



## WATER SAFETY POLICY

### POLICY STATEMENT

Water safety policies and procedures help keep children safe in and around water and support children's learning in a safe environment. Children's safety and wellbeing will be protected in and around water through supervision and education. The Nominated Supervisor is aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to water safety, and assists to ensure that all other staff are also aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to water safety.

Our services operate on the school grounds of our St Philip's Christian Colleges. Some of the school sites contain bodies of water, such as dams. To ensure that these bodies of water are considered and risks appropriately addresses, this policy has been developed to assist in keeping all students, staff and community members safe around water hazards.

### BACKGROUND

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for managing water safety, including safety during any water-based activities.

According to Kidsafe (the recognised authority on the prevention of injuries in children), drowning continues to be one of the main causes of fatalities of Australian children. Every year a number of children are killed and hundreds more are rescued from near drowning situations. Non-fatal drowning incidents are also of great concern as they can have potential long-term effects, including brain damage and permanent disability.

The most common factor in childhood drowning is lack of supervision. A child can drown in as little as a few centimetres of water. Items such as nappy buckets, sinks, pet drinking bowls, ponds, pools, water features and water tanks are potential drowning hazards.

### PROCEDURES

- Saints Academy create a large range of learning and development opportunities for children, including water-based play which is an important part growing, learning, wellbeing and development. This includes teaching children to be aware of water safety within our educational programs.
- The service conducts risk assessment for water excursions to ensure that all precautions are employed to safeguard children during these experiences. Water excursions are to be to aquatic centres and pools supervised by lifeguards.
- Any excursions near the beach will not include entering the water. Beach play will only be on sand, grass and play equipment areas.
- Children and Educators are NOT to enter the water other than at lifeguard staffed pools.
- Nominated Supervisors are responsible for planning excursions, incursions and activities. This includes identifying in advance any potential risks, assessing risk levels and planning safe excursions, incursions and activities accordingly.
- In conducting risk assessments, risks relating to incursion and excursions are to be identified, the level and probability of each risk assessed and adequate controls in place to



ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and educators.

- Nominated Supervisors and delegated Responsible Persons will communicate to educators and children, in advance, the risks and risk management behaviours required to manage identified risks.
- A range of factors shall determine the adequacy of supervision, including:
  - Numbers, ages and abilities of the children;
  - Areas where children are playing, in particular the visibility and accessibility of these areas;
  - Adequacy of educator: child supervision ratios to manage the level of risk in the environment and experiences.
  - Adequacy of educator skill and knowledge to manage risks in environment and experiences.
  - Position of educators to maintain oversight of each child's location and of the presence of unauthorised persons and other potential hazards;
  - Position of educators to maintain proximity to anticipate, prevent or respond to and address risks that present.
  - Educators' knowledge of each child and each group of children.
  - Other supervising personnel and their roles and responsibilities e.g. Lifeguards supervising swimming pools and reducing water safety risk level.
- While the Regulations do not specify supervision ratios related to water excursions, it is noted that in the Education and Care Services National Law there are clear statements about adequate supervision.
  - Sections 165 - The nominated supervisor of an education and care service must ensure that all children being educated and cared for by the service are adequately supervised.
  - Section 167 - A Nominated Supervisor of an education and care service must ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children being educated and cared for by the service from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury; and
  - Section 169 - The nominated supervisor of the education and care service must ensure that an unauthorised person does not remain at the education and care service premises while children are being educated and cared for at the premises unless the person is under the direct supervision of an educator or other staff member of the service.

Definition of a body of water:

- Swimming pools
- Water fun parks;
- Wading pools;
- Lakes;
- Ponds;
- The sea/ocean;
- Creeks;
- Dams; and
- Rivers.

*This policy links to the following:*

- *National Quality Standards 2.3*
- *Education and Care Service National Regulations 2011: 100-102; 168*
- *Education and Care Services National Law NSW 2011 – Sections 165, 167, 169, (Section 174(2)(a) and*
- *Regulation 176(2)(a).*

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- *Other: My Time, Our Place*