

# INCIDENT, INJURY, TRAUMA & ILLNESS POLICY



## 1.0 PURPOSE

This policy will guide all to manage illness and prevent injury and the spread of infectious diseases and provide guidance of the required action to be taken in the event of an incident, injury, trauma, or illness occurring when a child is educated and cared for.

Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and Educators have a duty of care to respond to and manage illnesses, accidents, incidents, and trauma that may occur at the Service to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, educators, and visitors.

We aim to reduce the likelihood of incidents, illness, accidents, and trauma through implementing comprehensive risk management, effective hygiene practices and the ongoing professional development of all staff to respond quickly and effectively to any incident or accident.

We acknowledge that in early education and care services, illness and disease can spread easily from one child to another, even when implementing the recommended hygiene and infection control practices. Our Service aims to minimise illnesses by adhering to all recommended guidelines from relevant government authorities regarding the prevention of infectious diseases and adhere to exclusion periods recommended by public health units.

When groups of children play together and are in new surroundings accidents and illnesses may occur. Our Service is committed to effectively manage our physical environment to allow children to experience challenging situations whilst preventing serious injuries.

In the event of an incident, injury, trauma, or illness all staff will implement the guidelines set out in this policy to adhere to National Law and Regulations and inform the regulatory authority as required.

## 2.0 SCOPE

This Policy applies to children, families, educators, staff, Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, and visitors of the Service.

## 3.0 PRINCIPLES

### Best Practice

Our Service is committed to implementing best practice recommendations provided by the NSW Department of Education and Communities, NSW Health and Safe Work Australia.

### Risk Management

Our Service implements risk management planning to identify any risks and hazards to our learning environment and practices. Where possible, we have eliminated or minimised these risks as is reasonably practicable. New risk assessments are always being implemented and some are being reviewed.

## Continuous Improvement

We encourage regular and ongoing feedback from staff, children, families and the community in relation to our incident, injury, trauma and illness procedures and responses.

### 4.0 NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.
2.2.3	Child Protection	Management, educators, and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS	
Sec.165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Sec. 174(2)(a)	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority
Sec.176(2)(a)	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
85	Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma, and illness
87	Incident, injury, trauma, and illness record
88	Infectious diseases
89	First aid kits
93	Administration of medication
95	Procedure for administration of medication
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
103	Premises, furniture, and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
104	Fencing
117	Glass
161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care Service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
183	Storage of records and other documents

### 5.0 DEFINITIONS

WORD/TERM	DEFINITION
Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor	The Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor is the person who is in charge of the Service.

Medical Management Plan	A document completed by the parent/guardian in consultation with their medical practitioner and provided to the Service for the management of the child's medical needs.
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## 6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Management/Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person and Educators will ensure:

- Service policies and procedures are always adhered to.
- Each child's enrolment records include authorisations by a parent or person named in the record for the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or Educator to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital, or ambulance service and if required, transportation by an ambulance service.
- Parents or guardians are notified as soon as practicable and no later than 24 hours of the illness, accident, or trauma occurring via the OWNA app.
- An *Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Record* is completed via OWNA accurately and in a timely manner as soon after the event as possible (within 24 hours as per regulations) and sent to families via OWNA app.
- Parents are advised to keep the child home until they are feeling well, and they have not had any symptoms for at least 24-48 hours (depending upon the illness and exclusion periods)
- All Educators are qualified in first aid at the Service.
- First aid kits are suitably equipped and checked monthly (see *First Aid Kit Checklist*).
- First aid kits are easily accessible when children are present at the Service and during excursions.
- First aid, emergency anaphylaxis management training, and asthma management training is current and updated as required.
- Adults or children who are ill are excluded for the appropriate period.
- Children are excluded from the Service if staff feel the child is too unwell to attend or is a risk to other children.
- Cold food is kept cold (below 5 °C) and hot food, hot (above 60°C) to discourage the growth of bacteria (the service does not keep hot food unless a cooking experience).
- If the incident, situation, or event presents imminent or severe risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of any person present at the Service, or if an ambulance was called in response to the emergency (not as a precaution) the regulatory authority will be notified within 24 hours of the incident via the NQAITS.
- Parents are notified of any infectious diseases circulating the Service within 24 hours of detection.
- Staff and children always practice appropriate hand hygiene and cough and sneezing etiquette.
- Appropriate cleaning practices are followed.
- Toys and equipment are cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis or immediately if a child who is unwell has mouthed or used these toys or resources.
- Additional cleaning will be implemented during any outbreak of an infectious illness or virus.
- All illnesses are documented in the Service *Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Record*.
- Information regarding the health and wellbeing of a child or staff member is not shared with others unless consent has been provided, in writing, or provided the disclosure is required or authorised by law under relevant state/territory legislation.

## Families will:

- Provide authorisation in the child's enrolment record for the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or Educator to seek medical treatment from a medical practitioner, hospital, dental or ambulance service and if required, transportation by ambulance service.
- Use the Service's OWNA app as this is how families will receive notifications.
- Provide up to date medical and contact information in case of an emergency.
- Provide emergency contact details and ensure details are kept up to date.
- Provide the Service with all relevant medical information, including Medicare and private health insurance.
- Provide a copy of their child's Medical Management Plans (asthma, anaphylaxis etc.) and update annually or whenever medication/medical needs change.
- Inform the Service via appropriate forms (as per relevant procedure) if the child is diagnosed with a medical condition throughout the year or if the child is taking regular medication prescribed by a doctor.
- Adhere to recommended periods of exclusion if their child has a virus or infectious illness.
- Complete documentation as requested by the Educator and/or Approved Provider- *Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness record* and acknowledge that they were made aware of the incident, injury, trauma, or illness via the OWNA app.
- Inform the Service if their child has an infectious disease or illness.
- Provide evidence as required from doctors or specialists that the child is fit to return to care if required.
- Provide written consent for educators to administer first aid and call an ambulance if required (as per enrolment record).
- Provide written consent for the child to be transported by an ambulance if required.
- Complete and acknowledge details in the *Administration of Medication Record* /Long term medication record if required.

## 7.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Our Service implements procedures as stated in the *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (Fifth Edition) developed by the Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council as part of our day-to-day operation of the Service.

We are guided by explicit decisions regarding exclusion periods and notification of any infectious disease by the *Australian Government- Department of Health* and local Public Health Units in NSW under the Public Health Act.

### **Identifying Signs and Symptoms of Illness**

Early Childhood Educators and Staff are not doctors and are unable to diagnose an illness or infectious disease. To ensure the symptoms are not infectious and to minimise the spread of an infection, medical advice may be required to ensure a safe and healthy environment.

Recommendations from the [Australian Health Protection Principal Committee](#) and Department of Health will be adhered to minimise risk where reasonably practicable.

During a pandemic, such as COVID-19, risk mitigation measures may be implemented within the Service to manage the spread of the virus. These measures may include but are not limited to the following:

- Exclusion of unwell staff, children, and visitors (symptoms may include fever, coughing, runny nose, mucus in the nose, sore throat, fatigue, or shortness of breath).

- Notifying vulnerable people within the workplace of the risks of the virus/illness including:
  - people with underlying medical needs;
  - children with diagnosed asthma or compromised immune systems; and/or
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over the age of 50 with chronic medical conditions.
- Adhering to Public Health Orders for mandated vaccination requirements for all early childhood education and care educators, staff and visitors.
- Restriction of the number of visitors entering the Service.
- Consideration of drop off and collection of children from designated points outside the Service or inside the Service.
- Consideration of social distancing at drop off and pick up times as people enter the Service.
- Reducing mixing of children by separating cohorts e.g., session planning.
- Enhanced personal hygiene for children, staff, and parents (including frequent handwashing).
- Full adherence to the NHMRC childcare cleaning guidelines and cleaning and disinfecting high touch surfaces at least twice daily, washing, and laundering play items and toys.
- Recommending influenza vaccination for children, staff, and parents.

Children who appear unwell or not themselves at the Service will be closely monitored and if any symptoms described below are noticed, or the child is not well enough to participate in normal activities, parents or an emergency contact person will be contacted to collect the child as soon as possible.

A child who is displaying symptoms of a contagious illness or virus (vomiting, diarrhoea, fever) will be moved away from the rest of the group and supervised until he/she is collected by a parent or emergency contact person.

**Symptoms indicating illness may include:**

- behaviour that is unusual for the individual child;
- elevated temperature or fevers;
- loose bowels;
- faeces that are grey, pale or contains blood;
- vomiting;
- discharge from the eye or ear;
- discharge from the nose;
- skin that displays rashes, blisters, spots, crusty or weeping sores;
- loss of appetite;
- dark urine;
- headaches;
- stiff muscles or joint pain;
- continuous scratching of scalp or skin;
- difficulty in swallowing or complaining of a sore throat;
- persistent, prolonged, or severe coughing;
- difficulty breathing; and/or
- a stiff neck or sensitivity to light.

As per our Department guidelines, we reserve the right to refuse a child into care if they:

- Are unwell and unable to participate in normal activities or require additional attention.
- Have had a temperature/fever or vomiting in the last 24 hours.
- Have had diarrhoea in the last 48 hours.
- Have been given medication for a temperature prior to arriving at the Service.
- Have started a course of anti-biotics in the last 24 hours.
- Have a contagious or infectious disease.
- Family has identified child is receiving medication for a medical condition and has not completed a Risk Minimisation Plan with the Service, an action plan or have medication to sign into the Service.

### **High Temperatures or Fevers**

Children get fevers or temperatures for all kinds of reasons. Most fevers and the illnesses that cause them last only a few days. However sometimes a fever will last much longer and might be the sign of an underlying chronic or long-term illness or disease.

Recognised authorities suggest a child's normal temperature will range between 36.0°C and 37.0°C, but this will often depend on the age of the child and the time of day.

Any child with a high fever or temperature reaching 38°C or higher will not be permitted to attend the Service until 24 hours after the temperature/fever has subsided. Our service has thermometers on hand for checking temperatures.

### **When a Child Develops a High Temperature or Fever at the Service**

If a child becomes ill whilst at the Service, Educators will respond to their individual symptoms of illness and provide comfort and care. Educators will closely monitor the child focusing on how the child looks and behaves and be alert to the possibility of vomiting, coughing or convulsions. The child will be cared for in an area that is separated from other children in the service to await pick up from their parent/carer.

Educators will notify parents when a child registers a temperature of 38°C or higher.

The child will need to be collected from the Service and will not be permitted back for a further 24 hours.

Emergency services will be contacted should the child have trouble breathing, becomes drowsy or unresponsive or suffers a convulsion lasting longer than five minutes.

Educators will complete an *Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness record* on OWINA and note down any other symptoms that may have developed along with the temperature (for example, a rash, vomiting, etc.). This record will be sent to families via the OWINA app to sign. At times this may be completed after the child has left the service, due to supervision responsibilities of educators.

### **Methods to Reduce a Child's Temperature or Fever**

- Encourage the child to drink plenty of water (small sips), unless there are reasons why the child is only allowed limited fluids.
- Remove excessive clothing (shoes, socks, jumpers, pants etc.). Educators will be mindful of cultural beliefs.
- Parents/guardian will be contacted by phone and informed of their child's temperature.

## **Dealing with Colds/Flu (Runny Nose)**

It is exceedingly difficult to distinguish between the symptoms of COVID-19, influenza, and a cold. If any child, employee, or visitor has any infectious or respiratory symptoms (such as sore throat, headache, fever, shortness of breath, muscle aches, cough, or runny nose) they are requested to stay at home until they are well again.

Colds are the most common cause of illness in children and adults. There are more than 200 types of viruses that can cause the common cold. Symptoms include a runny or blocked nose, sneezing and coughing, watery eyes, headache, a mild sore throat, and a slight fever.

Nasal discharge may start clear but can become thicker and turn yellow or green over a day or so. Up to a quarter of young children with a cold may have an ear infection as well, but this happens less often as the child grows older. Watch for any new or more severe symptoms—these may indicate other, more serious infections. Infants are protected from colds for about the first 6 months of life by antibodies from their mothers.

After this, infants and young children are very susceptible to colds because they are not immune, they have close contact with adults and other children, they cannot practice good personal hygiene, and their smaller nose and ear passages are easily blocked. It is not unusual for children to have five or more colds a year, and children in education and care services may have as many as 8–12 colds a year.

As children get older, and as they are exposed to greater numbers of children, they get fewer colds each year because of increased immunity. By 3 years of age, children who have been in group care since infancy have the same number of colds, or fewer, as children who are cared for only at home. Children can become distressed and lethargic when unwell. Discharge coming from a child's nose and coughing can lead to germs spreading to other children, educators, toys, and equipment.

Educators have the right to send children home if they appear unwell due to a cold, cold symptoms or general illness.

## **Diarrhoea and Vomiting (Gastroenteritis)**

Gastroenteritis (or 'gastro') is a general term for an illness of the digestive system. Typical symptoms include abdominal cramps, diarrhoea, and vomiting. In many cases, it does not need treatment, and symptoms disappear in a few days.

However, gastroenteritis can cause dehydration because of the large amount of fluid lost through vomiting and diarrhoea. Therefore, if a child does not receive enough fluids, he/she may require fluids intravenously. If a child has diarrhoea and/or vomiting whilst at the Service, Management will notify parents or an emergency contact to collect the child immediately. In the event of an outbreak of viral gastroenteritis, management will contact the local Public Health Unit (NSW) on 1300 066 055. [Public Health Unit- Local state and territory health departments.](#)

The Nominated Supervisor must document the number of cases, dates of onset, duration of symptoms. An outbreak is when two or more children or staff have a sudden onset of diarrhoea or vomiting in a 2day period. (NSW Government- Health 2019).

Children that have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting will be asked to stay away from the Service for 48 hours after symptoms have ceased to reduce infection transmission as symptoms can reappear after 24 hours in many instances.

An *Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness* record must be completed as per regulations, this will be completed on the OWNA app. Notifications for serious illnesses must be lodged with the Regulatory Authority and Public Health Unit.

**Infectious causes of gastroenteritis include:**

- Viruses such as rotavirus, adenoviruses, and norovirus.
- Bacteria such as Campylobacter, Salmonella and Shigella.
- Bacterial toxins such as staphylococcal toxins.
- Parasites such as Giardia and Cryptosporidium.

**Non-infectious causes of gastroenteritis include:**

- Medication such as antibiotics.
- Chemical exposure such as zinc poisoning.
- Introducing solid foods to a young child.
- Anxiety or emotional stress.

The exact cause of infectious diarrhoea can only be diagnosed by laboratory tests of faecal specimens. In mild, uncomplicated cases of diarrhoea, doctors do not routinely conduct faecal testing.

Children with diarrhoea who also vomit or refuse extra fluids should see a doctor. In severe cases, hospitalisation may be needed. The parent and doctor will need to know the details of the child's illness while the child was at the Service.

Children, educators, and staff with diarrhoea and/or vomiting will be excluded until the diarrhoea and/or vomiting has stopped for at least 48 hours.

Please note: If there is a gastroenteritis outbreak at the Service, children displaying the symptoms will be excluded from the Service until the diarrhoea and/or vomiting has stopped, and the family will be asked to get a medical clearance from their doctor.

**Preventing the Spread of Illness**

To reduce the transmission of infectious illness, our Service implements effective hygiene and infection control routines and procedures as per the *Australian Health Protection Principal Committee* guidelines.

If a child is unwell or displaying symptoms of a cold or flu virus, parents are requested to keep the child away from the Service. Infectious illnesses can be spread quickly from one person to another usually through respiratory droplets or from a child or person touching their own mouth or nose and then touching an object or surface. If a parent/carer is unwell or displaying symptoms of a cold or flu virus they are also requested to keep away from the service.

**Prevention Strategies**

Practising effective hygiene helps to minimise the risk of cross infection within our Service.

Signs and posters remind employees and visitors of the risks of infectious diseases (e.g. COVID-19), and the measures necessary to stop the spread. Hand sanitiser is provided on arrival for adults and children are asked to wash hands effectively with soap and water. Posters are provided throughout the Service for children to view also at their eye level.



Educators model good hygiene practices and remind children to cough or sneeze into their elbow or use a disposable tissue and wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after touching their mouth, eyes, or nose. This is part of the Preschool's curriculum.

Handwashing techniques are practised by all Educators and children routinely using soap and water before and after eating and when using the toilet and drying hands thoroughly with the hand dryer.

Paper towel is provided for those that are sensitive to the hand dryer.

After wiping a child's nose with a tissue, educators will dispose the tissue in a plastic-lined bin and wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water and dry using paper towel.

All surfaces including pillows, cushions and couches used by a child who is unwell, will be cleaned with disinfect spray.

Parents, families, and visitors are requested to wash their hands upon arrival and departure at the Service or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. (Note: alcohol-based sanitizers must be kept out of reach of children and used only with adult supervision.) Again, in unwell parents/carers are not permitted into the Centre.

### **Parent/Family Notification**

#### **COVID-19**

Information regarding management of COVID-19 is in our *COVID-19 Management Policy*.

#### **Other Infectious Illness- [gastroenteritis, whooping cough etc.]**

Parents will be notified of any outbreak of an infectious illness (e.g. Gastroenteritis) within the Service via our notice board, online app, or email to assist in reducing the spread of the illness.

Exclusion periods for illness and infectious diseases are provided to parents and families and included in our Information Handbook and *Infectious Disease Policy*.

#### **Serious Injury, Incident or Trauma**

In the event of any child, educator, staff, volunteer, or contractor having an accident at the Service, an Educator who has a First Aid Certificate will attend to the person immediately.

Adequate supervision will be provided to all children. It is a requirement of our Service that all staff hold updated level 2 first aid qualifications. This qualification is repeated every 12 months.

Any workplace incident, injury or trauma will be investigated, and records kept as per WHS legislation, regulations and guidelines.

### **Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record**

An *Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness* record contains details of any incident, injury, trauma, or illness that occurs while the child is being educated and cared for at the Service. Our Service is now completing these via the OWNA app and parent/s are required to sign off on this using their devices. The record will include:

- name and age of the child;
- circumstances leading to the incident, injury, illness;

- time and date the incident occurred, the injury was received, or the child was subjected to trauma;
- details of any illness which becomes apparent while the child is being cared for including any symptoms, time, and date of the onset of the illness;
- details of the action taken by the educator including any medication administered, first aid provided, or medical professionals contacted;
- details of any person who witnessed the incident, injury, or trauma;
- names of any person the educator notified or attempted to notify, and the time and date of this;
- signature of the person making the entry, and the time and date the record was made.

Our Service has moved to completing these records via the OWNA app, which sends a notification to families to sign and 'push' back to the service. This is then accepted by the Nominated Supervisor and kept on file in the OWNA app. Hence is it imperative families are using this app whilst their child attends the service.

Educators are required to complete documentation of any incident, injury or trauma that occurs when a child is being educated and cared for by the Service. This includes recording incidences of biting, scratching, dental or mouth injury.

Due to Confidentiality and Privacy laws, only the name of the child injured will be recorded on the *Incident, Injury, Trauma, or Illness Record*. Any other child/ren involved in the incident will not have their names recorded. If other children are injured or hurt, separate records will be completed for each child involved in the incident.

Parents/Authorised Nominee must acknowledge the details contained in the record, sign, and date the record within 24 hours. Our Service has found that by using the OWNA app this is less written paperwork to follow up on, as families can acknowledge receipt on their app.

All Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Records must be kept until the child/staff/visitor is 25 years of age. At our Service these are kept online in the OWNA app.

### **Definition of a Serious Incident**

Regulations require the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor to notify Regulatory Authorities within 24 hours of any serious incident at the Service through the [NQA IT System](#). A serious incident may include:

- a) The death of a child:
  - (i) while being educated and cared for by an Education and Care Service; or
  - (ii) following an incident while being educated and cared for by an Education and Care Service.
  
- b) Any incident involving significant injury or trauma to, or illness of, a child while being educated and cared for by an Education and Care Service, which:
  - (i) a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner; or
  - (ii) for which the child attended, or ought to have attended, a hospital. E.g., whooping cough, broken limb, and anaphylaxis reaction.
  
- c) Any incident or emergency where the attendance of emergency services at the Education and Care Service premises was sought, or ought to have been sought E.g., severe asthma attack, seizure, or anaphylaxis.

- d) Any circumstance where a child being educated and cared for by an Education and Care Service:
- (i) appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for; or
  - (ii) appears to have been taken or removed from the Education and Care Service premises in a manner that contravenes these regulations; or
  - (iii) is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the Education and Care Service premises or any part of the premises.

A serious incident MUST be documented in an *Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Record* as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident, with any evidence attached. This information is required to be logged onto ACECQA on the NQAITS app. The Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider will complete this, as per regulations.

### **Missing or Unaccounted for Child**

At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision is provided to ensure children are protected from harm or hazards. However, if a child is missing or unaccounted for, removed from the Service premises that breaches the National Regulations or is mistakenly locked in or locked out of any part of the Service, a serious incident notification must be made to the Regulatory Authority.

A child may only leave the Service in the care of a parent, an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record, or a person authorised by a parent or authorised nominee or because the child requires medical, hospital or ambulance care or another emergency.

Educators ensure that:

- the attendance record is regularly cross-checked to ensure all children signed into the service are accounted for.
- children are always supervised.
- visitors to the service are not left alone with children at any time.

Parent/s carers must notify staff on the OWNA app (their own device or the Preschool's iPad) of who is collecting the child should it be someone different. This person's name must be on the enrolment record, including name, address, telephone number and relationship to the child. If the Service does not have this information that the preschool child cannot be released to that person. If circumstances change throughout the day, then the parent/carer must notify the Service and give this information and not expect the Service to source the information.

Should an incident occur where a child is missing from the Service, Educators and the Nominated Supervisor will:

- attempt to locate the child immediately by conducting a thorough search of the premises (checking any areas that a child could be locked into by accident).
- cross check the attendance record to ensure the child has not been collected by an authorised person and signed out by another person.
- if the child is not located within a 10-minute period, emergency services will be contacted, and the Approved Provider will notify the parent/s or guardian.
- continue to search for the missing child until emergency services arrive whilst providing supervision for other children in care.
- provide information to Police such as: child's name, age, appearance, (provide a photograph), details of where the child was last sighted.

The Approved Provider is responsible for notifying the Regulatory Authority of a serious incident within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

### **Head Injuries**

It is common for children to bump their heads during everyday play, however it is difficult to determine whether the injury is serious or not. Therefore, any knock to the head is considered a *head injury* and families need to be notified as soon as possible to inform the family.

In the event of any head injury, the First Aid Officer (ECT, Nominated Supervisor, Assistant Educator) will assess the child, administer any urgent First Aid, and notify parents/guardians. Families may be asked to collect their child if this is deemed serious and interrupts that child's preschool play.

Emergency services will be contacted immediately on 000 if the child:

- has sustained a head injury involving high speeds or fallen from a height (play equipment);
- loses consciousness; and/or
- seems unwell or vomits several times after hitting their head.

### **Trauma**

Trauma is defined as the impact of an event or a series of events during which a child feels helpless and pushed beyond their ability to cope. There are a range of different events that might be traumatic to a child, including accidents, injuries, serious illness, natural disasters (bush fires), assault, and threats of violence, domestic violence, neglect or abuse and war or terrorist attacks. Parental or cultural trauma can also have a traumatising effect on children. This definition firmly places trauma into a developmental context:

*“Trauma changes the way children understand their world, the people in it and where they belong.”*  
(Australian Childhood Foundation, 2010).

Trauma can disrupt the relationships a child has with their parents, educators and staff who care for them. It can transform children's language skills, physical and social development, and the ability to manage their emotions and behaviour.

Behavioural responses for pre-school aged children who have experienced trauma may include:

- new or increased clingy behaviour such as constantly following a parent, carer, or staff around;
- anxiety when separated from parents or carers;
- recent problems with skills like sleeping, eating, going to the toilet, and paying attention;
- shutting down and withdrawing from everyday experiences;
- difficulties enjoying activities;
- being jumpier or easily frightened;
- physical complaints with no known cause such as stomach pains and headaches; and/or
- blaming themselves and thinking the trauma was their fault.

Children who have experienced traumatic events often need help to adjust to the way they are feeling. When parents, educators and staff take the time to listen, talk, and play they may find children begin to say or show how they are feeling. Providing children with time and space lets them know you are available and care about them.

It is important for educators to be patient when dealing with a child who has experienced a traumatic event. It may take time to understand how to respond to a child's needs and new behaviours before parents, educators and staff are able to work out the best ways to support a child. It is imperative to realise that a child's behaviour may be a response to the traumatic event rather than just 'naughty' or 'difficult' behaviour.

Educators can assist children dealing with trauma by:

- observing the behaviours and expressed feelings of a child and documenting responses that were most helpful in these situations.
- creating a 'relaxation' space with familiar and comforting toys and objects children can use when they are having a challenging time.
- having quiet time such as reading a story about feelings together.
- trying several types of play that focus on expressing feelings (e.g., drawing, playing with play dough, dress-ups).
- helping children understand their feelings by using reflecting statements (e.g., 'you look sad/angry right now, I wonder if you need some help?').

There are several ways for parents, educators, and staff to reduce their own stress and maintain awareness, so they continue to be effective when offering support to children who have experienced traumatic events. Strategies to assist families, educators, and staff to cope with children's stress or trauma may include:

- Taking time to calm yourself when you have a strong emotional response. This may mean walking away from a situation for a few minutes or handing over to another educator or staff member if possible.
- Planning with a range of possibilities in case tricky situations occur.
- Remembering to find ways to look after yourself, even if it is hard to find time or you feel other things are more important. Taking time out helps adults be more available to children when they need support.
- Using supports available to you within your relationships (e.g., family, friends, colleagues).
- Identifying a supportive person to talk to about your experiences. This might be your family doctor or another health professional.
- Accessing support resources. E.g., BeYou, Emerging Minds.

*Living or working with traumatised children can be demanding so it is important for all Educators to be aware of their own responses and seek support from management when required.*

## **Resources**

[BeYou Bushfire resource](#)

[Emerging Minds Community Trauma Toolkit](#)

[Fever in children- \(health direct.gov.au\)](#)

[Head Injury and concussion](#)

NSW Health [Gastro Pack NSW Health](#)

Staying Healthy: *Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*

[Recommended exclusion periods- Poster](#)

[Minimum periods for exclusion from childcare services \(Victoria\)](#)

## 8.0 REFERENCES

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## 9.0 RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Administration of Medication Policy	Enrolment & Orientation Policy
Anaphylaxis Management Policy	Family Participation and Communication Policy
Asthma Management Policy	Hygiene Policy
Child Safe Environment Policy	Immunisation Policy
Infectious Disease Policy	Medical Conditions Policy
COVID-19 Policy	Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy
Diabetes Management Policy	Confidentiality Policy

## 10.0 REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Narelle Blachford	Director/Nominated Supervisor
POLICY REVIEW DETAILS		NEXT REVIEW DATE JUNE 2024
June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy is reviewed to reflect Centre's use of OWNA app for parents to be informed or accidents etc as it is regulation that families sign off on this within 24 hours of being notified.</li> </ul>	
POLICY REVIEW HISTORY	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A</li> </ul>	June 2022

# PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF A SERIOUS INCIDENT, ILLNESS, INJURY OR TRAUMA

If an incident or injury occurs whilst a child is receiving education and care at our Service, the Nominated Supervisor or Educator holding approved first aid training will administer First Aid and seek hospital transportation and treatment if required.

## ***Incident or Injury Management***

The Nominated Supervisor/First Aid Officer/Educator will:

1. Ensure the safety of themselves and others- DRSABCD (Danger, Response, Send for Help, Airway, Breathing, CPR, Defibrillation).
2. Attend to the child immediately.
3. Assess whether further medical attention is required (hospital or other medical assistance).
4. Contact Emergency Services for an ambulance on 000.
5. Administer First Aid procedures.
6. Ensure injured child is reassured.
7. If the illness or incident involves asthma or anaphylaxis or medical condition, refer to the child's Medical Management Plan or Action Plan or Risk Minimisation plan.
8. Notify parent/s or nominated authorised person to inform them an ambulance has been called and request for them to either:
  - Come immediately to the Service premises or place of incident/injury; or
  - Meet the ambulance at the hospital.
9. Remain with the child until the ambulance arrives.
10. Ensure any medical conditions/history is readily available (e.g., Emergency Action Plan for Asthma or Anaphylaxis).

*Action Plans should provide guidance of first aid responses in an emergency as provided by the child's doctor and authorised by the child's parents.*

11. As soon as practicable, document details on *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record*.
12. Notify Regulatory Authority of any serious incident within 24 hours.

## ***Calling an Ambulance***

**Do not hesitate to contact an ambulance if you think emergency services are required.**

If a child displays any of the following symptoms or suffers any of the following, call 000:

- the child has experienced unconsciousness or an altered state of unconsciousness;
- is experiencing difficulty breathing for any reason;
- has difficulty breathing and has not responded to reliever inhaler medication (even if they are not diagnosed with Asthma);
- is showing signs of shock;
- is experiencing severe bleeding, or is vomiting blood;
- has an injury to their head, neck or back or could have broken bones;
- has an extremely high temperature, with or without a rash or has a temperature above 38°C for an infant under 3 months old.



Dial 000 and be prepared to answer the following:

- The address of where the ambulance is required and the closest cross street.
- What the problem is.
- How many people are injured.
- The child/person's age.
- The child/person's gender.
- If the child/person is conscious.
- If the child/person is breathing.

### ***Emergency Response Procedures***

Follow instructions as per the child's ASCIA Action Plans for children who are known to have asthma or allergies including anaphylaxis:

- Administer adrenaline autoinjector or reliever inhaler medication (Ventolin) as instructed.
- Contact an ambulance **immediately** for any incident involving anaphylaxis.
- Contact an ambulance **immediately** for asthma emergencies if the child cannot breathe normally after following their Action Plan for asthma and receiving reliever inhaler medication or if their breathing become worse.

### ***Head Injuries***

All head injuries will be considered as serious and families should be notified. If the educator/staff members suggests to a family they need to seek medical attention then the family will need to do this prior to returning. The child must be closely observed until the parent or guardian collects the child from the Educator, or they are transferred to hospital.

If the child has suffered a head injury and is unconscious:

- They should not be moved unless there is immediate danger.
- Call for an Ambulance immediately.
- Monitor the airway and breathing until the arrival of an ambulance.
- If breathing stops or they have no pulse, begin CPR immediately.