



Health and Safety Procedure

Policy

The Health and Safety Procedure falls under the Health and Safety Policy. Hawthorn Early Years recognises that all children have the right to high quality education and care in a safe and comfortable environment. Our service is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and healthy environment for its employees, children, families and visitors. We strive to make sure the Service is as free of predictable risks as is reasonably practical while remaining true to our vision and philosophy.

Application of Procedure

This procedure applies to the Approved Provider, the Board of Hawthorn Early Years all subcommittees of the Board of Management, employees, students, volunteers, families, children and others attending the programs and activities of Hawthorn Early Years.

Hawthorn Early Years is committed to:

Providing and maintaining a work environment that is safe and without risks to health.

Hawthorn Early Years will:

Provide a safe workplace

Facilitate the election of a workplace Health and Safety Representative as required or at least every three years and display this information in the staff room.

Identify employees willing to join the health and safety committee who will assist with overseeing health and safety matters including attending health and safety meetings as scheduled.

Display the name of the OH&S Representative and Committee members in a prominent place in the staff room and ensure they are not personally liable for anything done or not done in good faith whilst carrying out their role.

Display the 'If you are injured poster' in a prominent position in the staff room and encourage the early reporting of any workplace injuries.

Provide safe systems of work as outlined in the Health and Safety Manual.

Provide appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision for employees.



Ensure that all equipment and materials used at the Service meet relevant safety standards.

Ensure substances, plant and equipment, are used, handled, and stored safely and that all plant, equipment and furniture are maintained in a safe condition.

Ensure that all cupboards/rooms that contain chemicals and first aid kits are labelled, and that child-proof locks are installed on doors and cupboards where contents may be harmful.

Keep a chemical register and provide material safety data sheets for all chemicals kept and/or used at the Service.

Promote a culture of early identification and reporting of potential hazards to reduce the risks.

Ensure contractors and visitors (other than parents dropping off and picking up children) sign the visitors register, complete all health and safety induction processes and are monitored whilst on site.

Communicate with families and employees, informing them of any works being carried out at the Service that have the potential to present an OH&S risk (eg. Uneven flooring, painting etc). This may be via online communication, notice on the entry door, or individual communication with those effected.

Implement risk minimisation strategies if works are to impact on an area where children and employees are located.

Ensure the Service is up to date with current legislation on child restraints in vehicles if transporting children.

Promote dignity and respect within the Service and take action to prevent and respond to bullying.

Ensure there is a systematic risk management approach (refer to www.ohsinecservices.org.au) to the management of workplace hazards including near misses. This includes ensuring that:

- hazards and risks to health and safety are identified, assessed and eliminated or, if it is not possible to remove the hazard/risk completely, effectively controlled
- measures employed to eliminate/control hazards and risks to health and safety are monitored and evaluated regularly

Organise and facilitate regular safety audits of the following:

- indoor and outdoor environments
- all equipment, including emergency equipment
- playgrounds and fixed equipment in outdoor environments
- cleaning services
- horticultural maintenance
- pest control.



Provide adequate welfare facilities e.g. first aid and dining facilities etc.

Implement a strategic approach to health and safety by using measurable objectives to monitor performance.

Protect other individuals from risks arising from the Service's activities, including holding a fete or a working bee etc., or any activity that is ancillary to the operation of the Service e.g. contractors cleaning the premises after hours.

Implement and review this procedure in consultation with the Approved Provider, employees and parents/guardians.

Training and supervision

Provide suitable training for the elected Occupational Health and Safety Representative.

Encourage health and safety committee members to attend the annual WorkSafe conference.

Provide adequate instruction to employees in safe working procedures, and inform them of known hazards to their health and wellbeing that are associated with the work that they perform at the Service.

Ensure that OHS accountability is included in all position descriptions.

Implement and practice emergency and evacuation procedures.

Identify and provide appropriate resources, induction and training to assist employees, contractors, visitors, volunteers and students to implement this procedure.

Ensure that all employees are aware of this procedure, and are supported to implement it at the Service.

Promoting Health and Safety

Allocate adequate resources to implement this procedure.

Make this procedure readily available at the Service premises and online.

Ensure all employees, contractors, volunteers and students are kept informed of any relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this procedure.

Consult appropriately with employees on OHS matters including:

- identification of hazards
- how to manage and control health and safety risks
- health and safety procedures



- establishing an OHS committee and determining membership of the committee
- proposed changes at the Service that may impact on health and safety
- nominating an occupational health and safety representative
- keeping up to date and complying with any relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy.

Managing health and safety issues

Provide a treatment and rehabilitation plan that fosters a safe, early and durable return to work.

Attempt to resolve OHS issues with employees or their representatives within a reasonable timeframe.

Not discriminate against employees who are involved in health and safety negotiations.

Allow access to an authorised representative who is acting within his/her powers under the OHS Act and not obstruct, mislead or intimidate an inspector who is performing his/her duties.

Notify WorkSafe Victoria about serious workplace incidents, and preserving the site of an incident.

All employees, volunteers and students will:

Ensure compliance with any reasonable instruction or lawful direction, including wearing personal protective equipment supplied by the employer as required.

Ensuring service policies and procedures are being followed and adhered to including taking care of their own safety and the safety of others who may be affected by their actions.

Co-operate with reasonable OHS actions taken by the Service, including:

- following all OHS rules and guidelines including correct manual handling procedures
- helping to ensure housekeeping is of the standard set out in the Services policies and procedures
- attending or participating in OHS training as required
- reporting OHS incidents including near misses using the Hazard and Maintenance Identification Forms
- co-operating with OHS investigations
- encouraging good OHS practices with fellow employees and others attending the Service
- assisting the Service with tasks relating to OHS, such as conducting OHS inspections during working hours

Not interfere with safety equipment provided by the Service.

Practice emergency and evacuation procedures as outlined in the Emergency Management Plan.



Ensure the physical environment at the Service is safe, secure and free from hazards for children and all other users including that gates and doors are closed after entry/exit.

Understand that they have a Duty of Care towards all children attending the Service, not just children within their classroom.

Maintain a clean environment daily, and removing tripping/slipping hazards as soon as these become apparent.

Implement and review this procedure in consultation with the Service, Nominated leadership team, employees, contractors and parents/guardians.

Complete all safety checklists including daily outdoor checklists and report any unresolved hazards.

Ensure storage areas are kept clean, tidy and organised with walkways and floor areas free from obstacles.

Use lockers provided to store bags and personal belongings so that these are not taken into the children's areas including store rooms.

Be responsible for taking designated breaks at suitable times to ensure personal health and wellbeing.

Ensure that any plants within the outdoor environment or classroom have been checked to ensure they are not toxic. If the plant or part of the plant is found to be mildly toxic a decision will be made about the plants suitability for use within the environment by undertaking a risk assessment. If the plant is in the juniors section then the plant must be deemed non-toxic.

Manual handling

Use adult sized chairs with good back support instead of squatting or bending for interaction with children and where possible kneel rather than bend.

Use an adult sized feed chair for feeding infants or sit in a low chair with good back support at child level.

Use drop sides on cots rather than lifting children over the sides of the cots which places a strain on your body.

Minimise lifting of children by having steps/foot stools/ladders in areas where lifting of children is likely to be needed, such as nappy change rooms.

Carry children only when necessary in the correct way - with one arm under the child's buttocks and the other arm supporting the child's back. At the same time hold the child facing you, as



close to your body as possible. Try to avoid carrying a child on your hip because this will strain your back.

Be careful to lift with a balanced and comfortable posture when lifting awkward loads.

Minimise the need to reach above shoulder level and use a step ladder.

Avoid extended reaching forward e.g. leaning into low equipment boxes. Share the load with another person if the equipment is heavy, long or awkward.

Ask for help and organise a team lift when sliding, pulling or pushing equipment. Lift furniture using at least two or more people.

Use equipment and furniture that can be moved around safely, easily and as comfortably as possible.

Place lighter items on higher shelves.

Where possible arrange children's activities and sleep around furniture and equipment to minimise manual handling.

Children's learning environments & equipment set-up guidelines

Check all new equipment meets Australian Safety Standards, is added to the classrooms equipment and resources register and if there are any potential risks associated with the equipment conduct a risk assessment.

Apply a risk assessment approach to the setting up of moveable play equipment suitable to the ages and developmental stages of the children using the equipment.

Carefully introduce children to new toys and pieces of equipment and teach them how to use and care for the materials appropriately.

Provide an environment that encourages children to take and manage considered risks with appropriate support and guidance.

Conduct routine inspections of loose fill soft fall as part of the daily checklist. Ensure levels are maintained at a depth of 300mm under outdoor climbing and play equipment that is higher than 600mm.

Ensure soft fall mats are placed around climbing equipment this is higher than 600mm where no loose fill exists.

Ensure a minimum impact area of 1500mm is covered/filled with a compliant impact surfacing for moveable play equipment items that measure more than 600mm from ground level.



Ensure that the recommended height of free fall for supervised early childhood services does not exceed the maximum allowable heights outlined in the table below:

| | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Standing | Foot support to surface below | 1.8m |
| Sitting | Seat to surface below | 1.8m |
| Hanging | Hand support to surface below | 1.8m |
| Climbing | Maximum hand support minus 1m to the surface below | Maximum foot support 1.8m Maximum hand support 2.8m |
| Moveable Play Equipment | Foot support to surface below | 1.5m |

Ensure that the free fall height for moveable play equipment does not exceed 1500mm as outlined above.

Families and Visitors will:

Be familiar with this procedure and co-operate with reasonable OHS rules implemented by the Service.

Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and not act recklessly and/or place the health and safety of other adults or children at the Service at risk.

Report health and safety issues and participate in consultation in health and safety issues affecting them.

See also:

1. Health and Safety Policy
2. Sun Protection Procedure
3. Water Safety Procedure
4. Hygiene Procedure
5. Clothing Procedure
6. Child Safe Policy/Procedure
7. Child Safe Code of Conduct
8. Behavioral Code of Conduct Procedure
9. Emergency and Evacuation Policy
10. Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
11. Volunteers and Students Procedure

Definitions

Hazard: An element with the potential to cause death, injury, illness or disease.



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.

Hazard identification: A process that involves identifying all foreseeable hazards in the workplace and understanding the possible harm that each hazard may cause.

Hazard management: A structured process of hazard identification, risk assessment and control, aimed at providing safe and healthy conditions.

Harm: Includes death, or injury, illness (physical or psychological) or disease that may be suffered by a person as a consequence of exposure to a hazard.

Material safety data sheet: Provides employees and emergency personnel with safety procedures for working with toxic or dangerous materials. The data sheet includes all relevant information about the material such as physical properties (e.g. melting/boiling point, toxicity and reactivity), health effects, first aid requirements and safe handling procedures (e.g. personal protective equipment, safe storage/disposal and management of spills).

OHS committee: A committee that facilitates co-operation between an employer and employees in instigating, developing and carrying out measures designed to ensure the health and safety of employees in the workplace.

Risk: The chance (likelihood) that a hazard will cause harm to individuals.

Risk assessment: A process for developing knowledge/understanding about hazards and risks so that sound decisions can be made about the control of hazards. Risk assessments assist in determining:

- what levels of harm can occur
- how harm can occur
- the likelihood that harm will occur

Risk control: A measure, work process or system that eliminates an OHS hazard or risk, or if this is not possible, reduces the risk so far as is reasonably practicable.

Moveable play equipment: is defined as a range of purpose-made manufactured equipment used in supervised settings (e.g. SECS, schools, etc.) that is not permanently fixed in place and can be adjusted and moved by educators on a regular basis to vary play opportunities.

The free height of fall: of any component of playground equipment is defined as the greatest vertical distance from the point of clearly intended body support to the impact area below.

Further information:

KPV: OHS in Early Childhood Services: www.ohsinecservices.org.au

WorkSafe Victoria: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

Play Australia: A guide to the Assessment of Risks and Benefits in Play Provision and Australian Standards 4685:2014, 2015