LOCKDOWN POLICY

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for emergency and evacuation situations (Reg. 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (Reg.170) (ACECQA 2021).

Our Service is committed to the ongoing safety and wellbeing of children, staff, students, families and visitors. To achieve this, we will implement our Emergency Management Plan (EMP) which provides a clear plan to manage all emergency situations, including a plan for emergencies that may require our Service 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 different lockdown measures to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

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 that is child safe.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S. 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
S. 165A	Offence relating to children leaving the education and care service premises unauthorised
S. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
S. 174	Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
S. 216D	Regulatory Authority may close services because of emergency event [VIC] [commencing 2026]

S. 219A	Power of Regulatory Authority to close services because of emergency event
4	Definitions “multi-storey building” and “storey”
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
168	Education and Care Services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures are to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
175	Prescribed information to be notified to the Regulatory Authority
176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

RELATED POLICIES

Acceptance and Refusal Authorisation Policy Administration of First Aid Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Delivery of Children to and Collection from Education and Care Services Premises Emergency and Evacuation Policy	Family Communication Policy Health and Safety Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Record Keeping and Retention Policy Supervision Policy

PURPOSE

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

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service’s Emergency Management Plan (EMP) outlines emergency management arrangements. Within the EMP we have set procedures to follow in the event of any emergency requiring evacuation or lockdown. These procedures comply with regulatory requirements and are consistent with

recommendations by recognised authorities. They are designed to ensure an efficient, safe, and calm procedure for all children, staff, families, and visitors. Management will ensure all directions and instructions from emergency services, local authorities and the regulatory authority are followed in relation to the possible lockdown, lockout or lock in (shelter in place) of the Service.

DEFINITIONS

Within education and care services there are three types of lockdowns that may be required to be implemented in an emergency situation. During an emergency, it may be necessary to implement a combination of measures. Emergency and evacuation- Policy guidelines - ACECQA 2023

Lockdown: a security measure taken during an emergency to prevent people from **leaving or entering** a building or premises until the threat or risk has been resolved. This may be implemented when an external and immediate danger is identified, and children and staff should be kept safely inside the building. For example:

- 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

Lockout: a security measure taken during an emergency to prevent people from **entering** a building or premises until the threat or risk has been resolved. This may be implemented when an internal or immediate danger is identified, and it is determined that children and staff are to be **excluded** from the premises for their safety. The Service will evacuate children, staff, visitors and families to a pre-identified evacuation point as identified in the EMP. For example:

- internal fire or flood damage to the building
- chemical or hazardous substance spill or gas leak inside the building
- snake or dangerous animal inside the building

Lock in (Shelter in place): a security measure taken during an emergency to prevent people from **leaving** a building or premises until the threat or risk has been resolved. This may be implemented when an incident occurs outside the Service and emergency services determine the safest course of action is to keep children, educators and staff inside a designated building in the Service until it is safe to return to normal operation. For example:

- unidentified dangerous animal or insects
- natural disaster (severe storm)

- aggressive visitor or person within the community.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- plan to maintain children's safety and wellbeing at all times
- ensure obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met and
  understood by all educators and staff
- ensure the nominated supervisor, management, staff, and educators comply with this policy
- ensure new staff, volunteers and students are provided with information and training about lockdown procedures upon induction
- ensure the Service's Emergency Management Plan (EMP) is reviewed and updated at least annually
- engage relevant stakeholders/authorities to improve risk mitigation strategies for lockdown situations as part of the EMP (e.g. police, fire, parents/families)
- develop, and review annually, a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that may require the Service to go into lockdown, lock out or lock in emergency response
- review the risk assessment annually or after becoming aware of any circumstance that poses a risk to the safety and wellbeing of children attending the Service
- ensure capacity to lock internal doors
- consider procedures for infants and non-ambulant children and staffing arrangements in the event of a lockdown (especially for a multi-storey setting)
- ensure emergency evacuation floor plans and instructions/procedures are displayed in prominent positions near each exit and in the indoor and outdoor learning environments (Reg. 97(4))
- nominate the person/ persons with authority to manage the lockdown response
- 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 (WhatsApp, Messenger)
- determine how the different types of lockdown alert signals will be given
- contact emergency services as soon as practicable- provide essential information to police depending on the type of lockdown to be implemented (e.g. description of the intruder, threat, weapons)
- design a movement and wellbeing plan to follow if not in an indoor learning environment
- develop an effective strategy for checking the attendance roll and communicating with children, educators, families, and visitors of the Service
- document roles and responsibilities of staff and educators

- ensure lockdown rehearsals are practiced *every three months* at different times 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 rehearsals are reviewed and reflected upon each time they occur and are adequately documented including any improvements
- communicate with families about lockdown procedures and rehearsals
- submit a serious incident notification to the regulatory authority within 24 hours, via the NQA ITS when there has been an emergency that has posed a risk to the safety and wellbeing of the children
- refer to the *Emergency and Evacuation Policy* for steps to be followed when the Service needs to close in response to an emergency
- ensure the regulatory authority is notified via the NQA ITS if the Service is required to close for a period of time as a result of a local emergency
- ensure the Department of Education (CCS) is notified if the Service is required to close for a period of time as a result of a local emergency through the Provider Entry Point (PEP) or our third-party software within 24 hours.

IN THE EVENT OF A LOCKDOWN, MANAGEMENT AND EDUCATORS WILL:

- contact emergency services (000) for assistance
- alert staff using agreed signal for immediate lockdown
- move infants and children to a secure designated lockdown location where doors can be locked or barricaded securely (as per the EMP)
- ensure all children, educators, staff and visitors are accounted for (check daily sign in sheet/app, staff sign in/out, visitor register, head count)
- check the premises to ensure no one is left outside
- remove the evacuation plans from the walls of the Service once all staff and children are in the lockdown position if the threat is from an intruder only
- gather transportable first aid/emergency kit/medical management plans/medication (including emergency contact list for children)
- lock external doors, windows, close blinds and turn off lights. During a Lock Down staff will lock internal doors
- turn mobile phones onto silent/vibrate
- ensure children remain out of sight during the lockdown period
- ensure children remain calm with quiet activities to engage them

- ensure a telephone line is kept free such as a landline or service-issued mobile phone
- administer first aid if necessary
- divert families and returning groups from the Service if required
- continue to liaise with emergency services and other relevant agencies
- remain in lockdown until the all-clear signal is given by emergency services
- ensure all families are notified of the incident as soon as practicable after the lockdown has ended
- ensure a record of all actions/decisions and times is maintained
- complete a serious incident notification to the regulatory authority within 24 hours via the NQA ITS 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, children and staff.

DURING A LOCKOUT, MANAGEMENT AND EDUCATORS WILL:

- contact emergency services (000) for assistance
- decide which of the Service's pre-identified evacuation point/s is most appropriate to the emergency situation (as stated in the EMP)
- assemble children, educators, staff and visitors at the evacuation point if children and staff have already arrived at the Service
- if emergency situation occurs before usual operating hours of the Service, divert families from accessing the Service due to the emergency if possible (via app, email)
- follow the EMP, including *Emergency Evacuation Procedure*
- ensure all children, educators, staff and visitors are accounted for (check daily sign in sheet/app, staff sign in/out, visitor register, head count)
- check the premises to ensure no one is left inside
- lock external doors to prevent entry to the Service
- gather transportable first aid/emergency kit/medical management plans/medication (including emergency contact list for children)
- continue to liaise with emergency services and other relevant agencies
- confirm with emergency services when it is safe to return to the Service
- alert families that the emergency lock out has been resolved and children are able to return to the Service or be reunited with families
- ensure a record of all actions/decisions and times is maintained
- complete a serious incident notification to the regulatory authority within 24 hours via the NQA ITS 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, children and staff.

DURING A LOCK IN- SHELTER IN PLACE, MANAGEMENT AND EDUCATORS WILL:

- contact emergency services (000) for assistance if required
- move children, educators, staff and visitors to a pre-determined shelter-in place location (as indicated in the EMP) as quickly as possible, if safe to do so
- assist with moving infants, younger children and non-ambulant children to the designated area inside the service premises
- ensure all children, educators, staff and visitors are accounted for (check daily sign in sheet/app, staff sign in/out, visitor register, head count)
- gather transportable first aid/emergency kit/medical management plans/medication (including emergency contact list for children)
- lock external doors, windows and close blinds or curtains where possible and turn off lights. If required, staff will lock internal doors
- ensure a telephone line is kept free
- keep children away from windows if the emergency involves an extreme weather event
- use any available linen or towels to block gaps around doors or window to minimise the entry of smoke/hazardous chemicals
- continue to liaise with emergency services
- ensure the delegated educator/responsible person contacts families or emergency contacts to notify them of the emergency situation. If advised by emergency services, they will arrange for the child/ren's collection from the service
- ensure children remain in a confined area, or out of sight for a 'full lockdown'
- administer first aid if necessary
- implement the Service's *Emergency Management Plan* including *Emergency Evacuation Procedure* If advised by emergency services
- remain in 'lock in' until the all-clear signal is given by emergency services
- ensure a record of all actions/decisions and times is maintained
- complete a serious incident notification to the regulatory authority within 24 hours via the NQA ITS 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, children and staff

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Lockdown Policy* will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management, and notification of any change to policies will be

made to families within 14 days.

CHILDCARE CENTRE DESKTOP RESOURCES

Emergency Evacuation Record Emergency Evacuation Rehearsal Evaluation Emergency Lockdown Rehearsal Procedure and Guide	Emergency Management Plan (EMP) Lockdown Procedure Lockdown Rehearsal - Letter to Families

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). Policy and procedure guidelines *Emergency and evacuation guidelines.*

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*

Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. *Emergency Management*

Australian Government Department of Education. (2023). *Help in an emergency*

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW)

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010.

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2025)

NSW Department of Education. (2023). *Emergency Planning, Management, Response and Recovery*. Emergency Management Plan.

Victoria State Government Department of Education and Training (2018). *Responding to Intruder Threat Guidelines for Early Childhood Services and Schools.*

Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012 [for WA services only]

Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Regulations (WA) Act 2012

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	[NAME] Amy Flockhart	[POSITION] office admin	[DATE]24/06/2026
POLICY REVIEWED	FEBRUARY 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	FEBRUARY 2027
VERSION NUMBER	V13.02.26		
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy maintenance-minor edits- grammar and punctuation added • applicable amendments to National Law added • sources checked for currency and updated as required		

POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
FEBRUARY 2025	• annual policy maintenance • minor edits • sources updated as required sources checked for currency and repaired where required	FEBRUARY 2026