



Periwinkle

PRESCHOOL

for Rudolf Steiner
early childhood education

Water Safety

The essential task of the early childhood educator is to create the proper physical environment around the children. 'Physical environment' must be understood in the widest sense imaginable. It includes not just what happens around the children in the material sense, but everything that occurs in their environment, everything that can be perceived by their senses, that can work on the inner powers of the children from the surrounding physical space.
Rudolf Steiner (1907) The Education of the Child

Steiner educators seek to create a learning environment that “nourishes the senses”. In line with this fundamental tenet of Steiner education, our educational program is enriched by opportunities for water play as well as other experiences with, in and around water. These include experiences such as washing up, watering the garden, washing hands, cooking with water, and using the water pump.

There are multiple benefits associated with safe water use. While using and playing with water, children learn to co-operate with others as they empty and refill water jars ready for the next child to use. Children learn independence and develop a positive sense of self by caring for their own needs and getting a drink at any time they need or want.

Whenever children are working or playing in or around water, their safety and wellbeing is of paramount importance. This policy outlines the measures taken at Periwinkle to ensure that children remain safe while enjoying the multiple benefits of safe water use.

Our goals in relation to water safety are to:

- empower children to play and work safely in and around water.
- establish procedures that will prevent students from experiencing harm as a result of interaction with water at Periwinkle Preschool
- make available clean water, hygienic for water play and for drinking.

Strategies

Water Safety

Careful and continuous supervision of children’s water use

- Staff implement procedures to ensure appropriate supervision of water at all times.



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Safe Water Storage

- Water is stored safely and securely to prevent contamination or injury.
- Hot water accessible to children is maintained at the temperature of 43.5 C.

A risk assessment will be conducted prior to any excursion taking place. Particular attention will be focused upon water safety where the excursion is near a body of water

Water Hygiene

Clear direction in relation to what water is safe to drink

- Children have access to filtered water and 'help themselves' to a drink whenever they wish
- Grey water systems (water from the hand pump) or water tanks/trough are for play only and not for drinking.
- Educators will discuss with the children that this water is for the purpose of play and not for consumption
- Water containers of any sort will be emptied or covered when not in use.
- Children's cups will be emptied and cleaned daily.

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider

- Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011.

Nominated Supervisor

- Ensure children are adequately supervised and are protected from harms and hazards.
- Provide supervision, guidance and advice to ensure adherence to the policy at all times.
- Ensure risk assessments for excursions planned near water identify a higher staff to child ratio to ensure adequate supervision.
- Ensure First Aid and CPR qualifications and requirements are met at all times.
- Provide families with community messages regarding safe water practices.



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Early Childhood Educators

- Embed water safety messages into the children's education program.
- Ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level and emptied or covered securely after use.
- Ensure water troughs or containers are only filled while in attendance by an adult at all times.
- Ensure no child is left unattended at any time with any body of water.
- Empty buckets used for cleaning immediately after use.
- Ensuring no cleaning buckets are to be left in areas or accessible to children
- Discourage children from drinking grey water.
- Provide clean drinking water at all times.
- Ensure that clean drinking water is available at all times and encourage children to drink at regular intervals throughout the day, e.g. lunch, afternoon and whenever a child appears hot or thirsty

Families

- Reinforce water safety practice with children.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every two years.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected

Related legislation

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 167
- Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulations 168(2)(h)&(a)(iii)



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Related Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks

- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety – Standard 2.1 and Standard 2.2

Sources

- Kidsafe NSW – www.kidsafensw.org/water-safety
- Kids Alive – www.kidsalive.com.au
- Kids Health – <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/water-safety.html>