

1. Policy Statement

This policy aligns with the service's philosophy of providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where children's health, safety and wellbeing are paramount. The service is committed to protecting children from harm and hazards associated with water. Water-based activities will be planned, risk assessed, and supervised to ensure children can safely engage in meaningful learning experiences.

All reasonable precautions will be taken to:

- prevent drowning and water-related incidents
- ensure adequate supervision at all times
- identify and manage water hazards
- support children's awareness of water safety

2. Background

Water activities are a significant part of Australian life and provide children with opportunities to access a variety of activities for experience, learning and fun. Water poses a significant risk to children, with drowning being a leading cause of injury and death in Australia. Children can drown in a very small amount of water and in a short period of time. Water hazards may exist in both natural and artificial environments and require constant vigilance.

3. Legislative requirements

SECTION/REGULATION	DESCRIPTION
Section 2A	Paramount consideration- safety, rights and best interests of children
Section 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Section 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Regulation 25 (1) ©	Additional information about proposed education and care service premises
Regulation 101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
Regulation 115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
Regulation 116B	Inspection report
Regulation 168 (2) (a) (iii)	Education and care services must have policies and procedures on water safety, including safety during any water-based activities



Regulation 170	Policies and Procedures to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and Procedures to be kept available
Regulation 172	Notification of change to policies and procedures

4. Principles to inform our Policy

- The safety, health and wellbeing of children is our number one priority. All water-based activities will be adequately supervised and no child will be left unattended when in proximity to water.
- Water-based play is an important part of our children's healthy growth, learning, wellbeing and development. Our educators and other staff ensure that all precautions are employed to safeguard children during these experiences.
- Clear roles and responsibilities ensure that management, educators and other staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to water safety.
- We create opportunities for children to learn and develop. This includes incorporating water safety awareness into the educational program.

5. Key Terms

TERM	DEFINITION	Source
ACECQA - Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.	ACECQA.gov.au
Adequate Supervision	Means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation • knowing where children are at all times and monitoring their activities actively and diligently. 	Guide to the NQF (Operational Requirements- QA 2)
Approved first aid qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A qualification that includes training in the matters set out below, that relates to and is appropriate to children, and has 	National Regulations (Regulation 136)



	<p>been approved by ACECQA and published on the list of ACECQA's approved first aid qualifications and training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matters are likely to include: emergency life support and cardiopulmonary resuscitation; convulsions; poisoning; respiratory difficulties; management of severe bleeding; injury and basic wound care; and administration of an auto-immune adrenalin device. 	
Risk Assessment	A systematic process of evaluating the potential likelihood and consequences of risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking.	
Serious incident	<p>For the purposes of the definition of serious incident in section 5(1) of the Law, each of the following is prescribed as a serious incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the death of a child— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service; or ii. following an incident occurring while that child was being educated and cared for by an education and care service; b. any incident involving serious injury or trauma to a child occurring while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. which a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner; or ii. for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital; <p>Example: A broken limb.</p>	National Regulations (Regulation 12)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • c. any incident involving serious illness of a child occurring while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital; Example: Severe asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis reaction. • d. any emergency for which emergency services attended; • e. Any circumstance where a child being educated and cared for by an education and care service— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for; or ii. appears to have been taken or removed from the education and care service premises in a manner that contravenes these Regulations; or iii. is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the education and care service premises or any part of the premises. 	
Hazard	Situations or things that have the potential to harm a person.	
Water Hazard	<p>Any water body that poses a potential drowning risk to children and could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • large bodies of water, such as rivers, creeks, dams, ponds, swimming pools, jetted bathtubs (or jacuzzis), inground spas, above ground portable spas (or hot tubs) or any container with poor drainage that allows water to pool • smaller bodies of water, such as baths, nappy buckets and pet water containers. 	Guide to the NQF (Operational Requirements – QA7)



Body of Water	<p>The service recognises the following locations are bodies of water:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • swimming pools, wading pools • lakes, ponds, rivers, dams, creeks, • the ocean or sea • equipment used by the service that could contain 5cm or more of water and would allow a child to submerge both nose and mouth at the same time – including water course in Nature Play Area and front garden. 	
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6. Links to Other Policies

- Providing a child safe environment
- The administration of first aid
- Emergency and evacuation
- Excursions
- Incident, injury, trauma and illness

7. Induction and Training

The nominated supervisor will ensure that:

- All educators, staff and volunteers will be informed of this policy during induction
- Water Safety will be reviewed regularly at staff meetings
- Ongoing training and updates will be provided as required
- Casual and relief staff will be made aware of policy location and information

8. Policy Review

Last review: March 2026



**St Paul
Lutheran School**

St Paul Lutheran School- SPLASH

Water Safety Policy and Procedures

March 2026

Next review: March 2027

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Procedural Guidelines

1. Reference to Policy and Philosophy

This procedure aligns with SPLASH's philosophy of providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where children's health, safety and wellbeing are paramount. SPLASH recognises the value of water-based play and learning experiences and is committed to ensuring these are conducted safely through effective supervision, risk management and education.

The service will ensure that every precaution is taken so that children are able to enjoy water-based activities safely. Risk assessments will be carried out for programmed water-based activities and the outcomes will underpin the educator to child ratio for the activities.

2. Procedures

2.1 General Water Safety

- Water hazards are identified daily during environment checks
- All water containers are emptied immediately after use
- Water play is only conducted under direct supervision
- Children are never left unattended near water
- Educators maintain clear sightlines at all times

2.2 Child Safety

The service shall ensure the safety of children around bodies of water by:

- Undertaking a risk assessment that will determine the required educator to child ratio for the proposed activity.
- Ensuring there are educators present that have a current, approved first aid qualification including CPR.
- Demonstrating a preference for venues that provide additional supervision in the form of life guards.
- Ensuring educators are placed in positions that allow them to directly and actively supervise any child accessing a body of water.



- Avoiding any venue with a body of water where sufficient precautions cannot be taken to ensure the safety of children.

2.3 Supervision

The Regulations do not specify a specific educator to child ratio for activities where water is a feature. The number of educators present is to be determined by a risk assessment of the proposed activity. It must also be noted that in sections 165, 167 and 169 of the National Law there are clear statements about adequate supervision. The adequacy of supervision shall be determined by a range of factors that include:

- numbers, ages and abilities of the children
- number and positioning of educators
- each child's current activity
- areas where children are playing, in particular the visibility and accessibility of these areas- Educators are positioned to maintain the direct line of sight.
- risks in the environment and experiences provided to children
- educators' knowledge of each child and each group of children
- the experience, knowledge and skill of each educator.

2.4 Water Play

Before water play:

- Complete risk assessment
- Set up safe and controlled environment
- Brief children on safety expectations

During water play:

- Maintain constant supervision
- Limit water depth
- Monitor children's behaviour and safety

After water play:

- Empty all water containers immediately
- Store equipment safely
- Check environment for residual hazards

2.5 Managing water hazards

- Daily inspection of indoor and outdoor environments



- Immediate removal or control of hazards
- Secure or restrict access to all water sources
- Additional checks conducted after rain or weather events

2.6 Excursions involving water

- Conduct detailed risk assessment (Reg 101)
- Use venues with lifeguards where possible (swimming centres for example)
- Increase supervision levels and ratios
- Ensure all safety requirements are met before proceeding

2.7 Emergency Response

If a child is found in or near water, SPLASH staff will:

1. Remove child from water immediately
2. Call for assistance
3. Administer first aid/CPR if required
4. Call emergency services (000)
5. Notify Nominated Supervisor
6. Notify family as soon as possible

2.8 Documentation and Reporting

- All incidents are recorded in accordance with Regulation 87
- Serious incidents are reported to the Regulatory Authority within required timeframes
- Risk assessments and hazard checks are documented
- Records are securely stored

3 Roles and Responsibilities

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES
Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met • Keep a child safe environment • Ensure that there is adequate supervision provided given the ages and developmental needs of children undertaking water activities (including ratios)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure risk assessments are undertaken, and water hazards and risks associated with water based activities are taken into consideration; • Take reasonable steps to ensure that the policy and procedures are current, reviewed regularly, and communicated to educators, staff and stakeholders • Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures • Ensure copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers, and available for inspection • Notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or ○ significantly impact the service’s education and care of children or ○ significantly impact the family’s ability to utilise the service.
Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that there is adequate supervision provided given the ages and developmental needs of children undertaking water activities (including ratios) • Inform families about water safety practices at the service • Ensure first aid and CPR qualifications and requirements are met at all times • Ensure that at least one educator, staff member or nominated supervisor who holds a current approved first aid qualification is in attendance at all times that children are being educated and cared for by the service • Undertake risk assessments for excursions near water and for water-based activities • Take reasonable steps to ensure that the policy and procedures are current, reviewed regularly, and communicated to educators, staff and stakeholders • Take reasonable steps to inform and support educators and staff of their responsibilities in implementing the policy and procedures at all times • Guide and mentor educators and staff to be able to follow the policy and procedures.



<p>Educators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce water safety messages within the children’s education program • Make sure water hazards are managed as outlined in your procedure, e.g., water trough is emptied and packed away as soon as play has ended • Ensure buckets that contain liquids are not accessible to children empty, safely cover or make inaccessible to children all water containers when they are not in use, e.g., mop buckets, water troughs etc • Ensure water troughs or containers for water play will be supervised at all times and containers or troughs will be emptied after use • Inspecting indoor and outdoor environments for potential water hazards, particularly during and after wet weather.
<p>Families, Volunteers and Students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow educator direction and supervision requirements • Do not take responsibility for water supervision

4 Related Policies

- Providing a child safe environment
- Incident, injury, trauma or illness
- Excursions
- Emergency and evacuation
- Interactions with children.

5 Induction and Training

- All leaders, educators and staff will be informed of the Water Safety Policy and Procedure:
 - during induction and regularly in daily practice.
- All families will be informed of the Water Safety Policy and Procedure
 - During the enrolment process.
 - On the School’s website
- The provider and all staff involved in management of the service will be provided with training around sleep and rest which takes account of the Education & Care Law, National Regulations and the National Quality Standards.



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- Training and information sharing to assist managers, co-ordinators, educators and other staff to fulfil their roles effectively, will include reference the Water Safety Policy and Procedures.

6 Procedure Review

Last reviewed: March 2026

Date for next review: March 2027

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