

**Best Practice**

**PURPOSE**

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This policy will provide:

- guidelines to ensure that, children, educators, volunteers and others participating in Kurboroo Kindergarten programs and activities are safe from any risk associated with extreme weather conditions.
  - This policy includes the kindergarten's hot weather procedures and storm management procedures.
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**VALUES**

Kurboroo Kindergarten is committed to:

- promoting extreme weather strategies for children, families, staff and visitors
- At Kurboroo Kindergarten staff work with children and families to ensure everyone's safety and wellbeing in situations of hot weather, storms or strong winds.
- Staff recognise the importance of helping children to regulate their behaviours in inclement weather and will work with children and families to develop appropriate responses when the weather reaches extremes.
- Kurboroo Kindergarten has adequate air-conditioning in all inside areas, and covered and shady areas and shelter for safe play.

**SCOPE**

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Kurboroo Kindergarten.

**BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION**

**Background**

It is a requirement under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* that employers provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

Legislation that governs the operation of approved children's services is based on the health, safety and welfare of the children and requires that children are protected from hazards and harm.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Kurboroo Kindergarten policies:

- Sun Protection Policy (2.19)
- Bushfire Risk (2.22)

Kurboroo Kindergarten is committed to providing a safe space for Children. In the event of extreme weather, it may be required for the Kindergarten to close, request early pickup of children or evacuate the Kinder.

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**In the event of cancelling a kindergarten session/ closing the Kindergarten:**

Direct communication from the kindergarten regarding closure will come in four forms:

- A notice will be posted to the kindergarten door the night before to advise parents of the closure the following day.
- An email will also be sent the night before to all parents who have provided the kindergarten with their email address.
- A notification will be sent out on FlexiSchools the night before to advise parents of the closure the following day.
- A notification will also be posted on the kindergarten Facebook and individual group Facebook.

Regardless if the weather conditions change throughout the day - once the decision has been made to close the kindergarten, it will remain closed.

As per the Bushfire Risk Policy (see policy 2.22) - families should assume that during the fire season, if a day has been declared a *Severe, Extreme* or *Code Red* FDR, the kindergarten will be closed.

**Responsibility of Closure**

Nominated and Certified Supervisors and the Executive Committee will be responsible for making the final decision to close the Kinder as a result of extreme weather conditions.

A sign will be posted at the kindergarten door, informing families of the kindergarten's closure, in addition to the kindergarten Facebook and individual groups pages.

Contact with the secretary will also need to be made, so that an email and FlexiSchools notification can be sent to all kindergarten families. And facebook?

**Impact on Families.**

Days that the kindergarten will be closed as a result of extreme weather, staff will not be on site and parents will need to keep their child/ren at home or with a carer. If your child's session is cancelled due an extreme weather risk, there will be no refund of fees for this day.

**In the event of requesting early pick up of children:**

- Refer to main Delivery and Collection of Children Policy (2.09) for full procedures relating to delivery and collection of children.

**In the event of evacuating the Kindergarten:**

- The Kurboroo Kindergarten Emergency and Evacuation Policy (2.11) and Plan will be enacted.

**Legislation and standards**

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for Children)
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Section 167

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- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 113, 114, 168(2)(a)(ii)
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety
  - Standard 2.3: Each child is protected
    - Element 2.3.2: Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

**DEFINITIONS**

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

**Extreme weather:** includes rain, strong winds, thunder, lightning , 40+ temperatures and power outages.

**Appropriate clothing:** refers to sun protection clothing and wet weather gear.

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

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

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

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

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

**Notifiable incident:** An incident involving workplace health and safety that is required by law to be reported to WorkSafe Victoria. Notification is required for incidents that result in death or serious injury/illness, or dangerous occurrences. For a complete list of incidents that must be reported to WorkSafe Victoria, refer to the *Guide to Incident Notification* on the WorkSafe Victoria website: [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au)

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

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

- the **death of a child** while being educated and cared for at the service or following an incident while being educated and cared for by the service

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- any **incident involving serious injury or trauma to a child** while the child is being educated and cared for, which:
  - a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner; or
  - the child attended or ought reasonably to have attended a hospital e.g. a broken limb\*
  - any **incident involving serious illness of a child** while that child is being educated and cared for by a service for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital e.g. severe asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis\*

**NOTE:** In some cases (for example rural and remote locations) a General Practitioner conducts consultation from the hospital site. Only treatment related to serious injury, illness or trauma is required to be notified, not other health matters.

- any emergency for which **emergency services** attended  
NOTE: This means an incident, situation or event where there is an imminent or severe risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a person at an education and care service. It does not mean an incident where emergency services attended as a precaution.
- a child appears to be **missing or cannot be accounted for** at the service
- a child appears to have been **taken or removed** from the service in a manner that contravenes the National Regulations
- a child was mistakenly **locked in or out of the service** premises or any part of the premises.

Notifications of serious incidents should be made to the regulatory authority (DET) through the [NQA IT System](#). If this is not practicable, the notification can be made initially in whatever way is best in the circumstances.

NOTE: some of serious incidents above are also reportable incidents under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* and require notification to WorkSafe.

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

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

**WorkSafe Victoria:** The manager of Victoria’s workplace safety system. WorkSafe Victoria’s responsibilities are to:

- help avoid workplace injuries occurring
- enforce Victoria’s occupational health and safety laws
- provide reasonably priced workplace injury insurance for employers.

**SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES**

**Sources**

- Metropolitan Fire Brigade: [www.mfb.vic.gov.au](http://www.mfb.vic.gov.au)
- Country Fire Authority: [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au)

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

**Service policies**

- 2.13 Excursions and Service Events Policy
- 2.17 Nutrition and Active Play Policy
- 3.01 Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- 2.20 Supervision of Children Policy
- 2.19 Sun Protection Policy
- 2.22 Bushfire

**PROCEDURES**

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**The Approved Provider is responsible for:**

- ensuring parents/guardians are informed about the *Extreme Weather Policy* on enrolment,
- ensuring children wear appropriate sunhats, clothing for sun protection and sunscreen when attending the service
- ensuring children wear appropriate wet weather gear when attending the service (where applicable)
- Reinforcing this policy by providing information on extreme weather to service users via Flexibuzz, newsletters, noticeboards, meetings and websites etc.
- In cases of extreme weather;
  - Notifying parents / guardians of need to cancel kindergarten session
  - Notifying parents/ guardians of need for early collection of children
  - Notifying parents/ guardians of need for alternative pick up location

**The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:**

- ensuring parents/guardians are informed of the *Extreme Weather Policy* on enrolment,
- Monitor local weather conditions from [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)
- Ensure that the availability of shade/ shelter is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events (Regulations 100, 101).
- Informing Committee of need to cancel or arrange early pick up of any session as a result of extreme weather threats or disruptions to the Kinder as a result of extreme weather conditions (e.g. power outages)
  
- Activate appropriate cooling/ heating systems for comfort and relief in times of hot/cold weather. All air conditioning and heating systems are adjustable to suit the weather and temperature.
- Undertake risk assessments for outdoor play experiences if the weather is unpredictable or there are weather warnings and close down areas that are unsafe to play near (e.g. near trees in extreme wind)

**Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:**

- ensuring parents/guardians are informed of the *Extreme Weather Policy* on enrolment,
- Monitor local weather conditions from [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)
- Ensure that the availability of shade/ shelter is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events (Regulations 100, 101).

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## Extreme Weather including Storms

- Informing Committee of need to cancel or arrange early pick up of any session as a result of extreme weather threats
- co-operating with their employer with respect to any action taken by the employer to comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*.

**Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- reading and familiarising themselves with this policy
- Dress children and provide extra clothing that is weather appropriate i.e. layers for cold weather, minimise heat gain, layers that can be easily removed during activity and of a type that is sun safe and dry clothes after playing in rain etc.
- Making arrangements for the early collection or alternative collection location of children when requested by the Kindergarten as a result of extreme weather conditions.

Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

### EVALUATION

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

- regularly seek feedback from educators, staff, parents/guardians, children, management and all affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy or its procedures.

### ATTACHMENTS

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NIL

### AUTHORISATION

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This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of on October 2021

**REVIEW DATE; OCTOBER 2023**

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