

Emergency and Evacuation Policy

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations,, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for emergency and evacuation (regulation 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (regulation 170).

Emergency and evacuation situations in early education and care services may arise for a variety of reasons, often suddenly and unexpectedly. It is vital that if an emergency arises, staff are confident to manage the situation effectively and efficiently, maintaining the safety and wellbeing of children, families and visitors.

REED acknowledges that many of their services are in locations prone to bushfire, flooding and cyclones. Each site will have specific procedures for dealing with these threats and communication with relevant authorities. Each service requires a site- specific risk assessment (regulation 97(2)) and site-specific evacuation plan (regulation 97(4))

Ensuring that Educators and children know what to do in an emergency situation requires vigilant planning and practice. Regularly practicing the drills for emergency situations also provides an opportunity to help support and build on children's coping mechanisms and resilience.

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety		
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.
Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership		
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service.

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012	
12(d)	Meaning of a serious incident- any emergency for which emergency services attended
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
98	Telephone or other communication equipment
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
136	First aid qualifications
168	Education and Care Services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures are to be followed

Related Policies

Acceptance and Refusal Authorisation Policy	Family Communication Policy
Administration of First Aid Policy	Health and Safety Policy
Arrival and Departure Policy	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
Bush Fire Policy	Lockdown Policy
Child Safe Environment Policy	Retention of Records Policy
	Supervision Policy

PURPOSE

REED has a duty of care to maintain the safety and wellbeing of each child, educator, and all persons using or visiting our Services during an emergency or evacuation situation. We are committed to identifying risks and potential hazards of emergency and evacuation situations by conducting thorough risk assessments on an annual basis and continually plan for further risk minimisation and improvement to our policy and procedures.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of REED Services.

IMPLEMENTATION

We define an emergency as an unplanned, sudden or unexpected event or situation that requires immediate action to prevent harm, injury or illness to persons or damage to the Service's environment. It is a risk to an individual's health and safety. It is important that Services define emergencies that are specific to their location and environment.

An emergency is any event, situation or event where there is an imminent or severe risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children at the service. (Guide to the NQF)

Circumstances under which an emergency evacuation will occur may include:

- Fire within the building or playground
- Fire in the surrounding area where the Service may be in danger
- Flood
- Cyclone, severe storm or dust storm or other natural weather event
- dangerous animal, insect or reptile
- Terrorist threat
- Violent unknown person
- Other circumstances may include:
 - gas explosion, traffic accident, or any event which could render the building unsafe (eg: earthquake).

To ensure compliance with National Regulations and National Law, our Services will ensure that:

- emergency and evacuation policies and procedures are available for inspection at the Service's premises at all times
- an annual risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that are relevant to the Service
- relevant stakeholders/authorities are consulted for advice and guidance to improve risk mitigation strategies as part of our emergency and evacuation plan (police, fire, parents/families)
- consideration is made to evacuate infant/s and non-ambulant children evacuating the premises resulting in enhanced ratios
- emergency evacuation plans are displayed in prominent positions near each exit at the Service premises including both the indoor and outdoor learning areas
- emergency evacuation plans include a floor plan for ease of reference with clearly defined assembly points and clearly marked exit routes from all locations within the Service
- all exits have exit signs clearly visible
- there are no obstructions in hallways, stairways or emergency exits
- all educators, including casual/relief educators and staff members, are familiar with our *Emergency Evacuation Policy*, procedures and regulatory requirements
- new staff, volunteers and students are provided with information and training about our *Emergency Evacuation Policy* and procedures (including lockdown procedure) during induction
- all staff, visitors and students are aware of emergency evacuation points and assembly areas

- emergency evacuation rehearsals and lock downs (drills) will be practiced and reviewed at least *every three months* by the responsible person, all staff members, volunteers, and children present on the day.
- If the service has more than one emergency and evacuation procedure, all procedures must be rehearsed every three months.
- spontaneous rehearsals also take place during the year to assist in refining risk management procedures and evacuation procedures
- each time a planned or spontaneous emergency evacuation drill is performed it is to be timed and documented in the *Emergency Evacuation Rehearsal Record on 1Place*.
- after reflection, notes on any areas that need improving or revising are to be documented in the *Emergency Evacuation Rehearsal Record on 1Place*. Educators will discuss and implement strategies to make continuous improvement to procedures which will be documented in the Service's Staff Meeting minutes and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).
- in the event of limited educators (e.g. early morning or late afternoon), staff members are to work together to perform the duties as per the evacuation plan (the roster must include a Responsible Person being on the premises at all times to take responsibility and delegate duties). This scenario will be discussed and documented in the Service's Staff Meeting Minutes (WHS).
- children are provided with age-appropriate support and information before, during and after emergency and evacuation rehearsals (drills)
- all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in event of an emergency situation
- regular communication with families includes information about emergency and evacuation procedures
- families are informed when a rehearsal or drill has occurred
- each room has an *Emergency Evacuation Bag* located in a prominent position
- *Emergency Evacuation Bags* are regularly audited and restocked as required
- an up-to-date register of emergency telephone numbers for children is maintained. A copy of the current list will always be available in the *Emergency Evacuation Bag*
- portable First Aid Kits are readily available in case of an emergency evacuation
- at least one staff member or one Nominated Supervisor who holds current ACEQCA approved first aid qualifications, approved anaphylaxis management and emergency asthma management training is in attendance at all times
- Medical Management Plans for children are able to be accessed easily
- children's medication is collected during an evacuation
- extinguishers will be emptied, pressure tested, and refilled every five years
- all tests performed on emergency equipment and the date on which it was tested will be recorded on a label or metal tag attached to the unit. Certificates to verify testing will be filed.
- ensure smoke detectors are regularly tested and batteries replaced annually
- staff and educators have access to an operating telephone or other means of communication at all times (mobile phone)

- our emergency telephone list (located next to the telephones) includes the numbers for:
 - Police
 - Rural Fire Service
 - State Emergency Services (SES)

Emergency and Evacuation Procedure Guidelines

- the Team Leader will make the final call to whether to evacuate the premises or service goes into lockdown due to an emergency situation
- contact 000 for local emergencies- provide name, address and nearest cross street, reason for evacuation, phone contact number, number of children and adults evacuating
- guidance will be provided by the relevant emergency service (Fire service, SES, Police)
- move all children and visitors to identified evacuation/emergency assembly area as indicated on the *Emergency and Evacuation Floor Plan*
- collect Children's attendance records (*Evacuation Roll, Headcount & responsible Person sheet* and *Educator sign in & out sheet*, Emergency Evacuation Bag, Medical Management Plans and associated children's medication if safe to do so)
- collect First Aid Kit
- check daily attendance record and visitor record
- once children are safely evacuated, administer first aid if required
- remain calm and reassure children
- once emergency services arrive, contact parents/emergency contacts
- await instructions from relevant emergency services for re-entering premises or alternative evacuation procedure

Important:

Following the emergency evacuation, the Responsible Person will complete an *Emergency Evacuation Incident Report* and an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record*. The approved provider will make a notification of a serious incident to a regulatory authority (within 24 hours) through the [NQA IT System](#) when emergency services have attended an education and care service in response to an emergency, rather than as a precaution or for any other reason.

Dealing with Trauma

Emergencies and natural disasters are extremely stressful, and it is normal for children and adults to feel overwhelmed and distressed. People cope with trauma in many different ways. Children look to adults for reassurance, care and opportunities to share their feelings. It is important for educators to understand the impact of disasters and seek help when needed.

The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will support educators to provide information to parents and families following any emergency or natural disaster including:

- will the service be open in the days and weeks ahead?

- how to find alternative care and education
- how to contact services for support with dealing with trauma

Several organisations offer support for educators in these situations:

[Emerging Minds](#)

BeYou- [Trauma informed practice](#)

Preparing for an emergency

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment Resources

<https://www.dese.gov.au/child-care-package/ccp-resources-providers/help-emergency> [Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology](#) <http://www.bom.gov.au/>

Additional Resources - Western Australia

- Department of Communities – www.communities.wa.gov.au
- Department of Health WA – www.health.wa.gov.au
- FESA – Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia - www.fesa.wa.gov.au
- Health Direct - www.healthdirect.org.au
- Child Australia – www.childaustralia.org.au
- SESVA - State Emergency Service Volunteers Association - www.ses-wa.asn
- WA Police – www.police.wa.gov.au
- WorkSafe WA - www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/

Source

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2020). Help in an emergency Australian Government – Emergency Services: <http://www.australia.gov.au/information-and-services/public-safety-and-law/emergency-services> Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011).

Fire Protection Association Australia: www.fpaa.com.au/

Fire System Services: <http://www.firesys.com.au/Fire-Extinguisher-Service-and-Maintenance-pg14686.html>

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017). (amended 2023)

Guide to the National Quality Framework (2017). (Amended 2020).

NSW Rural Fire Service: www.rfs.com.au

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

Review

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
February 2024	Addition – service must practice all emergency evacuations if they have more than one	February 2025
September 2023	Addition of site-specific risk assessments and procedures Added 'lockdowns' to type of emergency response Updated Department for Communities Removed staff receiving training in emergency equipment	September 2024
June 2022	Added names of REED documents	July 2023
July 2021	Policy separated from lockdown policy, procedure guidelines modified and extended, additional section – Dealing with Trauma	June 2022
February 2020	Minor editing and reformatting, Sources updated	February 2021
January 2019	Policy developed by REED management	January 2020