

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Associated Policies:

- Emergency Evacuation Plan
- Hazardous Materials
- Food Safety & Food Handling
- A Child Safe Environment
- Staff, Contractor and Volunteer Orientation
- Confidentiality / Privacy & Record Management
- OHS Procedures

Original: 11/8/2008
Review: 27 June 09
Revised: April 2014
Next Review Due:
April 2017

Legislation:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012:
 - Regulation 103: Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair;
 - Regulation 111: Administrative Space
 - Regulation 183: Storage of records and other documents
- National Quality Standards
 - Standard 7.1: Effective leadership promotes a positive organisational culture and builds a professional learning community (Element 7.1.2)
 - Standard 3.1: the design and location of the premises is appropriate for the operation of a service (Element 3.1.2)
 - Standard 7.3: Administrative systems enable the effective management of a quality service (Element 7.3.1 and 7.3.3)
- Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007

Location/Ownership: POLICY MANUAL - CENTRE OPERATIONS
OHS MANUAL

Policy Statement

- This policy reflects the value *Beechworth Community Child Care Centre* places on its employees, children, families and visitors by endeavouring to protect the health, safety and welfare of all members of its community.
- In Victoria's child care centres and kindergartens, 'safety' often focusses on the needs of children. These centres are also workplaces which must meet OHS laws to keep workers safe.
- Every year, more than 200 workers are seriously injured in Victorian child care centres and kindergartens (from Victorian Work Safe website <http://www.vwa.vic.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/your-industry/childrenservices> accessed 1/04/2014). Most of these are musculoskeletal injuries (sprains and strains, fractures and soft tissue injuries) caused by every day activities like moving play equipment, lifting children and sitting on small chairs.
- The other major OHS risks in child care workplaces include infectious diseases, manual handling and stress (Community Child Care -

This policy is ongoing and applies to all Management Committee members, educators, staff, families, children, contractors, visitors, volunteers and students attending the service.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Philosophy - Beechworth Community Child Care Centre commits to providing a safe and healthy environment for employees, families, children, contractors, visitors and volunteers.
- Children's needs - to be cared for and educated in an environment that is safe and with a focus on health. Risks are identified early through a regular system of review, and are addressed to remove or reduce the risk.
- Parents needs - to be assured that their children are cared for and educated in a centre that is concerned with all safety issues.
- Staff needs - to work in an environment that is safe from injury and illness; to look out for each other and contribute to keeping OHS in the forefront of daily operations through regular discussion, training and work place inspections.
- Management needs - to provide a safe and healthy work environment, with systems and procedures in place to effectively manage safety issues, risks and any injuries that may occur. To encourage a reflective cycle where safety issues, near misses and potential problems are considered, identified, managed, avoided and improved upon wherever possible.

1. Responsibilities

1.1 The Centre

Beechworth Community Child Care Centre will ensure that the Committee of Management, educators, staff, contractors, families, visitors and volunteers are aware of their health and safety responsibilities as employers/ employees / visitors of the service.

The Centre must, where reasonably practical, consult with educators and others directly affected by OHS issues during risk analysis processes, resolution of issues, identification of risks, by providing information and training.

Beechworth Community Child Care Centre specifically recognises the need to ensure that:

- Statutory requirements are fulfilled. In particular, the provisions of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* and its successors, and that all relevant codes of practice are adopted and accepted as the minimum standard;
- There is a systematic risk management approach to the management of workplace hazards;
- Hazards and risks to health and safety are identified, assessed and where they cannot be eliminated, are controlled effectively;
- Measures to control hazards and risks to health and safety are monitored and evaluated regularly;

- Adequate instruction is provided to employees in safe working practices and that they are informed of any hazard to their well-being and health which may be known to be associated with the work in which they are involved;
- Consultation and cooperation between the Coordinator and educators is important for effective translation of objectives into action;
- Equipment is to be maintained in a safe condition;
- Maintaining, filing and retention of OHS documentation and records occurs in accordance with Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004;
- All visitors excluding families / persons dropping off and collecting children are to sign in and out using the Visitor Register.
- Educators and staff are provided with training on how to perform their tasks safely;
- Employees attend work free from the influence of alcohol or other non-prescription drugs;
- Incident reports are lodged early;
- Appropriate preventative action is taken after accidents;
- All accidents are regarded as preventable.

1.2 The Management Committee will:

- Provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risks to health;
- Provide adequate welfare facilities including a staff room, washroom and lockers;
- Promote staff and Management Committee discussion of OHS issues by ensuring OHS is a standing item on meeting agendas;
- Engage suitably qualified persons to provide advice to the staff group and Committee in relation to health and safety issues.

1.3 The Coordinator will:

- Ensure the Centre complies with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and regulations in its daily operations;
- Report to the Management Committee on any OHS issue (including near-misses, training, staff feedback);
- Ensure staff are consulted and involved in the development, implementation and review of OHS policy and procedure;
- Provide adequate and up to date health and safety information to employees;
- Provide all staff with adequate supervision, training and instruction to enable staff to perform their tasks safely and prevent accidents occurring;
- Provide a Register of Injuries book in the workplace;
- Ensure that any worker returning from injury is provided with suitable alternative duties
- Maintain clearly documented OHS records;
- Ensure that all new staff, students and contractors are provided with an induction of OHS policy and procedures;

- Display material required by Work Cover prominently in the workplace.

1.4 Educators

- Educators are required, while at work, to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of anyone else who may be affected by their actions;
- Educators must act in ways which do not endanger the health or safety of anyone;
- Will elect an OHS Representative;
- Report any hazard identified between hazard assessments to the Coordinator or OHS Representative;
- Report and document all injuries (no matter how minor they appear at the time) and all near-miss incidents to the Coordinator and OHS Representative;
- Educators are also required to cooperate with their employers on any action taken by the employer to comply with any requirements imposed by the OHS Act 2004 or Regulations;
- Conduct a daily inspection of the premises prior to the children's attendance at the Centre using the Outdoor Safety Checklist [appendix 1]. If the daily inspection identifies a problem, employees at the workplace are to correct the problem. If this is not possible, put in place temporary measures to ensure the educators/ children's safety and contact the Coordinator who will assist in obtaining a more permanent solution.
- Ensure any OHS issues are discussed at regular staff meetings;
- Conduct and report on workplace inspections and hazard assessments using the Indoor Safety Checklist [appendix 2] each month.
- Participate in the development, implementation and review of OHS policies and procedures;
- Follow OHS procedures and act to prioritise health and safety at all times;
- Will not wilfully or recklessly interfere with or misuse safety equipment that is provided;
- Will participate in and conduct anaphylaxis practices as per the Anaphylaxis Policy;
- Will participate in OHS training as appropriate.

1.5 Contractors

- Must complete the on-site OHS orientation before completing work;
- For contractors working irregularly, this should be conducted every visit, or every 6 months;
- For regular contractors, this should be conducted at the beginning of their contract and as a refresher once every 12 months.

1.6 Families , visitors

- Must conduct themselves in safe manner while on site;
- Must not put anyone else at harm;
- Must follow the safety instructions of educators / Coordinator if an incident occurs while they are on site.

1.7 Everyone

- Recognise that the concept and practice of safety involves shared responsibilities and a team approach by the Centre and all educators / staff / visitors / contractors etc. Every effort will be made to work towards accident prevention.

1.8 Other

- OHS accountability is to be included in all position descriptions;
- Adequate resources need to be allocated to fulfil the aims of this policy;
- This policy will be displayed in a prominent workplace area. This policy will form part of the orientation program for new staff, educators and contractors.

2. Workplace Inspections - areas to be inspected and when

Inspection Type	Area	How Often	Who to Complete	Form
Workplace Safety Inspection	Babies Room	Monthly	Educators / staff as agreed	Indoor Safety Checklist - Babies Room
	Toddler Room			Indoor Safety Checklist - Toddler Room
	Preschool Room			Indoor Safety Checklist - Preschool Room
	Kitchen			Indoor Safety Checklist - Kitchen
	Bathroom / Laundry			Indoor Safety Checklist - Bathroom / Laundry
	Office / Hallway & Foyer			Indoor Safety Checklist - Office / Hallway & Foyer
	Staff & Parents Room			Indoor Safety Checklist - Staff & Parents Room
Playground Safety Checklist	All playground areas	Daily	Educators starting on 8:30am shift	Daily Playground Safety Checklist
In-depth	All playground	6 monthly	OHS Rep with	6 Monthly

Playground Safety Checklist (6 monthly inspection)	areas		Coordinator	Playground Safety Checklist
Building & Playground Check	Buildings and Playground	Annually	Indigo Shire Council - report provided to Committee of Management	n/a

3. Procedure for Inspection Checklists, Hazard Identification and Resolution

- Workplace inspection is completed by the relevant person and is given to the OHS Representative for review and filing;
- For any issues, potential hazards, risks, repairs etc identified during the workplace inspection, a separate Safety Action Plan form [appendix 3] should be filled out to identify the specific issue, priority, person responsible, action required and due dates. In some instances, the OHS Representative may be able to resolve issues by applying a risk management strategy (see related procedure). Other issues may be referred to the Coordinator for resolution.
- The Safety Action Plans should be presented at the Staff Meetings in the OHS agenda item. The group as a whole may resolve some issues or may use the opportunity to reflect on how the incident happened and how it may be avoided or managed in the future.

4. The OHS Representative and the OHS Committee

- As Beechworth Community Child Care Centre is a small work force, the entire staff group constitutes the OHS Committee. OHS is a permanent agenda item for staff meetings, and issues can be raised and discussed by any staff member.
- The Coordinator has responsibility for the management of OHS information, workplace inspections and risk analysis, training and administration. Aspects of this responsibility may be delegated to an elected OHS Representative. The OHS Representative is responsible for:
 - Ensuring all workplace checks are completed on time;
 - Ensuring any identified hazards or risks are promptly eliminated, removed or minimised;
 - Keeping all OHS related information securely stored for the required time periods;
 - Keeping up to date with all OHS information, legislation and training opportunities;
 - Reporting on OHS in staff meetings;
 - Communicating with the Coordinator and the team to ensure all relevant information is passed on and tasks are completed.
- There is a separate website devoted to supporting elected OHS Representative in their role - it is at <http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/hsr>

5. Visitor Register

- All visitors to the Centre, including students, contractors and volunteers, are to sign in at the Visitor Register placed outside the office. Persons who do are not included are families / carers dropping off or collecting children and paid staff members/ educators.
- The Visitor Register is used to keep the Centre informed of who is on site at any time, so that in case of emergency evacuations or incidents all persons on site may be accounted for.

6. Manual Handling, Infectious Diseases and Stress Management

- Correct procedures and practices for safe manual handling are to be observed by all educators and staff in the Centre at all times. Equipment to assist in safe manual handling practice should be used. For more details, see the Manual Handling Procedure.
- To assist with infection control, staff immunisation records will be requested upon commencement of employment and will be kept in staff files. These will need to be updated as required.
- Flu vaccination will be provided and funded by the Centre annually at the start of the flu season. See procedure for more details.
- Stress Management - as a staff team it is important that regular communication occurs to prevent the build - up of minor problems becoming major issues. Staff should work as a supportive team. This could simply mean being ready to listen sympathetically, offering moral support or acknowledging another's achievement. Ongoing and constructive strategies need to be developed to prevent stress related illnesses occurring. Prevention rather than cure is a necessary attitude.
- If any educator / staff member is suffering from workplace stress and needs to seek counselling, a GP visit will be funded by the Centre. The staff member may make use of the Medicare funded counselling model by establishing a 'recovery plan' with the GP.

7. Documenting OHS procedures and practices

- OHS procedures and practices are written objectively, in a clear manner and are precise.
- The maintenance of OHS records should comply with OHS legislation and regulations. It is the OHS Representative's responsibility to ensure that OHS documentation is stored according to legislation.

8. Resources, Support and Training

- All educators / staff will receive OHS training on commencement of employment and annually thereafter;
- Training will focus on, but not be restricted to, manual handling, infection control and stress management;
- In addition, training on manual handling will be provided 6 monthly;
- Training will be provided in staff meetings and via online learning as appropriate;
- All permanent staff shall attend Allergy Management Training as soon after commencement as is practical.

9. References

- Community Child Care resource sheet on OHS:
www.cccinc.org.au/docs/resourcesheet_occupational-health-and-safety.pdf (accessed 1/4/2014)
- <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au> accessed 1/4/2014
- Early Childhood Services sample OHS policy (Attachment 23) at
<http://www.ohsinecservices.org.au/earlychildhoodservices> (accessed 15/4/2014)
- Dawson Street Child Care Cooperative OHS Policy -
http://www.dawsonstreetcc.org.au/policies/Occupational_Health_and_Safety_Policy_2012.pdf (accessed 15/04/2014)

BEECHWORTH COMMUNITY CHILD CARE CENTRE

Outdoor Safety Checklist

The following items need to be checked daily prior to the children's outdoor activities:

Items	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Comments
Fencing secure and height as per regulations.						
No items in/near the fence that would assist the children to scale the fence.						
Gates locked and secure.						
Playground free of syringe and other unsafe materials.						
Perimeter of the fence and enclosed areas are checked of any unsafe items or unfamiliar items.						
Sandpit checked to ensure free of animal faeces and broken glass or any other unsafe matter.						
Paths and paving free of hazards.						
Soft fall and grassed areas free of hazards.						
Tyres and other equipment with recessed areas free of snakes and spiders.						
Shade areas under trees are free of falling branches and sticks.						
Checked by:						
Signed:						
Date:						

Appendix 2

Indoor Safety Checklist - Babies Room

(To be completed monthly)

Date:

Completed by:

ITEM/CATEGORY	Checked	In working order	To be repaired or replaced
1) Toys and Equipment: Puzzles Manipulative toys Blocks Dramatic Play			
2) Furniture: tables chairs shelving trolleys CD player Drawers Change Table / area			
3) Bedding: Cots sheets blankets mattresses mattress protectors			
4) Art Supplies: Easel Brushes			
5) Fixed equipment: Curtains/blinds Cleaning equipment Plumbing Doors/windows and locks Carpet/ Flooring			
6) Store Room			
7) Miscellaneous Microwave Fridge Kettle			

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Appendix 3

<u>SAFETY ACTION PLAN</u>					
ROOM.....					
Safety Issue or Hazard	Priority (H = high, M = medium, L = low)	Action Required	Person Responsible	Date of Action to be Completed	Review Date & Comment
Ie - carpet causing trip hazard in front foyer	H	Temporary - secure carpet so that it does not present a hazard. Then investigate getting it professionally repaired or replaced	OHS Rep and Coordinator	31/5/2014	