



# **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

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## **Mandatory – Quality Area 3**

### **PURPOSE**

This policy will provide guidelines and procedures to ensure that:

- all people who attend the premises of Renown Kindergarten, including employees, children, parents/guardians, students, volunteers, contractors and visitors, are provided with a safe and healthy environment
- all reasonable steps are taken by the Approved Provider, as the employer of staff, to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of employees at the service.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

#### **1. VALUES**

Renown Kindergarten has a moral and legal responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for employees, children, parents/guardians, students, volunteers, contractors and visitors. This policy reflects the importance Renown Kindergarten places on the wellbeing of employees, children, parents/guardians, students, volunteers, contractors and visitors, by endeavouring to protect their health, safety and welfare, and integrating this commitment into all of its activities.

Renown Kindergarten is committed to ensuring that:

- the management group, staff and volunteers are aware of their health and safety responsibilities as employers, employees and volunteers
- systematic identification, assessment and control of hazards is undertaken at the service
- effective communication and consultation form a fundamental part of the management process to encourage innovative ways of reducing risk in the service environment
- training is provided to assist staff to identify health and safety hazards which, when addressed, will lead to safer work practices at the service
- it fulfils its obligations under current and future laws (in particular, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*), and that all relevant codes of practice are adopted and accepted as a minimum standard.

#### **2. SCOPE**

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Persons with Management and Control, Nominated Supervisor, persons in day to day charge, educators, staff, children, parents/guardians, students on placement, volunteers, contractors and visitors attending the programs and activities of Renown Kindergarten.

#### **3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION**

##### **Background**

Everyone involved in an early childhood education and care service has a role to play in ensuring the service's operations are safe and without risk to the health and safety of all parties. In Victoria, health and safety in the workplace is governed by a system of laws, regulations and compliance codes that set out the responsibilities of employers and employees to ensure safety is maintained at work.

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (OHS Act) sets out the key principles, duties and rights in relation to workplace health and safety. The *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007*

specifies the ways duties imposed by the OHS Act must be undertaken and prescribes procedural/administrative matters to support the OHS Act, such as requiring licenses for specific activities, or the need to keep records or notify authorities on certain matters<sup>1</sup>.

The legal duties of an **employer** under the OHS Act are:

- to provide and maintain a workplace that is safe and without risk to the health of employees. This responsibility extends to contractors for routine tasks over which the employer has management. For contractors completing non-routine tasks, the employer must ensure that the service's daily operations and layout do not pose unreasonable risks
- to ensure other individuals, such as families and visitors, are not exposed to health and safety risks arising from the organisation's activities
- to consult with employees about OHS matters that will, or will likely, affect employees directly, including identifying hazards and assessing risks, and making decisions about risk control measures.

The OHS Act places the responsibility on **employees** for:

- taking care of their own safety and the safety of others who may be affected by their actions
- co-operating with reasonable OHS actions taken by the employer, including following guidelines, attending OHS-related training, reporting incidents, co-operating with OHS investigations, encouraging good OHS practice with fellow employees and others at the service, and assisting the employer with conducting OHS inspections during operating hours
- not interfering with safety equipment provided at the service, such as fire extinguishers.

### Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Accident Compensation Act 1985* (Vic)
- *AS/NZS 4804:2001 and 4801:2001 Occupational health and safety systems*
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 3: Physical Environment
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007*

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at: Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Accident Compensation Act 1985* (Vic)

### DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

**Duty of care:** A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury. In the context of this policy, duty of care refers to the responsibility of education and care services to provide children, staff, students, volunteers, contractors and anyone visiting the service with an adequate level of care and protection against reasonable foreseeable harm and injury.

**Hazard:** An element with the potential to cause death, injury, illness or disease.

**Hazard identification:** A process that involves identifying all foreseeable hazards in the workplace and understanding the possible harm that each hazard may cause.

**Hazard management:** A structured process of hazard identification, risk assessment and control, aimed at providing safe and healthy conditions for employees, contractors and visitors while on the premises of [Service Name] or while engaged in activities endorsed by [Service Name].

**Harm:** Includes death, or injury, illness (physical or psychological) or disease that may be suffered by a person as a consequence of exposure to a hazard.

**Material safety data sheet:** Provides employees and emergency personnel with safety procedures for working with toxic or dangerous materials. The data sheet includes all relevant information about the material such as physical properties (e.g. melting/boiling point, toxicity and reactivity), health effects, first aid requirements and safe handling procedures (e.g. personal protective equipment, safe storage/disposal and management of spills).

**OHS committee:** A committee that facilitates co-operation between an employer and employees in instigating, developing and carrying out measures designed to ensure the health and safety of employees in the workplace.

**Risk:** The chance (likelihood) that a hazard will cause harm to individuals.

**Risk assessment:** A process for developing knowledge/understanding about hazards and risks so that sound decisions can be made about the control of hazards. Risk assessments assist in determining:

- what levels of harm can occur
- how harm can occur
- the likelihood that harm will occur.

**Risk control:** A measure, work process or system that eliminates an OHS hazard or risk, or if this is not possible, reduces the risk so far as is reasonably practicable.

## 4. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

### Sources

- *Early Childhood Management Manual*, ELAA
- OHS in Early Childhood Services (ELAA): [www.ohsinecservices.org.au](http://www.ohsinecservices.org.au)
- WorkSafe Victoria: [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au)

### Service policies

- *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- *Code of Conduct Policy*
- *Emergency and Evacuation Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
- *Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy*
- *Staffing Policy*

## PROCEDURES

**The Approved Provider and Persons with Management and Control is responsible for:**

- providing and maintaining a work environment that is safe and without risks to health (OHS Act: Section 21). This includes ensuring that:

- there are safe systems of work
- all plant and equipment provided for use by staff, including machinery, appliances and tools etc., are safe and meet relevant safety standards
- substances, and plant and equipment, are used, handled, and stored safely
- material safety data sheets are supplied for all chemicals kept and/or used at the service (refer to: [www.ohsinecservices.org.au](http://www.ohsinecservices.org.au) )
- there are adequate welfare facilities e.g. first aid and dining facilities etc.
- there is appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision for employees

(Note: *This duty of care is owed to all employees, children, parents/guardians, volunteers, students, contractors and any members of the public who are at the workplace at any time*)

- ensuring there is a systematic risk management approach (refer to: [www.ohsinecservices.org.au](http://www.ohsinecservices.org.au) ) to the management of workplace hazards. This includes ensuring that:
  - hazards and risks to health and safety are identified, assessed and eliminated or, if it is not possible to remove the hazard/risk completely, effectively controlled
  - measures employed to eliminate/control hazards and risks to health and safety are monitored and evaluated regularly
- ensuring regular safety audits of the following:
  - indoor and outdoor environments
  - all equipment, including emergency equipment
  - playgrounds and fixed equipment in outdoor environments
  - cleaning services
  - horticultural maintenance
  - pest control
- monitoring the conditions of the workplace and the health of employees (OHS Act: Section 22)
- protecting other individuals from risks arising from the service's activities, including holding a fete or a working bee etc., or any activity that is ancillary to the operation of the service e.g. contractors cleaning the premises after hours (OHS Act: Section 23)
- providing adequate instruction to staff in safe working procedures, and informing them of known hazards to their health and wellbeing that are associated with the work that they perform at the service
- ensuring that all plant, equipment and furniture are maintained in a safe condition
- developing procedures to guide the safe use of harmful substances, such as chemicals, in the workplace
- ensuring that OHS accountability is included in all position descriptions
- ensuring new staff complete OHS training during the induction process
- allocating adequate resources to implement this policy
- displaying this policy in a prominent location at the service premises
- ensuring the physical environment at the service is safe, secure and free from hazards for children (refer to *Child Safe Environment Policy*)
- implementing/practising emergency and evacuation procedures (refer to *Emergency and Evacuation Policy*)
- implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, contractors and parents/guardians
- identifying and providing appropriate resources, induction and training to assist educators, staff, contractors, visitors, volunteers and students to implement this policy
- ensuring the Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, contractors, volunteers and students are kept informed of any relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy
- consulting appropriately with employees on OHS matters including:

- identification of hazards
- making decisions on how to manage and control health and safety risks
- making decisions on health and safety procedures
- the need for establishing an OHS committee and determining membership of the committee
- proposed changes at the service that may impact on health and safety
- establishing health and safety committees
- notifying WorkSafe Victoria about serious workplace incidents, and preserving the site of an incident (OHS Act: Sections 38–39)
- holding appropriate licenses, registrations and permits, where required by the OHS Act
- attempting to resolve OHS issues with employees or their representatives within a reasonable timeframe
- not discriminating against employees who are involved in health and safety negotiations
- allowing access to an authorised representative of a staff member who is acting within his/her powers under the OHS Act
- producing OHS documentation as required by inspectors and answering any questions that an inspector asks
- not obstructing, misleading or intimidating an inspector who is performing his/her duties.

The above list of procedures is not exhaustive. Services must develop specific procedures to be followed in managing hazards and issues identified. Such specific issues include chemical management, purchasing of equipment, hazard identification and risk assessment etc. For more information and guidance, refer to: [www.ohsinecservices.org.au](http://www.ohsinecservices.org.au)

**The Nominated Supervisor and Person in Day to Day Charge is responsible for:**

- ensuring that all educators/staff are aware of this policy, and are supported to implement it at the service
- organising/facilitating regular safety audits of the following:
  - indoor and outdoor environments
  - all equipment, including emergency equipment
  - playgrounds and fixed equipment in outdoor environments
  - cleaning services
  - horticultural maintenance
  - pest control
- ensuring that all cupboards/rooms are labelled accordingly, including those that contain chemicals and first aid kits, and that child-proof locks are installed on doors and cupboards where contents may be harmful
- ensuring the physical environment at the service is safe, secure and free from hazards for children (refer to *Child Safe Environment Policy*)
- ensuring that all equipment and materials used at the service meet relevant safety standards
- ensuring the service is up to date with current legislation on child restraints in vehicles if transporting children (refer to *Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy*)
- implementing and practising emergency and evacuation procedures (refer to *Emergency and Evacuation Policy*)
- implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with the Approved Provider, educators, staff, contractors and parents/guardians
- identifying and providing appropriate resources and training to assist educators, staff, contractors, visitors, volunteers and students to implement this policy

- keeping up to date and complying with any relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy.

**Educators and other staff are responsible for:**

- taking care of their own safety and the safety of others who may be affected by their actions
- co-operating with reasonable OHS actions taken by the Approved Provider, including:
  - following OHS rules and guidelines
  - helping to ensure housekeeping is of the standard set out in service policies
  - attending OHS training as required
  - reporting OHS incidents
  - co-operating with OHS investigations
  - encouraging good OHS practices with fellow employees and others attending the service
  - assisting the Approved Provider with tasks relating to OHS, such as conducting OHS inspections during working hours
- not interfering with safety equipment provided by the Approved Provider
- practising emergency and evacuation procedures (refer to *Emergency and Evacuation Policy*)
- ensuring the physical environment at the service is safe, secure and free from hazards for children (refer to *Child Safe Environment Policy*)
- maintaining a clean environment daily, and removing tripping/slipping hazards as soon as these become apparent
- keeping up to date with current legislation on child restraints in vehicles if transporting children (refer to *Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy*)
- implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, contractors and parents/guardians.

**Students on placements, volunteers, contractors and parents/guardians at the service are responsible for:**

- being familiar with this policy
- co-operating with reasonable OHS rules implemented by the service
- not acting recklessly and/or placing the health and safety of other adults or children at the service at risk.

## **EVALUATION**

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness, particularly in relation to identifying and responding to occupational health and safety issues
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures (Regulation 172(2)).

## **ATTACHMENTS**

**ATTACHMENT 1:** OHS Training Register

**ATTACHMENT 2:** Quarterly Employer Review Checklist

## **AUTHORISATION**

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Renown Kindergarten on 18th July, 2019

**REVIEW DATE: 18TH JULY, 2021**

**ATTACHMENT 1:**

**OHS Training Register 20...**

- As part of our OHS policy staff at Renown must complete OHS training during the induction process when beginning employment at Renown.

The following videos will cover this training requirement:

1. <http://www.ohsinecservices.org.au/node/78>
2. <http://www.recovre.com.au/training-consulting/training-and-consulting-videos/>

Please date and sign below when you have watched them

STAFF MEMBER	SIGNATURE AND DATE TRAINING COMPLETED

OHS training should next be completed in



## **OHS Slide Review - Key points taken from OHS Slide Training**

### **Lifting children**

- ▶ Ensure workers implement appropriate lifting techniques to avoid risk.
- ▶ Reduce the distance the worker needs to bend or reach down or forward.
- ▶ Keep the child close to your body when lifting, carrying and lowering them.

### **Working at low levels**

- ▶ Reduce tasks completed at low levels.
- ▶ Limit the duration of these tasks and rotate with other tasks to limit workers exposure to awkward postures.
- ▶ Provide and use stable lever or bracing points so workers can help support themselves with one or both hands as they move to and from floor level.
- ▶ Provide adult sized adjustable chairs and additional seating options for workers e.g. reading chairs or couches.
- ▶ Include features in outdoor play areas for workers to sit on.

### **Moving equipment**

- ▶ Provide suitable handles or grasping point so workers can get an effective grasp on the object to move it.
- ▶ Store equipment close to where it is used to minimise the need to carry and handle it.
- ▶ Ensure workers implement appropriate lifting techniques to avoid risk.

### **Storing supplies and equipment**

- ▶ Regularly review supplies and equipment in storage areas and discard unneeded objects.
- ▶ Use ladders or step platforms, provided they are safe and stable, to access higher shelves and store them where workers can easily access them.
- ▶ Keep store areas clutter free and use see through containers to group and store smaller items to reduce clutter.

### **Using office areas**

- ▶ Provide an adjustable desk and chair and set it up so it is comfortable for you while you are using the computer or writing at the desk.
- ▶ Take regular breaks away from the desk to stand and stretch or to perform other tasks.
- ▶ Relax eyes by looking away from computer screens or close up work.
- ▶ Keep the space on the top of the desk clutter free and the area under it free from objects and clutter.
- ▶ Place frequently used items within easy reach.

### **Maintaining indoor and outdoor areas**

- ▶ Maintain indoor and outdoor areas so they are free of clutter.
- ▶ Encourage children to assist in picking up toys.
- ▶ Tidy areas frequently so toys do not accumulate.
- ▶ Schedule and record regular inspections and maintenance of all areas of the workplace and all equipment.
- ▶ Design outdoor areas to keep sand and tan bark within a pit or play area and so they don't spill onto pathways where they could be a slip hazard.



## QUARTERLY EMPLOYER REVIEW CHECKLIST

### Recommended Instructions

- 1 Employer who is represented by the COM Facilities Officer is to complete this review at each Employer Management meeting once per quarter/term
- 2 Keep an updated record as attachment to relevant meeting minutes and note in the meeting that the review has been completed. Where it has not been completed then note in minutes when this is scheduled to be completed and after consultation with employees, and other persons/parties as required, agree on action parties.
- 3 Where the employer is not sure of what to do, please follow guidance in Service OHS Issue Resolution Procedure.

**Some services will need to modify their checklists in order to cater for the particular needs of their service.**

### PART 1 OF 2 – NO RISK ASSESSMENT RANKING REQUIRED

	<b>Description of OHS item or issue.</b>	<b>Comment and proposed corrective action for OHS item or issue.</b> Where and when this was first identified? Provide initial date e.g. weekly inspection dd/mm/yy. Employer to consult with employees, and employees to update employer if OHS risk increases. Consider using <i>Health and Safety Consultation Checklist</i> in Attachment 106.	<b>Person(s) responsible for corrective action.</b>	<b>By when?</b> Include revised target dates if required.
1	Are daily checklists being completed? Please include outstanding specific OHS issues from these checklists as separate items in this review table.			
2	Are weekly checklists being completed? Please include outstanding specific OHS issues from these checklists as separate items in this review table.			

3	Has incident/injury register been reviewed and, if there are any, has each outstanding corrective action been copied as separate item in this review table.			
4	Have incidents that were potentially <i>Incidents Notifiable to WorkSafe</i> (refer Section 9.8) been promptly advised to an employer representative?			
	Did an employer representative contact WorkSafe immediately?			
	Was the WorkSafe notifiable incident form completed and forwarded to WorkSafe within 48 hours?			
5	Was each workplace injury or illness, including first aid treatments, promptly attended to?			
	Was injured/ill person comfortable with response?			
	Was a <i>Near Miss, Other Incident and Injury/Illness Report Form (Register of Injuries)</i> completed and kept on file?			
	Has an <i>Incident Investigation Form</i>			

	been completed and kept on file?			
	Was the investigation completed in consultation with relevant employees and others, including witnesses?			
	Please include outstanding specific OHS issues from these investigations as separate items in this review table.			
6	Were there any reported instances or incidents of employees advising an employer representative that a specific manual task was found to be difficult and therefore may pose a manual handling hazard?			
	Are there any new manual handling activities or changes to existing work methods involving manual handling in the last month?			
	If so, was a manual handling risk assessment completed (refer separate form, below)?			
	Were all the action items in the assessment closed out?			
	If relevant, was a <i>Near Miss, Other</i>			

	<i>Incident and Injury/Illness Report Form (Register of Injuries)</i> completed and kept on file?			
	Please include outstanding specific OHS issues from these assessments as separate items in this review table.			
7	Were there any reported instances or incidents of employees advising an employer representative that a specific task involving use of chemicals or work near chemicals possibly exposed them or others to unacceptable or unknown risk of harm?			
	Are there any new chemicals or changes to work methods when using chemicals in the last month?			
	If so, was a chemical risk assessment completed (refer separate form, below)?			
	Were all action items in the assessment closed out?			

	If relevant, was a <i>Near Miss, Other Incident and Injury/Illness Report Form (Register of Injuries)</i> completed and kept on file?			
	Please include outstanding specific OHS issues from these assessments as separate items in this review table.			
8	Have all new employees received OHS induction?			
	Was there any feedback or learning points, and have these been considered by the employer?			
	Has it led to improvements in OHS induction process including <i>OHS Induction Checklist</i> ?			
9	Have there been any OHS incidents including near misses involving contractor activities?			
	Was there any feedback or learning points, and have these been considered by the employer?			

	Was contractor supervisor advised of problem and, if required, have they committed to corrective action?			
	Was feedback from persons involved, including witnesses sought?			
	Were there learning points?			
	Has it led to improvements in OHS contractor management process including contractor Job Start and OHS Induction Checklist for (non-routine task) contractor?			
10	Have there been any OHS incidents, including near misses involving labour hire personnel?			
	Was Labour Hire Principal Consultant advised of problem and, if required, have they committed to corrective action?			
	Was feedback from persons involved, including witnesses sought?			
	Were there learning points?			



	Have these led to improvements in OHS Job Start and OHS Induction Checklist for (routine task – labour hire personnel)?			
11	Have there been any different types (second hand or new) of tools or equipment brought into the service?			
	If yes, was the <i>New Equipment and Tools Assessment Checklist</i> completed?			
	Please include outstanding specific OHS issues from these assessments as separate items in this review table.			
12	Is the Emergency Contact list up-to-date and clearly posted in the service?			
	Do employees and all employer representatives know about where this is posted?			
13	Have there been any <i>Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Corrective Action Forms</i> completed by or reported to the employer?			

	Were all the action items in the assessment closed out?			
	If relevant, was a <i>Near Miss, Other Incident and Injury/Illness Report Form (Register of Injuries)</i> completed and kept on file?			
	Please include outstanding specific OHS issues from these assessments as separate items in this review table.			
14	Are there any outstanding Return to Work (RTW) Cases?			
	Has a designated employer representative been in regular contact with injured/ill employee?			
	Does the employee feel like their RTW needs are being met?			
	And if not are there learning points for employer and others?			
	Have RTW processes (refer to Attachments 107–110 above) been followed, including completion of separate <i>Risk Management and Occupational Rehabilitation Checklist</i> (provided below)?			

	Have hazards associated with potential incident or series of incidents that may have contributed to injury/illness been identified using a <i>Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Corrective Action Form</i> ?			
	Please include outstanding specific OHS issues from these assessments as separate items in this review table.			
15	Were relevant employees invited to attend this meeting?			
	Have employees been asked to raise any OHS items or issues or suggestions with an employer representative, for tabling at this meeting?			
	Please include outstanding specific OHS issues from these assessments as separate items in this review table.			
16	Are there other items to consider that the employer or service families have raised with an employer representative?			
	Please include outstanding specific OHS issues from these assessments			

	as separate items in this review table.			
17	Has the <i>Training Register</i> been reviewed by the employer?			
	Have all OHS and/or Professional Qualifications Training been scheduled with relevant employees?			
	Has there been consultation with relevant employees about this training?			
	Please include outstanding specific OHS issues from these assessments as separate items in this review table.			
18	Are any possible service family or joint employer/employee/family activities planned for the next month? e.g. gardening or working bees, fairs, excursions, incursions?			
	Has there been consultation with relevant employees, service families and others about these proposed activities?			
	Have hazards associated with proposed			

	activities been identified using a <i>Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Corrective Action Form</i> ?			
	Is the employer confident appropriate risk controls/precautions and response measures if something goes wrong are in place for these proposed activities?			
	Please include outstanding specific OHS issues from these assessments as separate items in this review table.			

**PART 2 OF 2 –RISK ASSESSMENT RANKING MAY BE REQUIRED**

	Description of OHS item or issue.	Risk Assessment (Priority Ranking). How likely is injury/illness and how severe could it be?			Comment and proposed corrective action for OHS item or issue. Where and when this was first identified? Provide initial date e.g. weekly inspection dd/mm/yy. Employer to consult with employees, and employees to update employer if OHS risk increases. Consider using <i>Health and Safety Consultation Checklist</i> in Attachment 106.			
		High	Medium	Low	Can you eliminate the hazard source? If so, how? e.g. remove cord that is creating trip hazard.	If you cannot eliminate the hazard source how can you reduce it?	Person(s) responsible for corrective action.	By when? Include revised target dates if required.
19	Other – please provide details							
20	Other – please provide details							

