

Our Centre is committed to the ongoing safety and wellbeing of children, staff, families and visitors. To achieve this, we will implement a clear plan to manage all emergency situations, including a plan for emergencies that may require our Centre to go into lockdown and ensure our educators and staff are well equipped with the knowledge and expertise to respond effectively when required. Children and staff will regularly rehearse our emergency procedures, including lockdown to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

## Purpose

We aim to minimise the risk of harm, ensuring the safety of children, educators, families, and visitors of the Centre in the event of a threatening situation.

## Implementation

We have set procedures to follow in the event of any emergency requiring evacuation and lock down. These procedures comply with regulatory requirements and are consistent with recommendations by recognised authorities. They are designed to ensure the precipitate, safe and calm evacuation of all children, staff, families and visitors.

Whilst many emergency situations will require staff and children to evacuate from the Centre, there are potential situations that will require the Centre to go into 'lockdown'.

Within early childhood centres there are three types of lockdown that may be required:

- **'External threat'** indicating that there is a potential threat outside that you wish to prevent from entering the building. For example:
  - Unidentified dangerous animal or insects.
- **'Shelter-in-place'** which generally will be required when there is a real or perceived threat to health or safety. For example:
  - Severe storms.
  - Extreme smoke from a local or distant bushfire.
  - Chemical or hazardous substance spill.
  - Gas leak / atmospheric hazardous substance.
  - Flood.
- **'Full lockdown'** for situations that involve serious threats such as:
  - Potentially dangerous unwanted or uninvited intruder.
  - Potentially dangerous person due to intoxication or substance abuse.
  - Receiving an emergency services warning about a reported incident or civil disturbance.

Lockdown means that all windows and external doors are locked, and where possible internal doors are locked, and blinds closed.

For a 'shelter-in-place' or 'external threat' lockdown children are able to participate in the usual experiences and activities: However, for a 'full lockdown' children and adults must be moved to a room/position that does not allow them to be viewed.

Where possible access should be maintained to a bathroom and enough space should be available for children to be comfortably involved in quiet activities. It is therefore vital that appropriate spaces have been identified and displayed on an Emergency Lockdown Procedure. This information can be displayed on the back of the Evacuation Plan, which can then be quickly taken from the wall when required. This act will ensure that in a situation involving unwanted visitors, or previous visitors that have now returned with malicious intent, that the plan is not visible or available.



*Management or Nominated Supervisor will:*

- Engage relevant stakeholders/authorities to improve risk mitigation strategies for lockdown situations as part of our Emergency Management Plan (police, fire, parents/families)
- Ensure capacity to lock internal doors
- Consider procedures for non-ambulant children and staff implications in the event of a lockdown
- Ensure new staff, volunteers and students are provided with information and training about lockdown procedures upon induction
- Ensure emergency evacuation plans and procedures are displayed in prominent positions near each exit and in the indoor and outdoor learning environments
- Nominate the person/people with authority to manage the lockdown
- Determine communication channels- ensure all educators and staff have access to an operating telephone or means of communication- consider use of communication apps for silent group communication among staff members
- Contact emergency services as soon as practicable- provide essential information to police depending on the type of lockdown- (eg: description of the intruder, threat, weapons)
- Develop an effective strategy for checking the attendance roll and communicating with children, educators, families, and visitors of the Centre
- Document roles and responsibilities of staff and educators
- Plan to maintain children's safety and wellbeing
- Ensure all children, staff, families, and visitors of the Centre remain inside
- Ensure lockdown drills are practiced to ensure all staff and children have the opportunity to participate
- Document emergency lockdown rehearsals including the responsible person who is present at the time of the rehearsal
- Ensure lockdown drills are reviewed and reflected upon each time they occur and are adequately documented including any improvements
- Communicate with families about lockdown procedures and drills
- Complete a serious incident notification to the regulatory authority within 24 hours when there has been an emergency that has posed a risk to the safety and wellbeing of the children

*In the Event of a Lockdown, Educators will:*

- Direct children to shelter in place indoors, where doors can be locked or barricaded securely
- Ensure all children are accounted for (check daily sign in app)
- Immediately lock doors and windows
- Close all blinds/curtains
- Ensure all children remain inside the indoor learning space (or are accompanied by an educator/staff member if going to the bathroom)
- Ensure children remain in a confined area, (or out of sight for a 'full lockdown' – see below) during the lockdown period
- Ensure children remain calm: except for 'full lockdown', arrange activities to engage them
- Remain in lockdown until the all-clear signal is given
- Ensure all families are notified of the incident as soon as practicable after the lockdown has ended

*Additionally, during a shelter-in-place lockdown, educators will:*

- Use any available linen to block gaps around doors or window to minimise the entry of smoke/hazardous chemicals.

*Additionally, during a full lockdown, educators will:*

- Implement lockdown procedure
- Alert staff using agreed signal for immediate lockdown
- Contact emergency services (000) for assistance
- Remove the evacuation plan from the walls of the Centre
- Move infants and children to a secure designated lockdown location



- Lock external doors, window and close blinds and turn off lights
- Clear any room/hallway that cannot be secured
- Silence televisions and radios/CD players
- Silence mobile devices such as phones
- Ensure all children remain low away from doors and windows
- Encourage all children to remain quiet: Have books ready for children to look at to assist with engaging them during the lockdown
- Ensure all children and persons in the room remain out of sight of external windows and glass doors, and internal viewing windows
- Ensure all families are notified of the incident as soon as practicable after the lockdown has ended
- Complete a serious incident notification to the regulatory authority within 24 hours when there has been an emergency that has posed a risk to the safety and wellbeing of the children
- Provide opportunities for debriefing and counselling to families and children and staff.

### Shelter-in-Place Procedures

The following shelter-in-place procedure will be considered when an event takes place outside of the children's centre and emergency services determine the safest course of action is to keep children and staff inside a designated building in the children's centre until the external event is handled.

If a shelter-in-place action is determined:

- Incident Controller activates the Incident Management Team.
- Move all children, staff and visitors to the pre-determined shelter-in-place area.
- Obtain emergency kit.
- Notify parents/families if the shelter-in-place is going to extend beyond the centres hours of operation.
- Seek support from the Manager, Operations and Emergency Management at the DEECD region.
- Notify the Department of incident, as set out in the Serious Incident and Complaints fact sheet.
- Emergency response procedures (specific emergencies)

### FIRE

- Report the outbreak of fire immediately to the Incident Controller (Chief Warden).
- Remain calm and activate the fire alarm.
- Phone **000** to notify the fire brigade.
- Extinguish the fire (**only if safe to do so**).
- If threat exists evacuate the room/s to the <insert assembly point/s>, closing all doors and windows.
- Check that all areas have been cleared and notify the Incident Controller.
- Check children, staff, visitors and contractors are accounted for.

### BUSHFIRES/GRASS FIRES

- Identify which buildings need to be evacuated in the case of a fire.
- Phone **000** to notify the Fire Brigade.
- If threat exists decide appropriate action e.g. move to shelter-in-place or evacuate the room/s, closing all doors and windows.
- Turn off power and gas.
- Check that all children, staff and visitors (including contractors) are accounted for.
- Listen to local radio or TV on battery-powered sets for bushfire/weather warnings and advice.
- Ensure staff/children do not hinder Emergency Services or put themselves at risk by going near damaged buildings or trees.
- Contact the region for advice and support, as appropriate.
- Direct all Media enquiries to DEECD Media Unit on 9637 2871.



## SEVERE WEATHER /STORMS AND FLOODING

- Store or secure loose items external to the building, such as outdoor furniture.
- Secure windows (close curtains & blinds) and external doors. If necessary, tape windows and glass entrances. Utilise boards and sandbags if required.
- Protect valuables and disconnect electrical equipment – cover and/or move this equipment away from windows.
- During a severe storm, remain in the building and keep away from windows. Restrict the use of telephone landlines to emergency calls only.
- After storm passes, evaluate the need to evacuate if uncontrolled fires, gas leaks, or structural damage has occurred as a result of the storm.
- Report to the Incident Controller (Chief Warden) regarding the status of children, staff and visitors safety.
- Direct all media enquiries to DEECD Media Unit on 9637 2871.

## PANDEMIC

- Be aware of DEECD Pandemic Incident Response Procedures
- Ensure basic hygiene measures are in place including the display of hygiene information.
- Provide convenient access to water and liquid soap and/or alcohol-based sanitiser.
- Educate staff and children about covering their cough to prevent the spread of germs.
- Stay alert and follow the instructions of DEECD and the Department of Health (including the Chief Health Officer).
- Direct all media enquiries to DEECD Media Unit on 9637 2871.
- Be prepared for multiple waves.

## BOMB/CHEMICAL THREAT

- If a bomb/chemical threat is received by telephone:
  - **Stay calm**
  - **Do not** hang up
  - Refer to the bomb threat checklist.
- If a bomb/chemical threat is received by mail:
  - avoid handling of the letter or envelope
  - place the letter in a clear bag or sleeve
  - inform the Police immediately.
- If a bomb/chemical threat is received electronically or through the centre's website:
  - Do not delete the message
  - Contact police immediately.
- Ensure doors are left open.
  - **Do not** touch any suspicious objects found.
  - If a suspicious object is found or if the threat specifically identified a given area, then evacuation may be considered.

## MAJOR EXTERNAL EMISSIONS/SPILL (includes gas leaks)

- Notify the Incident Controller (Chief Warden).
- Call the Fire Brigade by dialling 000.
- Turn off gas supply.
- If it's a gas leak onsite, notify your gas provider (number can be found on the emergency numbers and key contacts page).
- Evacuate staff, children, and visitors (including contractors) to Foletta Park, Glenlyon Rd. This may be an offsite location.
- Check staff, children and visitors are accounted for.



- Contact the region for advice and support, as appropriate.
- Direct all media enquiries to the DEECDs Media Unit on 9637 2871.
- Await 'all clear' or further advice before resuming normal children's centres activities.

#### INTERNAL EMISSION/SPILL (e.g. cleaner's storeroom)

- Move staff/children away from the spill to a safe area.
- If safe to do so, the spill can be cleaned up by staff. Personal Protective Equipment should be worn as per the requirements of the Material Safety Data Sheet and Safety Work Procedure/Practice (procedures including OHS Centre Policy).
- Contact the Fire Brigade if the nature of the emission/spill is unknown or it is unsafe to manage.
- Notify WorkSafe Victoria if required.

#### MEDICAL EMERGENCY

- Check for any threatening situation and remove or control it (if safe to do so).
- Remain with the casualty and provide appropriate support.
- Notify First Aid Officer.
- Notify the Incident Controller (Chief Warden).
- Notify the ambulance by dialling '000'.
- Designate someone to meet and direct the ambulance to the location of the casualty.
- Try not to leave the casualty alone unless emergency help arrives.
- Do not move the casualty unless exposed to a life threatening situation.

**Source:** ADT. (2019). Best practices for campus and school lockdown procedures: <https://www.adt.com/resources/school-lockdown-procedures> Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2020). Help in an emergency [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011). Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017). Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2018). (Amended 2020) Kearns, K. (2017). *The Business of Childcare* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Revised National Quality Standard. (2018) Victoria State Government Department of Education and Training (2018). *Responding to Intruder Threat Guidelines for Early Childhood Services and Schools*.

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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.
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 Service National Regulations		
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures	
98	Emergency and Evacuation procedures	
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures	
170	Policies and procedures are to be followed	



