

Emergency management policy

Purpose

This policy will provide a framework for:

- The development of specific emergency management procedures, practices and guidelines, including the identification of hazards in the centre and surrounding area
- Increasing awareness and implementation of emergency action plans.

Policy statement

1. Values

Boroondara Preschool is committed to:

- Providing a safe environment for all children, staff and persons participating in the program
- Ensuring that an appropriate response is provided, which meets the needs of the children, their families and other users of the services during and following emergency incidents
- Providing effective procedures in place to manage emergency incidents at the centre.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the committee, staff, parents/guardians, children, visitors, volunteers and students attending the centre.

3. Background and legislation

Comprehensive emergency management includes prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

There are several emergency situations that may occur at any time, including:

- Structural damage
- Chemical hazards
- Bomb threats
- Missing child
- Intruders (animal or human)
- Toxic leak
- Loss of water, electricity or gas
- Fire and/or bushfire
- The involvement of firearms or other weapons
- Hostage/siege
- Natural disasters, such as floods, severe winds, thunderstorm or earthquake
- Transport accident; for example, on excursion or outside the centre
- Hazardous substances incidents
- Medical emergency (refer to Incident and medical emergency management policy).

- Centres can use the above list to assist in developing risk management strategies and corresponding procedures and practices that will assist centres to administer first aid, evacuate the centre or remain in the service until further notice.
- It is vital that pre-emergency procedures are developed and that strategies for dealing with emergency situations are planned ahead of time to ensure the safety of all involved.
- It is important that services define and identify emergencies that are specific to their environment. For example, services in bushland may develop emergency procedures relating to the threat of bushfires/notification of Total Fire Ban days, which may be different from the fire evacuation procedures for an inner city service (see [Attachment 1](#)).

Relevant legislation may include but is not limited to:

- Children's Services Regulations 2009
- *Children's Services Act 1996*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*.

4. Definitions

Centre: Building and grounds, including the car park, entrance, foyer, children's indoor and outdoor licensed areas, kitchens, storage areas, staff room, office and any community room.

Emergency: A sudden, unforeseen crisis (usually involving danger) that requires immediate action.

Emergency management plan (EMP): A written set of instructions to assist the staff and committee deal with incidents or situations that could pose a threat to life, health or property.

Hazard: The potential to harm a person's health or safety that can arise from the environment, equipment and substances, poor work design and inappropriate practices and procedures.

Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB): Provide a fire and rescue service and are the first to respond to specific medical emergencies. The MFB aims to reduce the incidence and impact of fire and other emergencies on the community. This is achieved through the delivery of educational strategies that assist the community to become more self-reliant, including:

- Fire safety building inspections, and checking firefighting equipment
- Delivering community awareness, education and safety programs.
- Near miss: An incident that could have caused an injury but did not.
- Practicable: Involves doing what can be done in the light of:
 - The severity of the hazard or risk in question
 - The state of knowledge about that hazard or risk and any methods of removing or mitigating that hazard or risk
 - The availability and suitability of ways to remove or mitigate that hazard or risk
 - The cost of removing or mitigating that hazard or risk.
- Occupational health and safety (OH&S): Concern for the physical, mental and social wellbeing of people, in relation to their jobs, tasks and work environment:
 - The elimination or reduction of exposure of people in all occupations to conditions that are adverse to health and safety

- The promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of health, safety and wellbeing at work.

Risk: The chance of something happening that will have an impact on the service achieving its objectives.

Risk management: A structured approach to managing uncertainty related to a threat; a sequence of activities, including: the identification, assessment and prioritisation of risks followed by coordinated and economical application of resources to minimise, monitor and control the probability and/or impact of those risks.

State Emergency Service (SES): Volunteer-based organisation responding to emergencies and working to ensure the safety of communities around Victoria.

State of Emergency: A situation in which government is granted special powers, by constitutional or legal provision, to deal with a perceived threat to law and order or public safety.

WorkSafe Victoria: The manager of Victoria's workplace safety system and their responsibilities are to:

- Help avoid workplace injuries occurring
- Enforce Victoria's occupational health and safety laws
- Provide reasonably priced workplace injury insurance for employers.

5. Sources and related centre policies

Sources

- DEECD, *Children's Services Guide: A Guide to Managing and Operating Licensed Children's Services in Victoria*
- Australian Standards: Emergency control organisation for buildings, structures and workplaces (AS 3745–2002)
- Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Community Education Department
- State Emergency Services, Emergency Management Consultancy Section
- WorkSafe Victoria

Centre policies

- Administration of medication
- Delivery and collection of children
- Hygiene
- Incident and medical emergency management
- Occupational health and safety
- Program participation
- Qualified staff
- Supervision

Procedures

The committee is responsible for:

- Preparing a risk assessment to identify building safety features, risks, hazards and near misses by:

- Observation and consultation
- Regular inspections of the premises
- Reviewing documentation of accidents and potential accidents
- Developing, in collaboration with staff, appropriate procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency
- Ensuring emergency procedures are prominently displayed and practised at least once per term
- Ensuring all infrastructure and equipment are regularly checked for condition and maintenance, including emergency exit lighting
- Ensuring the location of first-aid kits, fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment are clearly signposted
- Ensuring all emergency equipment is maintained on a regular basis in accordance with those requirements specified by regulations, such as the Australian Standards Building Code; for example, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, evacuation kits, sprinkler systems, and alarm or duress systems
- Providing a fully equipped portable first-aid kit (refer to Incident and medical emergency policy)
- Developing a regular training schedule for staff that includes the operation and maintenance of communication and alarm systems, fire detection and suppressant devices; handling of fire extinguishers, fire hoses and fire blankets; evacuation procedures, including evacuation routes and safe places; and occupational health and safety and first aid
- Ensuring staff are provided with necessary information and training to deal with different emergency situations
- Regularly reviewing, evaluating and updating emergency management manuals and procedures (at least annually or following an emergency incident)
- Developing procedures to debrief staff following drills or emergency incidents
- Conducting spot checks of documentation and practices to ensure all requirements of this policy are being complied with
- Identifying with qualified staff member/s when the DEECD is required to be notified as per CSR r90
- Notifying DEECD by phone within twenty-four hours of a notifiable incident and following that up with written notification as soon as practicable (CSR r90)
- Engaging with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade and developing a relationship where fire safety, practical demonstrations and familiarisation sessions occur for the centre, including demonstrations of fire equipment, basic fire safety, smoke alarm, fire blankets and escape plans
- Discussing with regional DEECD staff regarding appropriate and acceptable action to be taken in the event of an emergency or potential emergency, such as bush fire, to ensure there is no risk to funding and licensing agreements
- Ensuring the safety of the centre during severe weather and total fire bans by conducting a thorough inspection of the centre to find out all the potential sources of hazards the centre could be exposed to and taking action to mitigate any risks identified

- Identifying external and internal threats to the workplace
- Planning for more than one assembly areas, primary and secondary
- Considering measures for people of all abilities
- Ensuring staff, such as cleaners and committee who work after hours, are provided with and understand the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency
- Ensuring that all staff understand the requirements of this policy. If a Committee member is not in attendance, staff are responsible for delegating duties to parents and volunteers to ensure the safety of the children. If an adult person does not comply after clear instructions are given twice, that person is accountable for their own actions and the centre is no longer responsible for anything that may happen as a result of their own decision
- Ensuring new staff, students and volunteers have an understanding of centre policy and procedures in relation to emergency management in their induction procedure
- Ensuring procedures are in place to identify which staff are in attendance at any one time

The staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring the safety of the children in their care and protecting children from hazards
- Attending training, following consultation with the committee, for first aid, emergency management and OH&S
- Providing awareness and support to children before, during and after emergencies
- Providing input into the development of procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency situation, and contributing to the review of the procedures following an emergency incident
- Implementing the procedures and responsibilities in this policy and the service's emergency management plan
- Providing a role model to others by following the direction of the authorised person
- Ensuring that the emergency evacuation procedure is displayed in prominent positions and that all visitors, parents, volunteers, contract staff and relief staff are briefed and aware of the emergency procedures
- Ensuring the sign-in book is completed as per the requirements of the centre's Delivery and collection of children policy and CSR r29
- Practising emergency evacuation procedures with the children once a term, recording the dates of practices and response times, and providing feedback to the committee of management regarding effectiveness of drills
- Informing the committee and reporting notifiable incidents to the DEECD (CSR r90)
- Recording incidents in the centre's incident book (CSR r49)
- Reviewing emergency manuals and procedures
- Evaluating the effectiveness of drills and consulting with the committee regarding any modifications required
- Ensuring that all children, staff and volunteers are accounted for in the event of an evacuation
- Developing procedures to deal with loss of critical functions, such as power/water shut off

- Testing alarms and communication systems regularly.

The parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Being familiar with the centre's emergency procedures
- Ensuring children are signed in as per the requirements of the centre's Delivery and collection of children policy and CSR r29
- Supporting children's awareness and education in emergency situations
- Following the directions of staff, including the person in charge, during an emergency, incident or drill.

Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purpose, the committee will:

- Consider feedback from staff, parents/guardians and volunteers regarding the policy and procedures, and ensure that procedures are evaluated and, if necessary, revised following an emergency
- Determine the awareness of staff and other relevant people of the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency
- Review drills to determine their effectiveness, including timing and processes
- Consult with emergency specialists, such as MFB, to ensure the policy and procedures meet current practices.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Emergency management plan

Attachment 2: Sample emergency management plan checklist

Attachment 3: Sample emergency risk analysis

Attachment 4: Sample emergency assessment

Attachment 5: Procedure for dealing with telephone or bomb threats

Attachment 6: Phone threat checklist

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the Boroondara Preschool committee of management at a committee meeting on 25th October 2010.

Review date: 25 / 10 / 2011

Emergency management plan

An emergency management plan (EMP) should be simple, flexible, written, tested and reviewed. This plan should be developed to ensure readiness to effectively deal with any foreseeable emergency, and must be reviewed annually and then revised and reissued if necessary. It is important that the committee consults with external experts—such as the local fire brigade, local council or building owner, and employees—to assist in determining the suitability of procedures and regular practice sessions will be held.

The EMP will be readily obtainable by all staff and prominently displayed at the centre. It will be based both on a practical assessment of hazards associated with the activity or centre and on the possible consequences of an incident occurring as a result of those hazards. External hazards that may also affect the safety of the children and the centre should also be considered when preparing the EMP.

The plan does not have to be too complex. Staff need to know what they have to do when there is an emergency and they may need some training.

Developing an emergency management plan

The procedures outlined in the plan will identify:

- The types of emergencies that may occur
- Who determines what an 'emergency situation' is and how to communicate this to other staff/adults and children
- Appropriate responses to the emergencies that have been identified
- Allocation of responsibilities to deal with these events
- Who needs to be contacted, for example, fire, police, local council, parents/guardians, neighbours and the DEECD
- Who will develop an emergency evacuation pack, containing, for example, family contact details, basic first-aid kit, torch with working batteries, keys for gates and spare mobile phone with charged battery
- How often emergency procedures will need to be practised
- Who makes the decision to have a drill and who puts the drill into action
- Who is responsible for supervising any drills and what processes are in place to evaluate and make necessary changes to practices
- Evacuation procedures.
- Those responsible for developing the EMP will need to consider:
 - The location of the centre in relation to emergency services, such as fire departments, police stations and hospitals
 - Geographic location, such as proximity to other sites that may contain hazardous substances
 - External environment, such as vehicle entries and exits, surrounding vegetation, proximity of roads and volume of traffic

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- Location and condition of the buildings' entries and exits
 - Ability of adults in the centre to assist in an emergency
 - Skills and knowledge of staff and their responsibilities in an emergency
 - Age range of children needing to be evacuated and the complications that may arise; for example, children who are unable to walk, such as sleeping babies
 - Documentation required by staff once the service has been evacuated, such as the contact details of children's families
 - Weather conditions at the time of the emergency and evacuation
 - Contingency plans when regular staff are on leave
 - Inclusion of relief staff, students and volunteers
 - Time of day that the incident may occur
 - Implications of two or more emergencies occurring at the same time, such as a fire and people requiring first aid
 - Centres need to seek recommended practices from recognised authorities, such as:
 - Fire department
 - Police
 - Ambulance
 - State Emergency Service (SES).

The evacuation or lockdown procedure

When developing evacuation procedures the committee will consider:

- Who decides that an emergency exists and that an evacuation or lockdown is required?
- From what criteria is an emergency defined?
- What is the signal to notify persons of an emergency requiring lockdown or evacuation?
- Who contacts the fire brigade/emergency services?
- What roles do other persons perform during an evacuation or lockdown?
- Which exits are utilised during an evacuation?
- How do children and adults exit the centre? For example, is the evacuation procedure different if there are large volumes of smoke? Are children and adults directed to crawl along the ground? If the centre is in a high-rise building, what is the safest exit route to the ground floor? Does it mean that the centre shares the evacuation route with persons not directly involved in the operation of the centre, such as participants in a community activity? How does this affect the centre's evacuation procedure?
- Are any documents, such as the sign-in book, required to be taken from the service during an evacuation? Who is responsible for these documents?
- Does the centre have a portable first-aid kit?
- Where is the assembly area once the centre has been evacuated?

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- What is the procedure once all persons are assembled?
 - How are children grouped and supervised at the assembly area?
 - What happens when there are children or adults missing from the assembly area?
 - What happens if the centre's evacuation exits are blocked by the emergency?
 - What happens if an individual requires first aid or is unable to leave the centre due to an injury?
 - Is there an alternative assembly area if the primary assembly area is affected by the emergency? For example, the assembly area is flooded.

Sample emergency management plan checklist

When developing or reviewing your emergency management plan, the following checklist provides some helpful points.

Responsibilities	Which person/s have been made responsible for specific actions in the event of an emergency, such as appointment of an area warden and first-aid officer? (Note: They should be two different people.)	
	Which employees are trained in how to deal with different emergency situations?	
	Are there clearly defined roles and responsibilities for nominated emergency personnel?	
	Which person is responsible for ensuring that all staff, children and volunteers are accounted for in the event of an evacuation?	Teacher
	What specific procedures are in place if critical functions are lost, such as power shut-off?	
Emergency contact details	Where are the emergency contact details displayed at the centre? Are they in an easily accessible location?	Pink folder in office & exit door + first aid kit we take in evac
	Are the emergency contact details relevant to the types of possible threats?	We don't have emergency contact other than family
	When are the emergency contact details updated?	Each time family changes details
Environment	What mechanism is there for alerting staff of an emergency, such as a siren or bell alarm?	Nothing for staff, 3 whistle blow for children
	Where is the documented site plan illustrating the location of fire protection equipment, emergency exits and assembly points?	On notice board & parent Info booklet
	If there is a site plan, where is it displayed in the centre?	As above
	Are all exits, corridors and aisle ways kept clear of obstructions and does the centre have illuminated exit signs?	Yes
	What procedures are in place for assisting mobility-impaired persons?	Need to consider this as Robyn has immobile child
Training	Are staff given training in how to respond to emergencies at the centre?	Never had training
	Where is the timetable for conducting regular exercises to ensure that the plan works; for example, evacuation drill each term?	MFB folder on shelf above phone in office

Fire protection equipment	What fire protection equipment does the centre have and where is it?	Kitchen & playroom
	Is the fire protection equipment suitable for the types of hazards at the centre?	Yes, checked by MFB annually
	When was the fire protection equipment last tested?	
	What is the schedule for regular checking and maintenance?	Working bee. Council ensure all items checked when required
	Is the fire protection equipment kept clear of obstructions?	Yes
	Are employees trained to use fire extinguishers where required?	Over 2yrs ago – training org by staff
Chemical safety	Where are the current material safety data sheets for all chemicals on site?	On shelf above office phone
	Are all chemicals labelled?	Need to check
	Where are chemicals stored and are they safe?	Comm need to check this to make sure staff doing it correctly
	What equipment is available to initially respond to a chemical incident, such as absorbent material to contain a liquid spill?	Paper towel?
First aid	When did the centre last conduct a first-aid assessment?	Never from Comm
	Which staff have current first-aid training?	All staff
	Does the centre have suitable first-aid facilities, such as a fully equipped first-aid kit?	Yes – bathroom, portable for excursions
	Where is the first-aid kit kept?	Bathroom & exit door
	Has someone been nominated to be the first-aid officer in the event of an emergency and are they aware of their responsibilities; for example, to take the first-aid kit with them in the event of an evacuation?	Yes all staff
	Does the centre have a portable first-aid kit and where is it kept?	Yes exit door
Post-incident follow-up	What are the procedures for notifying WorkSafe Victoria where necessary?	None –we would need to look on Web or centre chart
	What procedures are in place to ensure that the cause of an emergency is determined and action is taken to prevent a similar incident from occurring in the future?	No procedures in place other than what staff may think necessary

	What procedures are in place to ensure the welfare of staff, parents and children after an emergency or an incident, such as medical treatment or trauma counselling?	None
	What are the possibility of and risks to negative publicity— has a risk assessment been done, are there procedures in place for minimising those risks, such as a media management plan?	
Review	Has an emergency practice run been undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the emergency management plan? When?	Each term
	Which person is responsible for documenting and retaining results of EMP practice runs?	Staff
	Which person is responsible for reviewing the emergency management plan and informing staff and the committee of any revisions?	Teachers
Report	Who will need to be provided with a report, such as parents, government departments, council and other staff?	
	Who is responsible for reporting?	

Sample emergency risk analysis

Some examples of threats and possible outcomes analysis of the most likely emergency events that may impact on Boroondara Preschool is shown in the following table.

Threat	Hazards and possible outcomes	Likelihood	Resources required	Resources available	Public response agency
Building fire or smoke	Evacuation required	Moderate	Firefighting equipment and resources	Yes	000
	Smoke and fire damage				
Angry parent	Injury to staff/children				
Power failure or outage					
Chemical Event					
Phone system failure					
Sewerage spill					
Loss or contamination of water supply					
Major violence/terrorism					

Sample emergency assessment

Assessment	Action
Verify the report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm the accuracy of the information provided • Alert other staff and volunteers
Assess the scope of the emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the emergency? • Has the worst already happened? • Can the situation get worse? • Where is it? Is it close enough to be a threat?
Assess the danger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the hazard behaving? • Is it getting bigger or smaller? • Is it getting closer or moving away? • Is it moving quickly or slowly? • Is it affected by weather conditions?
Confirm the report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call 000 (112 on mobile phone) if appropriate
Identify safe areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which areas and access routes cannot be used? • Is it best to remain indoors or leave the building? • How far does the danger area extend?
Move to safe areas if appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seal building if remaining indoors • Contact licensee representative and DEECD • Implement other procedures as appropriate

Procedure for dealing with telephone or bomb threats

Although rare, telephone and bomb threats are an issue that all staff should be made aware of.

Telephone response

- Stay calm.
- Do not panic or make return threats.
- If possible, fill out all the information on the Bomb threat checklist (see [Attachment 6](#)) while you are on the phone to the caller.
- Listen carefully for as many details as you can, including:
 - a. Sex of the caller
 - b. Age of the caller
 - c. Any accents or speech impediments
 - d. Any background noises
 - e. Any key phrases used by the offender
- Ask the caller:
 - a. What the threat is?
 - b. When the threat is to be carried out?
 - c. Where the threat may be located?
 - d. Why the threat is being made?
- Keep the person talking for as long as possible—to obtain as much information as possible.
- While not alerting the caller, have a co-worker contact the police using a separate phone line or a mobile phone.
- Once the call is finished, DO NOT HANG UP—it may be possible to trace the call if the phone line is kept open, regardless of whether the caller hangs up.
- Ensure that all information has been written down.
- Inform management and report the threat to police (000) immediately. Remember to use a separate phone line or mobile phone.

Evacuation

If evacuation is deemed necessary, it should be conducted in a pre-planned and organised manner.

Phone threat checklist

Remember to keep calm.

Details of the person who received the call

Name (print): _____

Signature: _____

Telephone number called: _____

Date call received: _____

Time call received: _____

General questions to ask the caller

- What is it?
 - When will it explode or the substance be released?
 - Where did you put it?
 - What does it look like?
 - When did you put it there?
 - How will it explode or the substance be released?
 - Did you put it there?
 - Why did you put it there?

Bomb threat questions

- What type of bomb is it?
 - What is in the bomb?
 - What will make the bomb explode?

Chemical/biological threat questions

- What kind of substance is in it?
 - How much of the substance is there?
 - When will the substance be released?
 - Is the substance a liquid, powder or gas?

Exact wording of the threat

Analysis of the caller**Sex:** Male Female**Accent:** Australian Middle Eastern British Asian
American European Irish Other (specify)**Voice:** Angry Calm Loud Giggling
Child Obscene Soft Other (specify)**Speech:** Fast Slow Slurred Distinct
Stutter Lisp Distorted Clear
Muffled Other (specify)**Threat language:** Well spoken Irrational Abusive
Message read Incoherent Taped
Other (specify)**Background noise:** None TV/Radio Train
Traffic Music Construction
Sirens Aircraft Voices
Other (specify)**Duration of call:****Estimated age of the caller:****Did the caller appear familiar with the area?:****Other comments:**