



POLICY STATEMENT

Mawson Lakes School OSHC has a responsibility to provide a child safe environment and protect children and young people from harm or hazard. This procedure has been developed to protect children, families, educators, and visitors from harm during extreme weather conditions.

BACKGROUND

Due to climate change, Australia is expected to experience an increase in extremely high temperatures, increased heavy rainfall, damaging storms, and droughts. (CSIRO, 2023). To make warnings of these events clearer and lead people to act during emergencies such as bushfires, flood, storms, extreme heat, and severe weather, a nationally consistent three-tier approach by the Australian Warning System (AWS) has been introduced. The three-tier warning level system is communicated across all state and territory emergency services. The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) provides regular temperature forecasts, UV levels, predicted rainfall and potential extreme weather warnings—including storms, hail, and flooding. Fire warnings are regularly updated by the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service. Mawson Lakes School OSHC will be guided by Australian Government agencies such as those mentioned above, to protect children and young people and educators from harm during extreme weather conditions.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Regulation	Description	Implementation
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures	Mawson Lakes School OSHC completes emergency evacuations and lockdowns quarterly to inform children and educators of our practice in case of an emergency. Educator's direct children and young people to the designated areas as followed by our floor plans which are found in all approved spaces at the exits.
98	Telephone or other communication equipment	Educators will communicate through the use of walkie talkies. The Nominated Supervisor will have access to the OSHC mobile and landline for immediate communication to and from parents and emergency services.
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises	The sign-out procedure ensures all children leaving the service are collected by an authorised person which is stated on their enrolment form, the sign-out bench is located in building TR9. The exits and entrances are monitored by educators at all times.
136	First aid qualifications	There is always a Nominated Supervisor on site who holds a first aid qualification.
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures	The service has policies and procedures that reflect the needs of the service. These are reviewed every two years or when deemed necessary.

PURPOSE

This policy establishes a comprehensive framework for child safety and regulatory compliance. We aim to achieve this by adhering to the Regulatory Authority's regulations regarding emergency notifications for incidents posing a severe risk to children by extreme weather conditions. This policy prioritises child safety through clear communication protocols for emergency notifications and preventative measures. By fulfilling these objectives, this policy seeks to create a safe and secure environment for all children within our education and care service.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, nominated supervisor, educators, children, volunteers, and visitors of the OSCHC.

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy will be implemented through a comprehensive approach aligned with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations. This includes maintaining heightened supervision during extreme weather events reviewing and updating emergency plans to address specific weather risks with regular drills. The Nominated Supervisor will work with educators to complete a risk assessment if the following predictions are alerted, e.g., extreme weather warnings and risk of fire.

A risk assessment will identify and mitigate potential weather hazards through control measures like adjusting outdoor experiences, how children and young people are dropped off and collected from school and clearly assigning roles and responsibilities to educators of how the service operates through extreme weather conditions, this is to ensure the safety and well-being of children in our care, regardless of the prevailing weather conditions.

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY CALL 000

EXTREME WEATHER PLAN

Director, Assistant Director and or Nominated Supervisors will

- Monitor the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) website www.bom.gov.au for weather forecasts
- Check the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) website www.bom.gov.au for weather conditions prior to excursions
- Liaise with school representatives regarding the closure of school that may impact on the OSCHC service operation
- Consider postponing or cancelling excursions that occur during an extreme weather event
- Keep up to date with advice from local emergency services, during local emergencies
- Families will be notified through our software provider and advised to collect their child/ren, in the event OSCHC is required to close early due to an emergency situation. Educators must remain on the premises to ensure ratios are maintained and all children and young people are safe
- Families will be notified as soon as practical regarding any decision to close OSCHC for the following day due to extreme weather conditions
- Regularly check local road closures due to flooding, storm conditions, to notify parents
- Consider delaying or postponing travel during extreme weather conditions. Advice from local emergency services will be followed at all times
- Notify the regulatory authority through the NQAITS portal if the OSCHC service is required to close for a period of time as a result of a local emergency (Reg.175 (2)(b))
- Make a notification of a serious incident to a regulatory authority within 24 hours through the [NQA IT System](#) when emergency services have attended an education and care service in response to an emergency, rather than as a precaution or for any other reason or following an incident that poses a risk to the health and safety of children attending the OSCHC Service

WEATHER CONDITION SPECIFIC PLANS

Wet Weather

These are the steps taken when experiencing wet weather

- Stay indoors and minimise outdoor experiences during heavy rain

Light Rain

- Children will use umbrellas through transitioning from site east to west and from different approved spaces
- Educators will wear high vis vests to ensure they are easily seen

Heavy Rain

- Regularly check weather forecasts and radar to ensure a safe environment
- Wait for heavy downpours to pass before venturing outdoors
- Base decisions on official recommendations and safety guidelines
- Communicate drop off and pick up plan with the front office, children's teachers, and parents/caregivers in the event of extreme weather

Flooding

These are the steps taken when experiencing flooding

- We regularly observe water levels in the creek and surrounding areas in the event of heavy rain fall to stay vigilant
- OSHC is located on higher ground but adjacent to the creek that flows between site east and west
- In the event of an emergency OSHC has a life buoy located inside the door of TR 12
- An educator is always present on the deck to ensure everyone's safety
- Educators will refer to our risk assessment regarding the creek and public walkway
- OSHC uses the bridge to walk from site east and west for drop off and pick up
- If 'The Strand' is closed due to flooding, we will then notify parents/caregivers to take an alternate route to access the service

Fire

These are the steps taken when experiencing fire

- Ensure all educators are familiar with our emergency evacuation and lockdown procedure
- Being alerted to the local fire danger ratings and potential risks
- Conduct regular fire drills with all educators and children to ensure familiarity with procedures
- Educators will continuously monitor official warnings, news updates, and weather forecasts for fire threats
- Remain alert to any signs of smoke, fire, or approaching danger
- If a fire evacuation order is issued or the situation dictates immediate evacuation, we will follow the instructions outlined in the Emergency Evacuation and Lockdown policy and procedure

Extreme Heat

These are the steps taken when experiencing extreme heat

- Monitor weather forecasts and warnings daily.
- If the temperature is 36°C or above, all children must remain inside.
- If the temperature is below 36°C, children may have the opportunity to participate in outdoor activities. Refer to the Sun Protection policy for specific procedures for outdoor experiences
- Encourage frequent water consumption throughout the day, children have access to a cold drinking fountain under the veranda and a puratap in the kitchen
- Encourage parents to send children with appropriate clothing, hats, and sunscreen

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT & REFLECTION

Our 'Weather Policy' will be reviewed every two years or when deemed necessary in consultation with educators governing council and families.

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURE

- Administration of First Aid Policy & Procedure
- Emergency Evacuation and Lockdown Policy & Procedure
- Excursions Policy & Procedure
- Safe Arrival of Children Policy & Procedure
- Safe Transportation of Children Policy & Procedure
- Sun Protection Policy & Procedure

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS

The following quality areas link to Weather Policy & Procedure

QUALITY AREA 1 - EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM & PRACTICE	
Concept	Descriptor
1.1	Program
1.1.3	Program learning opportunities
1.2.1	Intentional teaching
QUALITY AREA 2 - CHILDREN'S HEALTH & SAFETY	
Concept	Descriptor
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures
2.2	Safety
2.2.1	Supervision
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management
QUALITY AREA 3 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS	
3.1	Design
3.1.1	Fit for purpose
QUALITY AREA 4 - STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS	

4.1.1	Organisation of educators	The organisation of educators across the service supports children's learning and development.
4.2	Professionalism	Management, educators, and staff are collaborative, respectful, and ethical.
4.2.1	Professional collaboration	Management, educators, and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills.
QUALITY AREA 5 - RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident, and included.
QUALITY AREA 6 - COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES		
6.2.3	Community engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.
QUALITY AREA 7 - GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service.
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.
7.2	Leadership	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.
7.2.1	Continuous improvements	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.

SOURCE

ACECQA. (n.d.). Safe sleep and rest practices: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/information-sheets/safe-sleep-and-rest-practices>

ACECQA. (2023). Sleep and Rest for Children. Policy Guidelines.

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Government Department of Education. My Time, Our Place- Framework for School Age Care in Australia.V2.0, 2022

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

Education and Care Services National Regulations (Amended 2023).

Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2023).

NSW Department of Education. (2022). Sleep and rest for children-Policy guidelines for early childhood education and care services. (updated)

Revised National Quality Standard. (Amended 2023).

Red Nose Organisation <https://rednose.org.au/section/about-us>

The NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011

The NSW Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011

Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations

REVIEW

POLICY CREATED BY	Lorin, Sue & Mack - All educators	Nominated Supervisor	May 2024
POLICY REVIEWED BY			
MODIFICATIONS			
POLICY REVIEWED BY			
MODIFICATIONS			