

Adequate and safe furnishings and equipment are an essential component of quality early childhood care. Under National law, we have a responsibility to protect the health and safety of children enrolled at the centre. Whilst this is reflective in our health and safety policies, however nursery furniture and equipment require careful consideration to minimise risks to all those entering the Centre.

The centre defines 'Buildings' as the main structure of the child care centre building. This may include verandas, fences and sheds.

- The centre defines 'Furniture and Equipment' as all children's toys indoors and outdoors. All electrical appliances and office equipment, such as; computers, photocopiers. Any furniture with in the centre, such as, tables, chairs, and shelves
- It is understood that there is a shared legal responsibility and accountability between, and a commitment by, all persons to implement the centre's Maintenance of Buildings and Equipment Policy, procedures and practices
- The centre will consistently reflect on its environment and put in place a plan to ensure that the environment continuously reflects our ideology of providing an environment that is safe, stimulating and engaging for all who interact with it.
- The Educators in each room will complete an Indoor /Outdoor Risk Assessment on a daily basis to ensure the Maintenance of equipment.
- It is the responsibility of the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor to complete a Building Safety Checklist of the centre and its grounds bi-annually and ensure any works deemed necessary are done to Australian standards. The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will also ensure that the centre and its grounds comply with Local Government and BCA regulations in regards to fire ventilation, natural and artificial lighting and safety glass.
- Should the centre undertake major renovations, management plans will be put in place to ensure that the safety of educators, children, families and others at the centre is not compromised.

Purpose

Management and Educators have a responsibility and duty of care to ensure the building, furniture, grounds and equipment are safe and hygienic. We aim to ensure all furniture and equipment at the Centre has acceptable safety standards and age appropriate for the children.

Implementation

Our Centre understands the importance of children experiencing and learning about risk through safe and creative play. All children have the right to be safe. The provision of safe environments for children is essential to prevent injury and enable them to grow and develop. We will only use furniture and equipment that been made in accordance with Australian mandatory design standards and the safe baby code of practice which has been developed by Kidsafe Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia.

Management will ensure:

- A proactive process of risk management is implemented, and clear processes are in place for the identification of hazards, risk minimisation and other control measures
- Daily/weekly routine visual inspections are made to identify obvious hazards in surfacing, fixed and mobile equipment, moving parts, swings, ropes, chains, tyres, fences, sandpits
- Records are kept of inspections and maintenance of furniture, playgrounds and equipment
- Educators and staff are aware of their responsibility to identify hazards and potential risks, conduct safety checks of all equipment and furniture and abide by Work Health and Safety requirements
- Mandatory Australian Safety Standards are always adhered to when
 - Purchasing new equipment or furniture, in particular in relation to cots



- Installing equipment (for example: equipment footings, clustering equipment, free height fall, swings)
- National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations and licensing requirements that relate to the safety of children at the Centre are adhered to.
- The equipment and furniture used in providing education and care at the Centre is safe clean and in good repair
- There is sufficient furniture and developmentally appropriate equipment so each child can take part in the educational program depending on their interests, ages and abilities
- The age recommendation in relation to the age and developmental stage of the children using the furniture and equipment is adhered to
- Educators are aware of appropriate instructions for use and supervision for all equipment and furniture
- Furniture in the Centre is securely built so it will not collapse, is easy to clean, and non-toxic
- To implement recommendations from organisations, such as Kidsafe, on fall zones and suitable heights of furniture, equipment and playground equipment
- Entrapment hazards are identified and appropriate measures to reduce the risk of harm implemented. (It is easy for small fingers and limbs to get caught in gaps. Head and upper body entrapments can cause death by asphyxiation. Be aware that fingers can get caught in holes or openings between 5-12mm, limbs in gaps between 30-50mm and heads in gaps over 85mm.)
- All equipment and furniture is kept in a clean and hygienic state, particularly before and after food service
- They carefully consider all aspects regarding the use of furniture and equipment and how it suits the age and stage of the children's development
- All cupboards have safety locks and remain locked when not in use
- Regularly testing is conducted on locking devices to ensure they are functioning correctly
- The Regulatory Authority is notified of any serious incident involving serious injury or trauma to a child within 24 hours.

Educators will ensure:

- Provide effective supervision of children, including the supervision of infants at all times to minimise the risk of accidents and injuries that could result from the furniture and equipment within the learning indoor and outdoor learning environment and nursery
- Regularly check furniture and equipment for stability and wear and tear- (corners, surface- splinters, missing bike handle grips, faulty cleats in boards or ladders, heavy objects on climbing frames that destabilise the equipment)
- Keep records of daily/weekly inspection of indoor/outdoor equipment
- Keep an accurate record of any furniture or equipment that needs maintenance in the *Equipment and Maintenance Record* and ensure this is reported to management
- Ensure non-toxic, easy to clean surfaces will be sourced for all equipment
- Reflect on common accidents and incidents in the learning environment and implement an action plan to ensure the safety of children and minimise accidents at the Centre
- Provide a safe physical environment that allows children to play safely
- Remain up to date with health and safety changes within the early childhood sector by attending appropriate professional development
- Ensure the furnishings and equipment within the program support and stimulates children's development.

Nursery Furniture

- All equipment will comply with compulsory Australian safety standards- (AS/NZS 2172 for cots AS 4684 for highchairs)
- Locking devices and stability of cots and highchairs will be checked daily/weekly
- Inspections will be made to check bolts and nuts on cots to ensure they are maintained as per instructions supplied with the cot
- Nappy change facilities should be properly constructed benches and designed and located in an area that prevents unsupervised access by children
- The nursery will be free from small objects or items that can break and become a potential hazard



- Cots will be positioned away from heaters, power points, windows or curtain and blind cords
- Our Centre will always use furniture and equipment that is free of rough surfaces, sharp edges, points, projections and/or small pieces that can break off
- The use of unsafe equipment such as baby walkers will be avoided
- To reduce the risk of harm, collapsible furniture and furniture that presents possible entrapment hazards will not be used in the Nursery (e.g. toy boxes with heavy lids)
- Infants will never be left unattended at any time
- All infants will be safely secured in their highchair when eating
- Educators will ensure that the sides of cots are put up when occupied by children

Source: Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014). Australian Competition & Consumer Commission. (2013). Keeping baby safe – a guide to infant and nursery products: <https://www.productsafety.gov.au/publication/keeping-baby-safe-a-guide-to-infant-and-nursery-products>
 Australian Competition & Consumer Commission. (n.d.). Product safety Australia: Mandatory standards: <https://www.productsafety.gov.au/product-safety-laws/safety-standards-bans/mandatory-standards>
 Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2009) *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016). Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017). Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2020) Kidsafe NSW Inc. Home and community safety information sheets: <https://www.kidsafensw.org/information-sheets/home-and-community-safety/> Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

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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
Education and Care Service National Regulations		
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair	
105	Furniture, materials and equipment	
112	Nappy change facilities	
174	Time to notify certain circumstances to the Regulatory Authority	
176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority	

