Early Learning Centre
Water Policy

National Quality Standard Related Standards/Regulations

**Standard 2.2**
Safety: Each child is protected

**Element 2.2.1**
At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

**Regulation 168**
Education and care service must have policies and procedures

Aim

The safety and supervision of children in and around water is a priority. It is acknowledged that water, even small amounts, can pose a significant risk to young children.

Explanation

This policy relates to water play, excursions near water, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the service environment.

Practice

The Nominated Supervisor will provide guidance to educators and families on the importance of children’s safety in and around water.

Educators will:

- Ensure children are closely supervised when a service environment includes areas where water may be used, lay or flow e.g. sand pits and mud patches.
- Ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level.
- Ensure water troughs or containers are emptied onto gardens after use.
- Ensure water play experiences are supervised at all times.
- Teach children about staying safe in and around water.
- Empty buckets used for cleaning immediately after use. No buckets are left in play areas or accessible to children.
- Ensure clean drinking water is accessible at all times. Parents are required to provide a water bottle each day for their child, filled with clean drinking water. Parents are responsible for cleaning and maintaining their child’s water bottle. Educators will refill children’s water bottles if they are empty, with clean tap water.

Operational Safety

- In cases where grey water systems or water tanks are in use, these will be labeled with “do not drink” signage and the children will be supervised in this area to make sure they are not accessing this water for drinking. Educators will discuss with the children that this water is for the purpose of play and not for consumption.
- Hot water accessible to children will be maintained at a temperature no higher than 40c.
- 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 and increased adult:child ratios will be required. Where possible, water hazards will be avoided when planning excursions.
- Adults will never consume hot drinks when around children. Hot drinks may only be consumed in areas that children do not access (e.g. office, staff room) or in other areas where children are not present (e.g. classrooms before or after school). If hot drinks are being transported through areas that may be trafficked by children (to reach a destination where children are not present), adults will check first and then take adequate care as they pass through.

- Any water required for animals’ needs must be changed regularly and only be accessible to children when adults are present.