

## **Henley Community Kindergarten's - Water Safety Policy**

*During 2016-17, 76% of toddler (children aged 0-4 years) drownings were from falls into water.*

### **Childhood drowning – the issue**

- The most common factor for childhood drowning is lack of active supervision
- A child can drown silently in as little as 5cm of water, in less than 20 seconds
- For every 1 child who drowns, 10 others are rescued from a near drowning incident.

### **Why young children are most at risk of drowning**

- They love to play with water and are naturally drawn to it
- They do not understand the danger
- They are top heavy (their head is large in comparison to their body) and they have a tendency to fall.

### **Water Hazards**

A water hazard is defined as anything that can hold 5cm of water and fit a child's nose and mouth.

Water hazards in children's learning environments include:

- sinks, basins, fish tanks, fishbowls, baths
- swimming pools, portable pools, spas
- water courses, ponds, sandpits, clam shells
- water troughs, containers and buckets used for play, animal drinking containers
- pooling water.

### **Managing Water Hazards**

Henley Community Kindergarten has this policy in place which outlines how we will manage water safety, including during waterbased activities based on a completed risk assessment. Risk assessments are required to be completed that identify and assess risks associated with any water hazards and water-based activities. Risk assessments will include matters such as:

- Active supervision – children must be actively supervised at all times when there is a risk of access to any water hazard. Active supervision includes:
  - direct and constant monitoring of children – within arm's length (within 1 to 2 metres)
  - careful and intentional positioning
  - scanning and moving around the environment
  - listening closely for sounds or the absence of noise
  - observing play and anticipating behaviour
  - higher adult to child ratios.
- Eliminating hazards – water must be emptied immediately after use and stored in a manner that prevents the vessel filling with water when not in use. All aspects of the environment must be designed to ensure adequate drainage of water to avoid pooling.
- Restricting access – compliant fencing or barrier. Refer to water safety in education and care settings (PDF 352 KB) fact sheet.

### **Water Courses**

- Water courses must be designed so that the depth of the water, at any point, is less than 300mm.
- Water courses are, where possible, to be directed into areas that have suitable drainage systems to avoid pooling such as sand and garden areas.

### **Water Troughs, Buckets and other Water Receptacles**

Water receptacles must be emptied immediately after use and stored upside down and out of children's reach. Access to kitchen areas must be restricted when unattended by adults.

This policy is informed by

Water safety In Education and Care Settings - Kidsafe (2018)

Preschool Water Safety Procedure - Department for Education (January 2022)

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Next due 27/09/2026