

ARMIDALE & DISTRICT FAMILY DAY CARE

Water Safety Policy

Policy/policies:	Excursion Policy, Sun Safe
Regulation/s/ Standards:	Education and Care Services National Regulations- 2.1.2, 2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2 National Quality Area 2.
Related procedures:	Bathing Babies and Young children, Supervision
References:	Staying Healthy in Child Care (5 th Edition) Kidsafe- FDC Safety Guidelines, Health and Safety in FDC Models and Practices - 2nd Edition- Frith, Kambouris, O'Grady
Date effective	May 2023
Date for review	May 2025
Purpose	To ensure the safety of children by protecting them from the possibility of drowning and acknowledging the danger of bodies of water to young children.
Responsibility	Nominated Supervisor, Coordinators, Educators, Educator Assistants and Relief Educators

Key information:

Children have no fear and little ability to look after themselves when near water. On average, one child dies each week in Australia due to preventable drowning. The children at greatest risk are toddlers aged 1 to 4 and for them, drowning is one of the most common causes of death. Children can drown in as little as 5cm of water.

Therefore, children need constant attention and supervision when they are near water to prevent drowning.

Family Day Care Educators, in their professional role as teachers, mentors and protectors of young children will follow these outlined procedures and take steps to prevent child accidents relating to water.

Practices

Physical environments:

To ensure that Armidale Family Day Care Educators are protecting all children using the service from harm and hazard relating to water, the following practices should be followed.

Any water body that poses a potential drowning risk to children and could include:

- large bodies of water, such as rivers, creeks, dams, ponds, swimming pools, jetted bathtubs (or jacuzzis), in-ground 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, buckets, and pet water containers.

Water Play:

- Water activities involving sprinklers, hoses and soaker hoses are endorsed, and are an important way to promote water confidence in young children.
- Paddling pools are endorsed for use by children over 2 years of age only. Careful and constant Family Day Care Educator supervision must always be maintained. The pool must be emptied as soon as it is no longer being used. Should the Educator be called away (to answer the door or phone, attend to another child etc.), the pool must be emptied immediately.

Hazard Checklist

- Check the garden after rain or watering and empty water that has collected in holes or containers that could constitute a drowning hazard.
- Ponds, birdbaths, and similar water sources are to be covered with secured steel mesh to prevent a child falling into the water.
- Store wading pools/clam shells to prevent the collection of water, e.g., upright.
- Check pool gates are locked and secure each morning before children arrive.
- Close top loading washing machines and secure lid on nappy bin (if using one).

Excursions:

- An Educator must conduct a risk assessment for an excursion located near a water hazard. The nominated Supervisor will consider the request based on information in the risk assessment and adult/child ratios (refer to Excursion policy).
- In Armidale, Civic Park (near the creek) and the Bicentennial Arboretum are areas that are not accessible to children due to the water hazards. You can visit the Arboretum Park, not the area where the water is.
- There is no access to council/school/UNE pools whilst children are in care, as supervision of children presents difficulty because of the number of other people present and the ease of access to a range of other pools.

Pools at Educators Premises:

It states in the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 Page 265

The approved provider of a family day care service must ensure that any swimming pool at a family day care residence or approved family day care venue of the service in New South Wales is fenced in accordance with the requirements for fencing a new swimming pool under the *swimming pools Act 1992 of New South Wales*.

- There is no access or use to an Educator's private swimming pool by any person whilst children are in care.
- Any pool filters at the premises must be inaccessible to children.
- Gates must be maintained, self-closing, self-latching and have a child resistant lock. Always check before the children arrive each morning.
- All objects should be removed from around the pool that could be used to climb over fencing, such as bikes, chairs, bins, and furniture.
- A CPR chart should be clearly visible in the pool area.

Whilst destinations with a significant water hazard e.g., dams, ponds, creeks, or rivers are to be generally avoided, visits to the Arboretum and the Creek land parks can happen for children under school age if there is one adult for every two children.
(Refer AFDC Excursion Policy)