



3.4 General Work, Health and Safety Policy

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Aims

In relation to Work Health and Safety, the aims of **Cootamundra Preschool** are:

1. To use a preventative approach to protect the safety, health and welfare of anyone who uses the centre. This means ensuring that management and employees work together to create a safe and healthy workplace
2. To provide staff with access to injury management where an employee has incurred a work related injury or illness and is eligible to submit a Workers Compensation Claim.

The Work Health and Safety of those who use or visit the centre is considered to be of the utmost importance. To this end WH&S considerations are central to any activity and practice that daily occurs in a preschool. This is evidenced in the large number of policies this centre has developed, with some examples being food safety, health and hygiene procedures, the purchase and provision of indoor and outdoor equipment, planning and teaching processes, the maintenance of buildings, etc. Therefore WH&S procedures are evident in **all** policies that have been developed for this centre and not just this one. Due to this fact, it is neither possible nor sensible to attempt to include them all here as a single policy. As such this WH&S policy will focus on the general administrative and management aspects of implementing WH&S in a preschool, including when staff are injured in the course of their work.

Legislative Requirements

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Children (Education and Care National Law Application) Act 2010

Occupational Health & Safety Act 2000

Occupational Health & Safety Regulations 2001

Children's Services Regulations 2004

Smoke Free Environment Act 2000

Workers Compensation & Rehabilitation Act 1987

Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998

Who Is Effected By This Policy?

Child

Parents

Staff

Management

Visitors

Contractors

Date reviewed by staff: October 2016

Date reviewed by committee: October 2016

Next review date: October 2019

Relevant Early Childhood Professional Standards

Standards

Early Childhood Code of Ethics:	1-1, 1-6, II-3, IV-2, IV-3,
Early Years Learning Framework:	Outcomes 1.1, 1.2, 3.2, Principles – 1, 2, 4
Education & Care Services Australian National Regulations:	All regs incorporate WH&S considerations plus 103, 168(2h)
National Quality Framework:	Quality areas – 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 4.1.1, 4.2.2, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.2, 6.1.3, 7.1.2, 7.1.3, 7.2.1

Sources/References

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
Children (Education and Care National Law Application) Act 2010
Work Health & Safety Regulation Act
Occupational Health & Safety Act 2000
Occupational Health & Safety Regulations 2001
Standards Australia (retrieved January 2012)
http://www.standardsportal.org.au/australia/english/resource/standardsList_e.jsp
WorkCover OH&S Consultation Code of Practice 2001
WorkCover NSW Health & Safety Summaries 2001
WorkCover NSW: Injury & Management Practices (retrieved January 2012)
<http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/injuriesclaims/Pages/default.aspx>
Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998

Procedures

1. General WH&S management

1.1 The Director will ensure that information about the Work Health & Safety Act, Regulations, Codes of Practice and Guidelines are discussed with all new staff during the induction phase and that the Act, Regulations and Code are made available online to all staff.

1.2 The Director will ensure WH&S issues are highlighted to new committee members as the need arises and also that the website for the WH&S documents as per Point 1.1, is given to the preschool Committee of Management

1.3 The Director will ensure that WH&S training is organised as needed at the start of each year, to ensure all staff members have a working knowledge of the processes involved with maintaining safe work practices and also of the reporting of unsafe work practices and hazards. This training does not have to be formal or certified, it can for instance include the Director

sharing relevant or updated information at staff meetings, or on a one to one basis with staff members. It could also include inviting a certified trainer to talk to staff (eg the local fire brigade re correct use of fire extinguishers)

1.4 In light of the fact that this centre's WH&S aims (see Aim 1 above) encompass a preventative approach, the Director will encourage all staff members to report any incident leading to risk of injury including near misses, and also any condition/s that may be causing stress. Whenever such reports are made, positive steps will be taken to remove hazards and also to understand and minimise any stress inducing conditions affecting individual staff members

1.5 Indoor and outdoor play equipment will be checked regularly by the staff to ensure that it is in a clean, and safe condition. Staff will notify the Director of any equipment and/or area that is not in a safe condition, and will write details on an WH&S Incident/Accident Report which will record the action taken. The Committee of Management will support the staff in the event of a report being made, by helping to ensure that the equipment/area at risk will be repaired or otherwise fixed up either immediately or as soon as possible. If the Director feels it is necessary, staff/children will be prevented from using the equipment or entering the area until this occurs

1.6 All new equipment/furniture will be checked against Standards Australia (website is cited above) where relevant, plus the Director's knowledge of developmentally appropriate standards for 3-5 year olds

1.7 Any contractors who work at the centre will be required to provide evidence of public liability insurance

1.8 The Director will ensure that furnishings limit risk of injury or ill health in the workplace i.e. if an office chair is being replaced, the Committee of Management will attempt to obtain ergonomic chairs if finances permit. WH&S criteria will be followed in relation to things such as appropriate storage systems, safe electrical appliances, the installation of circuit breakers etc

1.9 The centre's Treasurer at the advice of the Director, will allocate sufficient resources in the annual budget to ensure a healthy and safe environment can be maintained. This will cover direct costs such as the provision of safety equipment, maintenance of buildings, fittings and equipment, purchase of health and safety advice, training and resources

1.10 Staff will record all injuries (including near misses) in each employees personal files. Details entered will include: date, time, place of incident, injury or condition, brief description of events, witnesses, any anticipated treatment or outcome

1.11 All work related injuries and diseases or 'near misses' will be considered at depth to determine the causes, and a decision will be made on appropriate action to prevent similar events in the future. For further details see Point 2, 'Injury Management for Staff' below

1.12 Employees with varying unique needs such as pregnancy, medical conditions eg epilepsy, asthma, physical or intellectual disabilities, and people who are young and inexperienced, will be given special consideration regarding their health and safety needs. This will be achieved through careful consultation with the employee, and the documentation, monitoring and reviewing of the strategies established, so as to ensure that (1) their needs are met and (2) whether or not they can fulfill their responsibilities with regard to the safety and duty of care for preschoolers

1.13 WH&S issues, incidents and near misses will regularly be discussed at staff and committee of management meetings in terms of improvements that can be made etc. This again illustrates the preventative nature of the centre's policy on WH&S

1.14 The centre's Committee of Management will ensure that appropriate workers compensation cover is available to all employees of the organisation, and that public liability insurance cover is available to all visitors to the centre. The Committee of Management will also ensure that employees understand the importance of reporting injuries or illness which occurs during the course of their work. Employees will be informed about the time deadlines for completing workers' compensation forms, and be provided with information about compensation

1.15 The centre is a tobacco, drug and alcohol free zone

1.16 Any employee with a notifiable illness/ disease will contact the director and the director will confidentially record/ document the illness/ disease in the employees personal files, whilst also notifying families.

2. Injury management for staff

The process of rehabilitating an injured staff member can be very complex and has both legal complications as well as long term health implications for the staff member. Therefore it is advised that in the event of this occurring, the Director and Committee of Management needs to refer to: WorkCover NSW: Injury & Management Practices,

<http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/injuriesclaims/Pages/default.aspx>

for complete coverage on the necessary procedures. However as a general and initial guide, the centre's procedures are below:

2.1 The Committee of Management will immediately notify the centre's scheme agent or insurer within 48 hours of the incident, but preferably sooner. There is no need to notify WorkCover because the scheme agent or insurer will automatically do so

2.2 An Occupational Injury, Illness and Incident Report form is to be completed as soon as possible, noting the investigation of the circumstances and recommendations on action to prevent similar incidents in future

2.3 The workplace (trouble spot) will be inspected and work practices will be examined under the supervision of the director and the Committee of Management or a nominee from the committee

2.4 If necessary, modifications will be made to the area where the accident occurred as soon as possible so as to improve safety

2.5 The staff member with the injury or illness is expected to participate and cooperate with efforts to improve workplace health and safety and their return to work

2.6 Temporary or volunteer staff may need to be employed to maintain the department's normal operations without adding risk of injury or illness to other staff members

2.7 It is important the staff member remains at work or returns to work as soon as possible. An individual 'return to work plan' will be developed for the staff member where necessary. An Injury Management Plan is developed by the insurer for every staff member who is or is likely to be unfit for their normal duties for seven days or more. It is a legislative requirement that this plan will:

- be prepared in consultation with the treating doctor
- identify suitable duties for the injured staff member, where practicable
- outline the steps to be taken by the Service to facilitate return to work
- have a review date

2.8 Choice of return to work duties will be made on the basis of:

- the nature and severity of the injury/illness
- the staff member's age, education, skills and work experience
- restrictions imposed by treating doctor, treating health professionals and the rehabilitation provider
- the previous work undertaken by the staff member
- the predicted time frame for rehabilitation
- where the member of staff lives

The Director will ensure that this policy is maintained and implemented at all times.