

# Work Health & Safety Policy (WHS)

Brunswick Crèche and Day Nursery recognises its moral and legal responsibility under Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation to provide a safe and healthy environment of each individual person impacted by the centre's operations.

The policy reflects the values Brunswick Crèche & Day Nursery places on its employees, children, parents/guardians, students/volunteers and visitors by endeavouring to protect the health, safety and welfare of all members of its community. The commitment to occupational health and safety we will evidenced by the integration of the commitment into all organizational activities.

Brunswick Crèche & Day Nursery will ensure that educators and students/volunteers are aware of their health and safety responsibility as employers/employees/students/volunteers of Brunswick crèche & Day Nursery. This includes identifying and eliminating or reducing all reasonably foreseeable hazards and providing appropriate training and instruction. It is understood that there is a shared legal responsibility, commitment and accountability by all persons to implement our centre's Occupational health and Safety Policy and Procedures.

Our educators, staff and volunteers will also ensure they all take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that their conduct does not adversely affect the health and safety of other people. Effective communication and consultation form a fundamental part of the management process, encouraging innovative means of reducing risks in the workplace.

## **Brunswick Crèche & Day Nursery specifically recognizes the need to ensure that:**

- Statutory requirements are fulfilled. In particular, the provisions of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, and that all relevant codes of practice are adopted and accepted as the minimum standard.
- Providing all employees with a safe and healthy working and learning environment
- Hazards and risks to health and safety are identified, assessed and, where they cannot be eliminated are controlled effectively.
- Measures to control hazards and risks to health and safety are monitored and evaluated regularly.
- Adequate instruction is given to employees is safe working procedures and that they are informed of any hazard to their well-being and health which may be known to be associated with the work in which they are involved.
- Develop appropriate WHS policy and programs
- Provide Training to enable all employees to work safely
- Conduct regular reviews and evaluations of the health and safety systems.
- Promoting dignity and respect within the Centre and take action to prevent and respond to bullying in its workplace.
- Implementing a strategic approach to health and safety by using measurable objectives to monitor performance
- Supporting and promoting health and wellbeing
- Providing return to work programs to facilitate safe and durable return to work for employees
- Meaningful consultation with employees regarding work health and safety issues
- Providing staff with appropriate information, training and guidance to facilitate a safe and productive work and learning environment
- Providing an effective and accessible safety management procedure for all employees to guide safe working and learning in all workplaces.
- Reporting incidents and accidents in accordance with National Regulations and Centre policy requirements to ensure action can be taken to manage the incident or accident, prevent further incident and accidents and provide support where required.
- Providing a program of continuous improvement through engaging with industry, new technology and reviewing and updating policies and procedures.



*The Nominated Supervisor and Educators will ensure:*

- Centre policies and procedures are being followed and adhered to
- Workplace incidents are reported and investigated to ascertain the circumstances of the incident or accident, and take appropriate action to prevent further incidents from occurring.
- Comply with any reasonable instruction or lawful direction, including wearing personal protective equipment supplied by the employer as required.
- Report any incidents and hazards, and participate in training and consultation with the support of management.
- That the health and safety of children, families and visitors of the Centre are not at risk of harm
- They observe, implement and fulfil the responsibilities under the current Work Health and Safety Act
- They take practical steps for their own health and safety and of others affected by their actions at work
- Work areas are safe and help reduce accidents to themselves and others
- Management and/or WHS Officer of any incidents and accidents in the work place as soon as practicable
- Correct record keeping procedures for incidents and accidents etc. Including the Quality Improvement Plan and WHS Reporting folder are followed
- To report any potential and actual hazards in the work place to the WHS officer
- Children's equipment is regularly checked
- Supervise children at all times
- Store all dangerous chemicals appropriately
- Keep children out of kitchen areas
- Ensure all power points have safety plugs
- Do not have hot drinks around children
- Shut and lock all gates behind you
- Clean up all spills immediately (to prevent slipping)
- Regular chemical compliance checks (MSDS and First Aid)
- Maintaining First Aid boxes
- Reviewing cleaning and disinfecting procedures
- Complete Centre audits regarding WHS and Workplace Safety
- Seek and provide information on training for staff to attend regarding workplace safety and manual handling
- Staff - responsibilities:
- Ensure that children, families and visitors to the Centre are not exposed to risk to their health or safety and are free from harm
- Follow the correct manual handling procedures
- Employees to inform Nominated Supervisor and/or WHS Officer of any incidents and accidents in the work place as soon as practicable
- Carry out all safety checklists that are implemented including but not limited to; playground, classrooms, cot room, bathrooms, kitchen and laundry

*Families and visitors are to:*

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety
- Report health and safety issues and participate in consultation in work health and safety affecting them
- Follow Centre policies and procedures in relation to work health and safety

*The Nominated Supervisor will appoint a Work Health and Safety Officer:*

- All staff will undergo an induction upon commencement of employment
- Educators and management will support the belief that prevention is better than cure



## Health and Safety Representatives

Our educators and staff will designate Health and Safety Representatives. If a request is made for a Health and Safety Representative, the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will:

- Initiate consultation with workers about the number of Health Safety Representatives required
- Give all educators and staff the chance to nominate a Health and Safety Representatives and to choose in order to determine if there is more than one contender.
- Notify workers of the outcome of the consultation as soon as possible.

The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor must keep a current list of all Health and Safety Representatives and display a copy at the workplace.

### A Health and Safety Representatives can:

- Inspect the workplace as directed by management
- Be present at an interview with a worker that the HSR represents (with their consent) and the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor or an inspector about health and safety issues
- Monitor compliance measures by the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor
- Enquire into any risk to the health or safety of workers at the Centre

### Our Centre will ensure Health and Safety Representatives are:

- Never prevented from carrying out any of their duties
- Able to give people assisting them access to the workplace
- Can take paid leave to attend to their health and safety duties
- Can take paid leave to attend an initial work health and safety course or annual refresher training. The centre will pay the course costs and reasonable expenses
- Can access any resources, facilities and assistance that they reasonable require to undertake their duties.

Health and Safety Representatives are elected for 12 months unless they leave the Centre, are disqualified or, resign. They are not personally liable for anything done, or not done, in good faith while carrying out their role.

## Policy Implementation

- The WHS Officer will ensure that current information on manual handling is available at the Centre and will explain the manual handling policy to all staff.
- The WHS Officer or other nominated person will ensure that all Team Members have been inducted and orientated to the Centre and complete all relevant documentation to indicate the understanding and training
- The WHS Officer will arrange appropriate training in manual handling for staff annually and will advise the nominated safety officer who has the responsibility, to ensure that Team Members on any outing also adhere to the best practice in manual handling.
- Management will ensure that, within budget limits, the safest aids and equipment will be provided.
- All equipment and devices will be well maintained and readily available to Team Members.
- Adequate seating will be provided at the Centre for Educators to sit with children at tables.
- Care will be taken when lifting children and where possible a child should be comforted by a Team Member in a seated position.
- Where developmentally appropriate, children should be encouraged to get on and off chairs and equipment by themselves.
- Staff Members will rotate manual handling tasks whenever possible. Lifting children onto change tables etc.
- The WHS Officer or other nominated person will identify manual handling hazards and will  confer with staff on ways to minimise the hazards
- Manual handling risks will be constantly monitored and procedures reviewed.



- Where special circumstances exist (such as pregnancy or a pre-existing back injury) which may restrict staff members' ability to lift children or move equipment, they should discuss the situation with the Director to ensure that there are no unsafe expectations of their capacity in relation to manual handling. If the Centre is not able to offer light duties, the Centre will require a Medical Clearance for all injuries or medical conditions.
- Where possible, kneel rather than bend down, in order to avoid neck and back problems.
- Carry children only when necessary. The correct way to carry a child is with one arm under the child's buttocks and the other 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 may strain your back.
- When lifting awkward loads be careful to lift with a balanced and comfortable posture.
- 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 if the equipment is heavy long or awkward.
- When sliding, pushing or pulling equipment, if the equipment is not easy to move, ask for help and organise team lift
- All manual handling accidents and injuries will be recorded. **Never twist while lifting**
- Move equipment when children are not around.
- Rearrange storage so that it is easier and safer to replace and remove items.
- Lift only within the limits of your strength.
- Make sure you can see where you are going when carrying equipment or children.
- Be extra careful when lifting a child with additional needs. **Avoid accidents with careful house keeping**
- The floors and other walking surfaces are uncluttered, even and non-slippery.
- The workplace is tidy.
- There is adequate space to perform each task.
- Equipment is maintained regularly.
- Lighting is adequate.
- Wet floor signs to be used.

### **Definitions:**

**Hazard:** A hazard is anything that has potential to cause injury, illness or disease to employees, children, parents/guardians, students/volunteers and visitors. A hazard can be related to a physical state or a work practice or procedure.

**Hazard Identification:** involves the process of identifying all of the foreseeable hazards in the workplace and understanding the potential harm that the hazards may cause

**Hazard Management:** describes a structured process of hazard identification, risk assessment and control aimed at providing safe and healthy conditions for all whilst on Brunswick Crèche & Day Nursery premises or whilst engaged in the centre's endorsed activities.

**Injury/Incident:** Is an Injury/incident at the workplace where a person was or could have been injured but does not meet the requirement of a serious injury/incident. This could include an Employee who suffers injury and is taken to casualty at a hospital; but is not admitted, providing the Employee does not have one of the serious/incident listed below.

**Serious Injury/Incident:** Serious injury or illness is a "notifiable incident". Serious injury or illness means a person requires:

- Medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance;
- Immediate treatment for:
  - The amputation of any part of the body
  - Anaphylaxis
  - A serious head injury



- A serious eye injury
- A serious burn
- The separation of skin from an underlying tissue (DE gloving or Scalping)
- Electric Shock
- A spinal injury
- The loss of a bodily function
- Serious lacerations

A serious illness includes any infection to which the carrying out of work is a significant contributing factor, for example an infection that can be linked to providing treatment to a person or coming into contact with human blood or body substances.

A dangerous incident is also notifiable under the legislation. Dangerous incidents include:

- An uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance
- An uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire
- An uncontrolled escape of gas or steam
- An uncontrolled escape of a pressurised substance
- The fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or thing
- The collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, any plant that is required to be authorised for use in accordance with the regulations
- The collapse or partial collapse of a building or structure
- The collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation
- The inrush of water, mud or gas in workings, in an underground excavation or tunnel

The approved provider or nominated supervisor must notify WorkCover by telephone or in writing (including by facsimile or email) as soon as possible after the injury, illness or incident. Records of the incident must be kept for at least 5 years from the date that the incident is notified. The approved provider/nominated supervisor must ensure the site where the incident occurred is left undisturbed as much as possible until an inspector arrives or as directed by WorkCover.

- **Risk:** Risk is the chance or the likelihood of injury, illness or disease arising from exposure to any hazard.
- **Risk Assessment:** Is a process for developing knowledge and understanding about hazards and risks so that sound decisions can be taken about the control of hazards. Risk assessments assists in determining;
  - What levels of harm can occur?
  - How harm can occur?
  - The likelihood that harm will occur?
- **Risk Control:** Is the process of implementing measures to reduce the risk associated with a hazard. It is important that any control measures does not introduce new hazards, and that the ongoing effectiveness of the control is monitored.
- **Evaluation:** In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purpose the committee will:
  - Consider feedback from educators, parents/guardians, students and volunteers regarding the policy and procedures are evaluated and if necessary revised following any incidents.
  - Evaluate the awareness of educators and other relevant people

### Duty of Care

A duty of care is the legal obligation to provide reasonable care while performing any acts or making any omissions that could foreseeably harm others.

The duty encompasses a wide range of matters, including (but not limited to):



- Provision of adequate supervision
- Ensuring grounds, premises and equipment are safe for children's use
- Implementing strategies to prevent bullying and
- Providing medical assistance (if competent to do so), or seeking assistance from a medically trained person to aid a child who is injured or becomes ill at the Centre

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will ensure all practical steps are taken to certify the health and safety of all educators, staff, volunteers, children, their families and any other people impacted by the Centre operations. This includes ascertaining and eliminating or decreasing all realistically foreseeable hazards and providing suitable training and instruction for employees to ensure health and safety. Educators, staff and volunteers will also take reasonable care for their own health and safety, ensuring their conduct does not adversely affect the health and safety of other people

### **Manual Handling**

All staff members are required to undertake Workplace Health and Safety Training that will continue to be updated to ensure safety.

Educators are at risk of work related ergonomic injuries, particularly back injuries, through carrying children, bending, reaching and not using adult sized furniture.

To prevent this, Educators are to be attentive to:

- Use adult height utilities and equipment, including sinks and change tables
- Use small chairs with good back support instead of squatting or bending for interaction with children
- Use an adult feed chair for feeding infants, or sit in a low chair with good back support at child level
- Use drop sides on cots
- Use beds that are light weight and stackable with washable mattresses
- Have shelving, filing cabinets and storage cupboards at a suitable height to avoid stretching to reach them
- Use child sized ladders for nappy changing
- Where possible kneel rather than bend to avoid back problems
- 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 if the equipment is heavy, long or awkward.
- Ask for help and organise a team lift when sliding, pulling or pushing equipment
- Use equipment and furniture that can be moved around safely, easily and as comfortable as possible
- Place lighter items higher on shelves
- Lift furniture using at least two or more people
- Where possible arrange children's activities, sleep around furniture, and equipment to minimise manual handling
- 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

**Correct Storage and Shelving Height** - To check the height at which it is safest for each individual to work, stand with feet together and hands by sides. The breast height range for handling loads is around waist level and the acceptable height for lifting is any point between the individual's wrist and shoulder.

### **How to lift safely**

- Place your feet in a stride position.
- Keep your breastbone as elevated as possible.
- Bend your knees.



- Brace your stomach muscles.
- Hold the object close to your center of gravity.
- Move your feet not your spine.
- Prepare to move in a forward-facing direction
- Ask for help when it is not possible to lift your own.
- Given that caring for children is physically demanding it is wise to do a warm-up exercises for three to five minutes before starting work. Muscles and tendons are more likely to be damaged when cold.

### Hazardous Materials

We strive to minimise the health and safety risks associated with the handling and storage of hazardous materials. We adopt a risk management strategy that enables practices that minimise the risk of harm, injury or illness caused by any hazardous material.

As far as is reasonably practical, our Centre will:

- Provide the least hazardous chemical, product or equipment for the task without jeopardising hygiene.
- Ensures that staff, contractors, students and visitors are protected from both short- and long-term health effects of hazardous substances and processes.
- Ensures all staff, contractors, visitors and students have access to Safety Data Sheets and adequate training on the safe use and storage of all hazardous substances prior to any exposure to those substances.
- Ensures that non-toxic plants are planted within the workplace and undertake regular garden and grounds maintenance to minimise the risk of toxic plants within the grounds and premises.

This policy was made with consideration of Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and Occupational, Health and Safety Regulations 2007.

**Source:** Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard, Occupational Health And Safety Act 2004, Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007, Safe Work Australia Legislative Fact Sheets First Aiders, Safe Work Australia First Aid in the Workplace Draft Code of Practice (Draft), Kindergarten Parents Victoria (KPV) - OHS

**Date Implemented:** 16/04/2012

**Review Completed:** 26/01/2017

**Schedule for Review:** 26/01/2018

#### National Quality Standard – NQS

#### Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety

**2.3.2** Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury

#### Education and Care Service National Regulations

**168** Education and care service must have policies and procedures

