

FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT SAFETY POLICY

Adequate furnishings and equipment are an essential component of quality Family Day Care services. Under National Law, we have a responsibility to protect the health and safety of children enrolled at our FDC Service. Whilst this is reflected in our health and safety policies, nursery furniture and equipment require careful consideration to minimise risks to all those entering the Service.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

QUALITY AREA 3: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT		
3.1.1	Fit for Purpose	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
3.1.2	Upkeep	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS

103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
105	Furniture, materials and equipment
116	Assessment of family day care residences and approved family day care venues
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
169	Additional policies and procedures- family day care service
170	Policies and procedures must be followed
174	Time to notify certain circumstances to the Regulatory Authority
176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

Victorian Child Safe Standards	
Standard 1	Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued
Standard 2	Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
Standard 3	Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
Standard 4	Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
Standard 5	Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
Standard 6	People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
Standard 7	Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused
Standard 8	Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
Standard 9	Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
Standard 10	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved
Standard 11	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved

RELATED POLICIES

Health and Safety Policy Incident, illness, accident and Trauma Policy Physical Environment Policy	Supervision Policy Work Health and Safety Policy
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PURPOSE

Management and Family Day Care educators have a responsibility and duty of care to ensure that the building (residence or venue), furniture, grounds, and equipment are safe and hygienic. We aim to ensure that all furniture and equipment at the Family Day Care residence or venue adheres to recognised safety standards and is age appropriate for the children.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Coordinator, Educators, Educator Assistants, children, families, and visitors of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Family Day Care Service understands the importance of children experiencing and learning about risk through safe and creative play. All children have the right to be safe. The provision of safe environments for children is essential to prevent injury and enable them to grow and develop. Our FDC Educators will only use furniture and equipment that has been made in accordance with Australian mandatory design standards and follow recommendations from the Kid safe Family Day Care Safety Guidelines.

The Family Day Care Service will ensure:

- assessments are conducted of the Family Day Care residence or venue at least annually to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children are protected
- a proactive process of risk management is implemented, and clear processes are in place for the identification of hazards, risk minimisation and other control measures
- every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm (e.g. not locating a swing too close to a concrete wall)
- National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations and licensing requirements that relate to the safety of children at the Family Day Care Service are adhered to
- records are kept of inspections and maintenance of furniture, playgrounds and equipment
- FDC educators conduct daily/weekly routine visual inspections to identify obvious hazards in surfacing, fixed and mobile equipment, moving parts, swings, ropes, chains, tyres, fences, sandpits
- mandatory Australian Safety Standards are always adhered to when
 - purchasing new equipment or furniture, in particular in relation to cots, prams and strollers, baby dummies and dummy chains, baby walkers, bicycle helmets, and child restraints
 - installing equipment (for example: equipment footings, clustering of equipment, free height fall, swings)
 - entrapment hazards
- the equipment and furniture used in providing education and care at the Service is safe, clean and in good repair
- there is sufficient furniture and developmentally appropriate equipment so each child can take part in the educational program depending on their interests, ages and abilities

- to implement recommendations from organisations, such as Kid safe, on fall zones and suitable heights of furniture, equipment and playground equipment (soft fall such as grass, sand or tan bark)
- the age recommendation in relation to the age and developmental stage of the children using the furniture and equipment is adhered to.
- FDC educators are aware of appropriate instructions for use and supervision for all equipment and furniture
- furniture in the FDC residence or venue is securely built so it will not collapse, is easy to clean, and non-toxic
- entrapment hazards are identified; it is easy for small fingers and limbs to get caught in gaps. Head and upper body entrapments can cause death by asphyxiation. (Be aware that fingers can get caught in holes or openings between 5-12mm, limbs in gaps between 30-50mm and heads in gaps over 85mm.)
- all equipment and furniture are kept in a clean and hygienic state, particularly before and after food service.
- furniture and equipment does not contain any lead. This is most likely to occur with second-hand furniture
- the Regulatory Authority is notified of any serious incident involving serious injury or trauma to a child within 24 hours.

Educators/Educator Assistants will ensure:

- to provide effective supervision of children, including the supervision of infants at all times to minimise the risk of accidents and injuries that could result from the furniture and equipment within the learning environment and nursery
- consideration should be made for the different ages of children at the service and adapt supervision of these play resources accordingly
- they regularly check furniture and equipment for stability and wear and tear- (corners, surface-splinters, missing bike handle grips, faulty cleats in boards or ladders, heavy objects on climbing frames that destabilise the equipment)
- considerations are made about fall zones and heights recommended by Kid Safe

- soft fall is maintained (grass, sand, tanbark or fall mats)
- they keep records of daily/weekly inspection of indoor/outdoor equipment
- that a record is kept of any furniture or equipment that needs maintenance in the *Equipment and Maintenance Record* and this is reported to the Coordinator
- the FDC educator ensures repairs and maintenance is completed as indicated above
- they carefully consider all aspects regarding the use of furniture and equipment and how it suits the age and stage of the children's development
- to regularly test locking devices to ensure they are functioning correctly
- non-toxic, easy to clean surfaces will be sourced for all equipment
- to reflect on common accidents and incidents in the learning environment and implement an action plan to ensure the safety of children and minimise accidents at the Family Day Care Service
- to provide a safe physical environment that allows children to play safely
- they remain up to date with health and safety changes within the early childhood sector by attending appropriate professional development
- the furnishings and equipment within the program support and stimulate children's development
- the Coordinator/Approved Provider and Regulatory Authority are notified of any serious incident involving serious injury or trauma to a child within 24 hours.

Nursery Furniture

- all equipment will comply with compulsory Australian safety standards- (AS/NZS 2172 for cots AS 4684 for highchairs)
- locking devices and stability of cots and highchairs will be checked daily/weekly
- inspections will be made to check bolts and nuts on cots to ensure they are maintained as per instructions supplied with the cot
- nappy change facilities are suitable for children attending the service. Any nappy change table must be sturdy and have:
 - roll-off protection, such as a child safety harness and raised edges
 - ends and sides that are raised at least 100mm with smooth edges
 - no gaps that could injure a child's fingers or toes
- the Nursery area will be free from small objects or items that can break and become a potential hazard
- cots will be positioned away from heaters, power points, windows or curtain and blind cords
- FDC educators will always use furniture and equipment that is free of rough surfaces, sharp edges, points, projections and/or small pieces that can break off

- the use of unsafe equipment such as baby walkers will be avoided
- to reduce the risk of harm, collapsible furniture and furniture that presents possible entrapment hazards will not be used (e.g. toy boxes with heavy lids)
- sleeping infants will be closely monitored at all times
- all infants will be safely secured in their highchair when eating
- FDC educators will ensure that the sides of cots are put up when occupied by children

Consideration requirements when assessing the Family Day Care Residences and Venues

Things to consider when conducting an assessment include:

- are the premises, furniture and equipment suitable for the children who attend the service?
- is fencing and security adequate?
- is there enough furniture, materials and equipment?
- availability of laundry facilities or other arrangements for dealing with soiled clothing?
- suitable toilet, washing and drying facilities?
- is there enough ventilation and natural light?
- have glass windows and doors been made child safe?
- availability of nappy change arrangements for children who wear nappies.
- are there any water hazards, water features or swimming pools at or near the premises?
- are there any animals that could harm the children?
- A record of assessment of family day care residences and approved family day care venues about safety of furniture and equipment

SOURCE:

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Competition & Consumer Commission. (2013). Keeping baby safe – a guide to infant and nursery products: <https://www.productsafety.gov.au/publication/keeping-baby-safe-a-guide-to-infant-and-nursery-products>

Australian Competition & Consumer Commission. (n.d.). Product safety Australia: Mandatory standards: <https://www.productsafety.gov.au/product-safety-laws/safety-standards-bans/mandatory-standards>

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2009) *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*.

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).

Kidsafe NSW Kidsafe (2020) *Family Day Care Safety Guidelines* 7th edition

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	AUGUST 2022	NEXT REVIEW DATE	AUGUST 2023
MODIFICATIONS	• additional regulations added • notification to Regulatory Authority added • points added to Management responsibilities • additional points to Nursery Furniture/Equipment • sources checked for currency • Policy purchased from Child care Desktop		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEW REVIEW DATE