

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

PRINCIPLE

'Emergency' refers to all situations or events posing an imminent or severe risk to those present at an education and care service premises¹

Greater Shepparton City Council Children's Services will ensure in the event of an emergency or evacuation situation, the safety and wellbeing of all children, families, staff and visitors to the services is paramount.

GUIDELINES

Children' Services will ensure:

1. Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children at the service from harm and hazards that are likely to cause injury (*Education and Care Services Law – section 167*) (*Children's Services Act 1996 – 107 OCC only*).
2. All staff, educators, students and volunteers are familiar with the emergency information provided during the service induction and their role and responsibility during emergency and evacuation situations.
3. The emergency and evacuation procedures must set out:
 - (a) Instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency; and
 - (b) an emergency and evacuation floor plan (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 97(1)*) (*Children's Services Regulation 2020 – 66(1)*) OCC only).
4. The emergency and evacuation procedures are to be rehearsed every 10 – 12 weeks by the staff members, educators, volunteers, visitors and children present at the service on the day of the rehearsal and the responsible person in relation to the service who is present at the time of the rehearsal (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 97(3)(a)(ab)*) (*Children's Services Regulation 2020 66(3)(a) OCC only*).
5. The rehearsals of the emergency and evacuation procedures are documented on the *Emergency or Lockdown Report Checklist (Appendix 6.1)* (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 97(3)(b)*)(*Children's Services Regulations 2020 – 66(3)(b) OCC only*) and a copy is to be provided to Early Years Administration. Families are to be informed of the rehearsal.
6. Services participate in emergency procedures that reflect the type of emergency situations that they may be potentially faced with, for example natural disaster-bush fire, flood, severe storm; bomb threat, and for multiple emergency evacuation points/events, ie car park, side gate, back fence.
7. A copy of the emergency and evacuation floor plan and instructions are displayed in a prominent position near each exit at the service (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 97(4)*). In

¹ACECQA Guide to the National Quality framework –Operational Requirements

the case of an emergency situation, educators/staff are to follow the instructions as outlined and the direction from emergency services.

8. Services have an emergency kit for the use in the situation of implementing evacuation and lockdown procedures. Items to include in the emergency kit are outlined in the *Children's Services Emergency Kit Checklist. (Appendix 6.2)*
9. Staff members have ready access to an operating telephone or other similar means of communication to enable immediate communication to and from parents and emergency services (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 98*)(*Children's Services Regulations 2020 - 67 OCC only*).
10. Staff members have ready access to emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers and fire blankets and are aware of how to use them if required.
11. Emergency equipment is tested within the timeframes recommended by recognised authorities.
12. *Children's Services Emergency Contact Numbers (Appendix 6.3)* are displayed prominently near phones within the service.
13. A current, portable list of children's emergency contacts can be accessed by staff in case of emergencies and/or evacuations is provided.
14. An attendance record is maintained to account for all children attending the service (*Education and Care Services Regulation 158(1)(c)*).
15. A record is kept of all staff and visitors to the service, including time of arrival and departure to ensure all staff, visitors, volunteers, students on placement and others attending the service are accounted for in the event of an evacuation.
16. All staff, visitors, volunteers and students on placement understand the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.
17. The Emergency Management Plan (EMP) is reviewed annually and a copy as well as this policy is available for inspection at the service premises at all times that the service is educating and caring for children (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 171*)(*Children's Services Regulations 2020 – 112-115*) *OCC only*).
18. For the purposes of preparing the emergency and evacuation procedures a risk assessment is conducted to identify potential emergencies that are relevant to the service and is included in the Emergency Management Plan (EMP) (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 97(2)*).
19. In the event of an emergency situation, evacuation or lockdown during operating hours at a service, Early Years Services Management is notified as soon as practicable, an *Emergency or Lockdown Report Checklist (Appendix 6.1)* is completed and provided to Council and an *OHS Incident Report* is to be lodged online electronically to Council.
20. The Regulatory Authority is notified within 24 hours of becoming aware of a serious incident that has occurred at the service, such as any emergency for which emergency services attended (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 12(1)(d); 176(2)(a)*) (*Education and Care Services National Law – section 174(2)(a)*), via the NQAIT System at www.acecqa.gov.au
21. The Regulatory Authority is notified within 24 hours if the centre- based service is educating and caring for extra child/ren due to an emergency(*Education and Care Services National Regulation 175(2)(ca)*, *Education and Care Services Law Act – section 174(2)(c)*).

22. The Regulatory Authority is notified within 24 hours of any incident that requires the service to close, or reduce the number of children attending the service for a period of time ie a flood or a fire damage, while repairs are undertaken (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 175(2)(b), Education and Care Services National Law Act – section 174(2)(c)*).
23. The Regulatory Authority is notified within 7 days of any circumstances at the service that poses a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child attending a service (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 175(2)(c), Education and Care Services National Law section - 174(2)(c)*).
24. Debriefing and/or counseling for staff and educators affected/involved in an emergency is offered through the Employee Assistance Program the (EAP) or another external source if appropriate.
25. In the case of damage to the service, the building is inspected by Greater Shepparton City Council Building and Maintenance Department to ensure if it safe to resume normal service.
26. All staff, educators, students and volunteers are to be made aware of the emergency phrase – **'remind me to order the lolly bags'** to be used in an offender threat situation and follow (*Appendix 6.4 Children's Services Offender Threat Procedure*).
27. Services located in 'bushfire risk' areas –that are placed on the Department of Education and Training (DET) Bushfire At – Risk Register (BARR) or Category 4 (Grassfire), (Frank R Pullar Child Care Centre, Tallygaroopna Children's Centre, Katandra West Early Childhood Centre, Dookie Children's Centre only) are required to meet additional conditions that are imposed on their service approval as follows:
 - download the VICEmergency app and have accessible to maintain situational awareness, including determination of conditions such as **Catastrophic** days.
 - must ensure that on any day declared to be a '**catastrophic**' day for the region in which a service is located, that the service is closed and remains closed for the duration of the '**catastrophic**' day.
 - All warnings of potential and actual closure of facilities can be accessed at the following website:
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/Pages/bushfirerisk.aspx?Redirect=1>

Families will:

1. Ensure they complete the attendance record on delivery and collection of their child (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 158(1)(c(i))*).
2. Provide emergency contact details on their child's enrolment record and ensure that this is kept up to date (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 160(3)(b)(ii)(iii)*).

Related Policies

- Administration of First Aid
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Excursions
- Incident. Injury, Trauma and Illness Procedures
- Medical Conditions
- Providing a Child Safe Environment
- Safe Arrival of Children
- Student, Volunteers and Visitors
- Water Safety

National Quality Standards – 2.2.2

Education and Care Services National Regulations: 97; 98; 158(1)(c);160;168(2)(e),171,174, 175

Education and Care Services National Law – section 167, 174(2)(a)(c)

Children’s Services Regulations 2020- 66, 67, 112-115 (OCC only)

Children’s Services Law Act 1996 – 107, 174(2)(c) (OCC only)

Sources and Reference Tools

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Children’s Services Regulations 2020*
- *Children’s Services Law Act 1996*
- *Guide to the National Quality Framework ACECQA*
- *ACECQA – Emergency and Evacuation Policy Guidelines*
- *Managing Emergency Situations in Education and Care Services – PSC – National Alliance*
- *DET – Emergency Management Requirements*
- *Licensed Children’s Services*
- *OH&S Officer –Greater Shepparton City Council*
- *Country Fire Authority www.cfa.vic.gov.au*
- <https://www.vic.gov.au/managing-bushfire-grassfire-risks-early-childhood-services>

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Next review due: July 2025