.**

FLOATERS

- 1) In the case where the floater is the first to see the fire, ensure that the alarm has been raised by notifying the Director.
- 2) The floaters will assume the role of the childcare staff member they are replacing. E.g. if in Toddlers stay in the Toddler Room
- 3) Proceed to assembly point at Exit gate.
- 4) Help supervise and comfort children while other staff continue removing children from the building.

- 5) Staff who are on breaks or programming should go directly to the Nursery to assist with their evacuation

Documenting OHS procedures and practices.

After each drill or response to an emergency each room leader is expected to document the process in which their room was effected and responded. A template has been developed to assist rooms in finding this task easier by allowing space to record the key pieces of information: number of children, staff, key tasks that were completed and roll check verification. Space is allowed for Staff to document any issues that may have arisen in response to the emergency.

The fire drill is then discussed amongst senior staff at a room Leaders meeting with senior staff returning to their team and sharing the information or concerns with them.

Please refer to the Occupational health and safety policy.

Dealing with the emotional and psychological impact of an emergency

Responding to an emergency situation is an emotional event which can effect individuals for a extended period after an event. There will be opportunities to debrief with each other – in small or large groups as appropriate. Woden Early Childhood Centre is able to access support from various sectors of the community. As a CIT (Canberra Institute of Technology) Child Care Centre we are able to access their Counsellors if needed. We have also accessed training, counselling, advice and support from Justin Purtle and Bobbie Cooke both of whom also work with families and children if required. Their contact numbers are listed below:

CIT counselling Departments (02) 6207 4947
Email : citcounselling @cit.act.edu.au

Justin Purtle (02) 6241 4431
Bobbie Cook (02) 6253 3116

We are aware of the impact emergencies can have on children's ability to feel secure and safe. Staff will provide play opportunities which facilitate the children in expressing their thoughts and feelings regarding the emergency.

Dealing with the media

This is covered in the media enquiries/requests policy as follows

The Management Committee's position is that all Media Releases/Announcements, etc are to be:

- a) made by the Director, or
- b) approved by the Director

Media calls/requests are to be channelled to the Director.

NOTE: Staff contacted by the media must inform the Director.

Protective behaviours and practices

Staff, carers, students and volunteers as role models. We understand that children learn through example and modelling is an important way to teach children about safe and effective emergency practices. Staff respond to emergency situations calmly and talk to the children about the drills that have occurred giving age appropriate information.

Staff students and volunteers must comply with the Emergency Policy at all times.

Woden Early Childhood Centre accesses centre visits from Kenny Koala for the intro and Pre School rooms. Kenny delivers protective behaviours messages to the children in an age appropriate way.

Staff/Carer professional development opportunities

Woden early Childhood Centre is committed to providing training for its staff. OHS training is available to the Occupational Health and Safety Representative. Other training is offered where there is a need this could include training in the use of fire extinguishers.

Communication with different stakeholders

Children

As noted above under protective behaviours

Families

Staff communicate with their families on a daily basis through conversation and written documentation in their journals. Families are made aware of fire drills in this manner. If there has been an emergency in the Centre then families are notified as relevant fire safety information is included in newsletter attachments, emails and the enrollment package.

Staff/Carers

staff will discuss / debrief after emergencies and offer each other feedback on how it was handled as well as thinking ahead and planning how it could be handled differently. Staff are involved in the evaluation process with room leaders documenting the processes followed.

Management/Coordination unit staff

the Director will debrief with senior staff and provide feedback. The director will seek support from support organisations for the staff where needed as well as sourcing training if there is a need.

Experiences

Woden early childhood Centre provides opportunities for children to 'act out' or role play scenarios involving the emergency services. This is done through use of : hospital police, ambulance, and fire fighting environments, including educational resources and found materials such as hoses.

The Centre will contact the fire brigade for planned visits from the fire brigade and to the fire station to discuss fire safety and recommended evacuation procedures in the home at an age appropriate level

Excursions

Woden early childhood Centre considers the safety of the children and staff at all times. In planning an excursion careful consideration is given to ensure that we have low ratios. Excursion venues are often revisited resulting in staff being familiar with the venue entries and exits. On arrival at a new venue staff familiarise themselves with emergency exits and seek information about emergency procedures.

When on an excursion staff take a mobile phone so that it can be used in an emergency to either : get in contact with the centre for family numbers. In the case of a whole centre excursion where no-one stays at the centre staff will collect emergency contacts for the families for that day in the event of an emergency.

Community

The centre plans to involve the community in the delivery of this policy by inviting the fire brigade to visit the centre, speak with children and families as well as show the fire engine. This can be done inside the Centres operating times as well as at community events like the winter warmer and parties outside centre hours

Policy review

The service will review the Emergency Policy and procedures, and related documents, every 12 months Families are encouraged to collaborate with the service to review the policy and procedures. Staff and Carers are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be encouraged to be actively involved.
