EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION

QUALITY AREA 2 | ELAA VERSION 1.9

PURPOSE

This policy will provide a framework for:

- the development of specific emergency and evacuation procedures, practices and guidelines at Middle Park Kindergarten, including for managing bushfire and grassfire risk
- being informed by a risk assessment that identifies potential emergencies at Middle Park Kindergarten,
- raising the awareness of everyone attending Middle Park Kindergarten, about potential emergency situations and appropriate responses.

POLICY STATEMENT

The safety, health, wellbeing, rights and best interests of every child are the paramount consideration and must guide all decisions, actions and practices of educators within the education and care service.

VALUES

Middle Park Kindergarten, is committed to:

- providing a safe environment for all children, staff and persons participating in programs at Middle Park Kindergarten,
- having a plan to manage emergency situations in a way that reduces risk to those present on the premises,
- ensuring effective procedures are in place to manage emergency incidents at the service,
- ensuring an appropriate response during and following emergency incidents to meet the needs of the children, their families, staff and others at the service,
- informing parents/guardians how communication will be provided in a case of emergency.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Middle Park Kindergarten, including during offsite excursions and activities.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in charge day-to-day	Early childhood teachers, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					

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1. Ensuring the *Emergency and Evacuation Policy* and procedures are in place *(Regulations 168)* and available to all stakeholders (*Regulations 171)*	**R**	√			
2. Ensuring copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers, and available for inspection	**R**	√			
3. Taking reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, early childhood teachers, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures and are aware of their responsibilities *(Regulations 170)*	**R**	√			
4. Ensuring that all early childhood teachers, educators and staff are trained in the emergency and evacuation procedures and aware of their roles and responsibilities in an emergency or evacuation	**R**	√			
5. Completing the DE Emergency Management Plan *(refer to Definitions) (refer to Attachment),* and attaching a copy to this policy	**R**	√	√		
6. Reviewing the EMP annually by 1 September and after any emergency or critical incident	**R**	√	√		
7. Ensuring the service's emergency management contact details are up to date on NQA ITS online portal	**R**	√			
8. Identifying if the service is on the BARR *(refer to Definitions)*	**R**	√			
9. Conducting a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that the service may encounter *(refer to Definitions)* A comprehensive risk assessment must be conducted at least annually and reviewed following any emergency or significant change. Risk assessments must consider: • Environmental risks (e.g. bushfire, flood) • Building and infrastructure risks • Service location and surroundings • Needs of children, including those requiring additional assistance *(Regulation 97(2)) (refer to Sources)*	**R**	√	√		
10. Conducting a risk assessment *(refer to Definitions)* of emergency evacuation routes and assembly points	**R**	√	√		
11. Ensuring any necessary updates to the emergency and evacuation policies and procedures are implemented as soon as practicable after reviewing the risk assessment	**R**	√	√		√
12. Ensuring that designated emergency exits/routes are kept clear at all times to ensure that everyone can exit safely in the event of an evacuation	**R**	√			
13. Displaying the emergency and evacuation floor plan and instructions for what must be done in an emergency in a prominent position at each exit of the service *(Regulation 97(1)(a))* *(refer to Attachment)*	**R**	√	√		

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14. Appointing an Incident Management Team (IMT) to oversee safety at the service in the event of an emergency *(refer to Attachment)*	**R**				
15. Ensuring that a copy of the emergency and evacuation floor plan *(refer to Definitions)* and instructions are displayed in a prominent position near each exit at the service premises, and near each exit that forms part of the evacuation route out of the service *(Regulation 97(4))*	**R**	√	√		
16. Ensuring that the emergency and evacuation drills *(refer to Definitions)* are rehearsed and documented at least once every 3 months by everyone attending the service and the responsible person in relation to the service who is present at the time of the rehearsal. Rehearsals must: • Involve all persons present at the service • Cover all identified emergency procedures (e.g. evacuation, lockdown) • Be documented and evaluated • Be conducted at varying times and conditions where practicable • Outcomes of rehearsals must inform continuous improvement. • If it has been identified both a lock down and evacuation response procedure in the risk assessments, and incorporated them in the emergency plan, they will both need to rehearse every three months *(Regulation 97(3)(a))* *(refer to Attachment)*	**R**	√	√		
17. Emergency Roles (to be customised by each service) The service must allocate roles for emergency situations, which may include: • Chief warden • First Aid Officer • Child Attendance/Headcount Officer • Communication Officer (families/emergency services) • Evacuation Wardens These roles must be clearly documented, communicated to staff, and practiced during drills.	**Ö**	√			
18. Ensuring that all staff, students, volunteers and visitors are aware of emergency evacuation points	**R**	√	√		
19. Ensuring up-to-date portable emergency contact lists are held in each room within the service and that evacuation procedures state who will carry this list during evacuation	**R**	√	√		
20. Developing procedures that consider collecting children's medication and managing children's medical conditions	**R**	√	√		
21. Providing feedback regarding the effectiveness of emergency and evacuation procedures to inform policy, procedures and manuals etc.	√	√	√	√	√

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22. Testing alarms and communication systems regularly, such as on a monthly basis	**R**	√			
23. Ensuring that those working at, or attending the service, have access to a phone (or similar means) for immediate communication with parents/guardians and emergency services *(Regulation 98)*, and that phone numbers of emergency services are displayed	**R**	√			
24. Identifying potential onsite hazards and taking action to manage and minimise risks *(refer to Attachment)*	**R**	√	√		√
25. Ensuring all infrastructure and service equipment are regularly checked for condition and maintenance, including emergency exit lighting	**R**	√			
26. Ensuring the location of first aid kits, fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment are clearly signposted	**R**	√			
27. Ensuring all emergency equipment is maintained on a regular basis in accordance with requirements specified by regulations, such as the Australian Standards Building Code e.g. fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, evacuation kits, sprinkler systems and alarm or duress systems	**R**	√			
28. Providing a fully equipped portable first aid kit *(refer to Administration of First Aid Policy)*	**R**	√			
29. Ensure that designated emergency exits/routes are kept clear at all times to ensure that everyone can exit safely in the event of an evacuation	**R**	√	√		√
30. Keeping lock-down *(refer to Definitions)* areas in a state of readiness so they are safe for children, staff and visitors to use	√	√	√		√
31. Attending regular training to ensure that they are able to deal with emergency situations e.g., first aid *(Regulation 136)*, emergency management and OHS training	**R**	**R**	√		√
32. Regularly reviewing, evaluating and updating emergency management plans, manuals and procedures (at least annually or following an emergency incident)	**R**	√	√		√
33. Developing procedures to debrief staff following emergency incidents	√	√			
34. Providing support to children before, during and after emergencies		√	√		√
35. Conducting checks of documentation and practices to ensure all requirements of this policy are being complied with	**R**	√	√		√
36. Informing the nominated supervisor or persons in day-to-day charge or, in their absence, the approved provider or person with management and control, about any serious incidents or notifiable incidents *(refer to Definitions)* at the service			√		√
37. Notifying DE in writing within 24 hours of a serious incident, change of circumstances and/or complaints *(refer to Definitions)*	**R**	√			

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[this only applies to any kindergartens delivered by school councils on school premises]					
38. Ensuring that management and reporting of incidents is in accordance with the 6 stages of the department's management and reporting incidents (including emergencies) process	**R**	√	√		√
39. Completing the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record *(refer to Definitions)* where required	**R**	√	√		√
40. Notifying DE within 7 days of an incident that required the service to be closed, or a circumstance that posed a significant risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child attending the service *(National Law: Section 174(2)(c); Regulations: 175(2)(b) & (c), 176)*	**R**	√			
41. Reporting notifiable incidents *(refer to Definitions)* in the workplace to WorkSafe Victoria *(refer to Definitions)*	**R**	√			
42. Where possible engaging with Fire Rescue Victoria and/or Country Fire Authority *(refer to Definitions)* regarding fire safety awareness and training for the service, including demonstrations of fire equipment, basic fire safety, smoke alarm, fire blankets and escape plans	**Ö**	√	√		
43. Identifying staff and children requiring additional assistance in the event of an emergency *(refer to Attachment)*	√	√	√		√
44. Ensuring that emergency contact details are provided on each child's enrolment form and that these are kept up to date	**R**	**R**	√	√	
45. Ensuring that an attendance record *(refer to Definitions)* is completed and maintained to account for all children attending the service *(Regulation 158)*	**R**	**R**	**R**	**R**	
46. Keeping a written record of all visitors to the service, including time of arrival and departure	**R**	**R**	√		
47. Ensuring all staff, parents/guardians, children, volunteers and students on placement understand the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency	**R**	**R**	√	√	√
48. Ensuring there are induction procedures in place to inform new staff, including casual or relief staff, of the emergency and evacuation policy and procedures	**R**	√			
49. Ensuring all staff, parents/guardians, children, volunteers, students on placement and others attending the service are accounted for in the event of an evacuation	**R**	√			
50. Developing procedures to deal with loss of critical functions, such as power/water shut off.	**R**	√			
51. Ensuring that children are adequately supervised at all times and protected from hazards and harm *(refer to Supervision of Children Policy)*	**R**	**R**	**R**		
52. Raising children's awareness about potential emergency situations and appropriate responses.		√	√		√

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PROCEDURES

Every service is different; therefore, it is not practical to apply a generic emergency and evacuation procedure.

We recommend you refer to the Department of Education 'the Guide to Developing Your Emergency Management Plan' (the Guide). It will take you through your plan on a step-by-step basis. The Guide and other resources can be located at:
www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/emergencymanagementrequirements.aspxdepaRT

BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

The Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 define an emergency in relation to an education and care service as any situation or event that poses an imminent or severe risk to the persons at the service premises e.g., flood, fire or a situation that requires the service premises to be locked down.

Comprehensive emergency management includes prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Services are required to have policies and procedures in place detailing what needs to be done in an emergency, including an emergency and evacuation floor plan. These policies and procedures must be based on a risk assessment that identifies potential emergencies relevant to the service *(Regulation 97)*.

Policy and procedures should account for various emergency scenarios. These emergencies can encompass fires, smoke, personal injuries, threats, bomb threats, suspicious mail, biohazards, chemical spills, gas leaks, floods, and other natural disasters. In such situations, it may be necessary to evacuate or implement a lockdown. The policy and procedures must include comprehensive information to effectively handle all potential emergency situations within each specific service environment. Various emergency scenarios can entail varying levels of risk and demand different responses, depending on the location of the service. It is crucial to address these distinctions adequately in the policy and procedures. Every service is different, so it is not sufficient to apply generic policies and procedures to multiple services. You will need to contextualise your policies and procedures to your service's operations and its unique context.

In addition to the *Education and Care Services National Law* and *National Regulations*, service jurisdiction may have legislation regulating building facility requirements, such as workplace, health and safety legislation, which should also be considered.

Early childhood services have a duty of care to all attending the facility including the children, staff, volunteers, students, visitors, and contractors. It is also a requirement under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* that employers provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

All services in Victoria are required to have an Emergency Management Plan (EMP) *(refer to Definitions)* as part of their everyday operations and are required to regularly rehearse their emergency and evacuation procedures *(Regulation 97).* They must:

- EMP must be attached to the policy and reviewed annually
- Rehearse the procedures every 3 months and document it,
- Involve everyone present at the service at the time of the rehearsal. This includes all staff members, volunteers, children, and the responsible person who is present at the time of the rehearsal.

A copy of the service's emergency and evacuation policy and procedures must be available for inspection at the service premises at all times or on request.

DET provides Emergency Management Plan Guidelines and an Emergency Management Plan template *(refer to Sources)* to assist services to develop and review their EMP *(refer to Sources).* A copy should also be attached to this policy.

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It is required in *Element 2.2.2 of the National Quality Standard* that your emergency and evacuation procedures are developed in conjunction with relevant authorities/experts.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010c (including section 167)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 including Regulations 97, 98, 168(2)(e), 170,171,172
- National Quality Standard, including Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au

DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g., Approved provider, Nominated supervisor, Notifiable complaints, Serious incidents, Duty of care, etc. refer to the Definitions file of the PolicyWorks catalogue.

Country Fire Authority (CFA): An organisation tasked with responding to various fire and emergency incidents. In addition to response efforts, CFA engages in fire safety building inspections, community awareness and education programs and post-incident analysis and fire investigation, as well as fire prevention and land-use planning at a municipal level.

Critical incidents: Events requiring planning and response, such as child abuse, medical emergencies, mental stress, data breaches or missing persons**.**

Bushfire at Risk Register (BARR): Kindergartens and childcare facilities assessed to be at the highest risk of fire are placed on the department's BARR. Inclusion on this register is a trigger for the kindergarten or childcare facility to pre-emptively close on days determined Catastrophic in their Bureau of Meteorology district, as well as other pre-emptive and preparedness actions in line with their fire risk category

Direct Egress: The ability to move and directly exit to an assembly area that is at the same level as the education and care service and is outside the service premises and away from the building. This does not include travelling through sets of stairs (including fire isolated stairwells), busy occupied areas, traffic or other hazards, or obstructions.

Emergency drill/rehearsal: A process to rehearse anticipated emergency scenarios or events, designed to help clarify roles and responsibilities, provide training and verify the adequacy of the emergency response

Emergency Management Plan (EMP): A written set of instructions for the service to prepare for and respond to emergencies. A guide to preparing an emergency plan and an Emergency Management Plan templates are available on the DET website *(refer to Sources)*

Emergency services: Includes ambulance, fire brigade, police and state emergency services.

Evacuation floor plan: An evacuation plan is used where it is deemed necessary to evacuate the immediate area or building to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and adults. It may also have the name 'evacuation diagram'

Evacuation route: Continuous path of travel (including exits, public corridors and the like) from any part of a building to a safe place

Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV): (previously known as Metropolitan Fire Brigade) respond to fires, complex rescues, road crashes, emergency medical calls and hazardous chemical spills. The FRV aims to reduce the incidence and

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impact of fire and other emergencies on the community. This is achieved through the delivery of educational strategies that assist the community to become more self-reliant, including:

- delivering expert fire and rescue services to the community they serve
- driving systemic change to the built environment through reforms to building design, regulations and legislation, and
- educating the community through fire prevention programs that improve community safety and build resilience

Fire safety adviser: A specified role in some jurisdictions. May coordinate fire safety management plans, fire and evacuation plans, procedures, review and practice, and give or arrange instruction to staff on evacuation and the operation of firefighting equipment.

Hazard: Anything with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these.

Incident: An event that has led to or could have led to an injury. Incidents include 'near misses', accidents and injuries. They may impact students, employees, school operations or security, and may involve serious conduct or require police notification.

Incident Management Team (IMT): Is the group of incident management personnel comprising of the incident controller and other personnel appointed to be responsible for the functions of operations, planning, and logistics

Lock down: 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

Lock in: A security measure taken during an emergency to prevent people from leaving a building or premises until the threat or risk has been resolved.

Lock out: A security measure taken during an emergency to prevent people from entering a building or premises until the threat or risk has been resolved

Multi-storey building: a building with more than 2 storeys. A storey of a building includes the ground level and a level of a split level.

Planned closure: services identified as being at high fire risk and on the DE's Bushfire At-Risk Register will close on days determined to have a fire danger rating of Code Red by the Emergency Management Commissioner. Where possible, four to seven days' notice of a planned closure will be provided. Services not on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register will remain open, unless directly threatened by fire or another emergency

Risk assessment: A systematic process of evaluating the potential risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking and determining suitable mitigations.

Risk management: A structured approach to managing uncertainty related to a threat; a sequence of activities including the identification, assessment and prioritisation of risks followed by co-ordinated and economical application of resources to minimise, monitor and control the probability and/or impact of those risks.

WorkSafe Victoria: The manager of Victoria's workplace safety system. WorkSafe Victoria:

- strives to prevent workplace injuries, illness and fatalities
- provides benefits to injured workers and helps them to return to work
- enforces Victoria's occupational health and safety laws
- provides reasonably priced workplace injury insurance for employers
- provides an emergency response service 24 hours per day

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SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

SOURCES

- Community Early Learning Australia – CELA's Simple Guide to bushfire advice for children's services: cela.org.au/2020/12/04/bushfire-advice-2020
- Department of Education, Bushfire At-Risk Register: https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/pages/bushfirerisk.aspx
- Department of Education, Emergency Management in early childhood services: www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/emergencymanagementrequirements.aspx
- Department of Education, Risk Assessment Template: https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/support/Risk-assessment-table.docx
- Fire Rescue Victoria: www.frv.vic.gov.au
- Country Fire Authority: www.cfa.vic.gov.au
- State Emergency Service: www.ses.vic.gov.au
- WorkSafe Victoria: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

RELATED POLICIES

- Administration of First Aid
- Administration of Medication
- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Excursions and Service Events
- Dealing with Medical Conditions
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Staffing
- Supervision of Children

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- review the policy to determine whether it adequately addresses a range of potential emergency situations
- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness particularly following an emergency
- review procedures, including evacuation procedures, to determine their effectiveness, including timing and processes
- use information gained from checks on documentation and practices and the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record to inform proposed changes to this policy
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required by legislation, research, policy and best practice
- consult with emergency services such as the FRV and CFA, to ensure the policy and procedures meet current best practices
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk *(Regulation 172 (2))*.

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ATTACHMENTS

- Emergency Management Plan template: https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/emergency-management-plan-(EMP)-template-example.docx

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Middle Park Kindergarten, on July 2026.

REVIEW DATE: July 2028

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