

Water Safety Policy

Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to help protect children at River School Early Childhood Centre from potential hazards posed by water	
Scope:	Children attending the service, parents and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements	
Status:	Approved	Supersedes: All previous Water Safety Policies
Authorised by:	Dee Farquharson	Date of Authorisation: 19 Jan 2022
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 • Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 167, 168(2)(a)(iii), 170, 171, 172 • National Quality Standard: Quality Area 2 – Standard 2.3.2 • Swim and Survive • Royal Life Saving • River School Early Childhood Centre Risk Benefit Documentation • River School Early Childhood Centre Work Health and Safety Policy • River School Early Childhood Centre Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma Reporting Form • River School Early Childhood Centre Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma Policy • River School Early Childhood Centre Supervision Policy • River School Early Childhood Centre Child Risk Management Strategy • River School Early Childhood Centre Excursions Policy • River School Early Childhood Centre First Aid Policy • River School Early Childhood Centre Facility Check Procedure 	
Review Date:	Beginning of every year	Next Review Date: 23 Jan 2023
Policy Owner:	AMEL Board	

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022	NEXT REVIEW	23/01/2023
VERSION	1	PAGE	1 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.	

Policy Statement

River School Early Childhood Centre is committed to taking all reasonable steps to protect children attending the service from potential hazards posed by water. Hazards caused by water may be due to hazards created by water-based learning activities, water hazards on service premises and water hazards at excursion locations.

In order to effectively manage and mitigate against water hazards, River School Early Childhood Centre will act in accordance with its Work Health and Safety Policy and utilise River School Early Childhood Centre Risk Management Framework and risk benefit tool to conduct a risk assessment of all water hazards. In accordance with each risk assessment, River School Early Childhood Centre will implement and utilise appropriate controls and treatments to mitigate identified risks. Specifically, risk assessments will be carried out for all:

- Water hazards on service premises including the Wi’ra Creek (Kindy), the Djaa’gan (Pre-Kindy) dry creek bed on Bridge Creek, Maleny.
- Water-based learning activities, such as water play containers.
- Excursions with water hazards, such as beaches and theme parks.

Dependent upon each specific risk assessment, River School Early Childhood Centre risk controls may include the following:

- Maintaining appropriate or above educator-to-child ratios at all times, see the River School Early Childhood Centre Supervision Policy
- Adequately supervising children at all times, see the River School Early Childhood Centre Supervision Policy
- Appropriately planning and carrying out excursions, see the River School Early Childhood Centre Excursion Policy
- Maintaining appropriate numbers of first aiders at all times, see the River School Early Childhood Centre First Aid Policy
- Undertaking checks of the outdoor learning environment at the start and end of each day for water hazards, see River School Early Childhood Centre Physical Environment Check List / Procedure.
- Embedding water safety awareness in the curriculum, see the River School Early Childhood Centre.
- Providing appropriate water safety training, include hazard identification, risk assessment, controls, and treatments to employees.
- Providing current information to parents about water safety, see the River School Early Childhood Centre Parent Handbook.

Additional appropriate risk treatments may be implemented following the risk assessment for each water hazard.

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022	NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1	PAGE	2 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.	

Definitions

Definitions relevant to this policy include:

Water hazards – can lead to drowning or non-fatal drowning incidences. Drowning hazards include large bodies of water, such as swimming pools, rivers, creeks, dams and ponds. Smaller bodies of water, including nappy buckets, water containers, pet water bowls and poor drainage, which allows water to collect, can also present drowning hazards for young children.

Risk Benefit Assessment - Risk Benefit Assessment is an approach to risk assessment that focuses not just on the risks of the activity, but on the benefits of the activity. It is particularly valuable in the context of outdoor learning and play and as such as been adopted by River School Early Learning Centre as a preferred method of risk assessment.

Responsibilities

River School Early Childhood Centre

River School Early Childhood Centre has the following role and responsibilities:

- Take all reasonable steps to protect children attending the service from potential hazards posed by water.
- Conduct a risk benefit assessment of all water hazards that children may be exposed to whilst attending the service.
- Implement appropriate controls and treatments to mitigate identified water hazard risks.

Employees

Employees of River School Early Childhood Centre have the following role and responsibilities:

- Be aware of and act in accordance with River School Early Childhood Centre’s Water Safety Policy.
- Report and remove, if possible, awareness or identification of any water hazards.
- Assist with risk benefit assessments as appropriate.
- Assist with the implementation of risk controls and treatments as appropriate.

Families

Families at River School Early Childhood Centre have the following role and responsibilities:

- Be aware of and act in accordance with River School Early Childhood Centre’s Water Safety Policy.
- Report awareness or identification of any water hazards.
- Assist with the implementation of risk controls and treatments as appropriate.

Implementation

- Awareness – regularly raise awareness of the importance of water safety, including the development and implementation of this Policy.
- Training – provide employees with access to appropriate training in water hazard identification, controls, and treatments.

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022	NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1	PAGE	3 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.	

- Record keeping, monitoring, reporting – keep appropriate records, monitor and report on water hazards, risk benefit assessments, controls and treatments as well as any water safety incidents in line with the service’s Work Health and Safety, Incident, Injury and Trauma, First Aid, Privacy and Record Retention Policies.

Compliance and Monitoring

In line with the *Education and Care Service National Regulations 2011*, River School Early Childhood Centre will ensure that:

- Copies of this policy and any related procedures are readily accessible and available for inspection by the Nominated Supervisor, employees and families; and
- Parents of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before the service makes any change to a policy or procedure that may have a significant impact on the service’s provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service or the family’s ability to utilise the service.

Appendices

Risk Benefit Assessment

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022	NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1	PAGE	4 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.	

Risk Benefit Assessment 2022.

Excursion details			
Date(s) of excursion	Any	Excursion destination	River/ Nature Space
Departure and arrival times	Any time within opening hours in accordance with child pick up and departure times		
Proposed activities	Nature walks, bush tucker collection, free play, nature immersion, art, native animals, bird spotting, maze work, tool work, stonework, tree climbing, stick play, fire play, water play and wading.	Water hazards? Yes	If yes, detail in risk assessment below.
Method of transport, including proposed route	Walking in accordance with weather and traffic conditions. Emergency exit 1: Up creek stairs to oval Emergency Exit 2: Along creek bank to school bridge Emergency Exit 3: Along creek bank (upstream) towards Swimming Hole and into Forest Walkway, exiting at basketball court		
Name of excursion co-ordinator	Katchia Avenell, Julie Hohn, Susanne Reed, Dee Farquharson (depending on group)		
Contact number of excursion co-ordinator	0754999359		
Number of children attending excursion	Between 2 to 22 (3.5-5 years) Between 2 to 16 (2 – 3 years)	Number of educators/ parents/volunteers	2-4 (3.5-5 years) 2-8 (2-3 years)

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022	NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1	PAGE	5 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.	

<p>Educator to child ratio, including whether this excursion warrants a higher ratio?</p>	<p>Whilst standard kindergarten ratio of 1:11 applies for general kindergarten activities, a ratio of 1: 8 will apply to all creek-based activities.</p> <p>1:2 adult to child ration for 2–3 year old children</p>
<p>Benefits to children on excursion</p>	<p>Play; fun; social and emotional development; fine motor skill development; gross motor skill development; upper body and core body strengthening activities; pre-literacy skill and muscle development; the inclusion of children’s voices and learning in completing their own dynamic risk assessments, increasing their ownership of safety and space.</p>
<p>Children’s voices</p>	<p>“I built a cubby! I am the best builderer ever!”</p> <p>“I made a swing. I am swinging through the trees.”</p> <p>“I made fire all by myself. I thought it was out, but then I putted dry stuff on top and it smoked and smoked and now whoooosh! FIRE! What would have happened if I wasn’t here?”</p> <p>“This is the most fun ever”</p> <p>“I really wish I had something like this in my childhood. Perhaps my relationship with school would have been a bit better” (Parent)</p>

<p>LAST REVIEWED</p>	<p>19/01/2022</p>	<p>NEXT REVIEW</p>	<p>19/01/2023</p>
<p>VERSION</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>PAGE</p>	<p>6 of 18</p>
<p>DOCUMENT NUMBER</p>	<p>QA 2.10 This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.</p>		



General						
Activity	Hazard identified	Risk assessment (Use matrix)	Elimination/control measures	Who	When	Modified risk
Walk to and from destination	Car	Moderate	Walk outside of school pick up and drop off times, cross the road together, discuss road safety and awareness; travel on designated paths where possible	Educator		
Free play	Slip/fall/trip minor injury	High	Surface review for possible hazards/ play monitoring	All	Ongoing	
Free play/nature walk	Creek/pond water feature	High	Water safety discussion with children, monitor play, assess rock pools for depth and speed of river flow	All	Ongoing	
Any	Absconding children	Moderate	Identify boundaries children cannot explore past; safety education discussion prior to leaving ECC; parent helper or assistant for children with additional needs; continuous head count. One-on-one ratio for identified children who may abscond.	All	Ongoing	
	Inclusion Support-	High	Review play space to minimise risk set clear	All	Ongoing	moderate

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022		NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1		PAGE	7 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.		



			boundaries with taped areas; physically hold child’s hand and walk perimeter of play space; use clear and simple directions “[Child], hat please.” Use gentle touch to draw attention to verbal instructions; use proximity to ensure child and others safety when negotiating rock spaces; close/open areas dependent on physical capabilities and balance			
Walking	Lawn mower/mowing	Moderate	Monitor lawn mowing location	All	Ongoing	
Nature walks	Snake/bug bite	High	Carry first aid kit, keep first aid cert current Snake stomp and check around play area	Educator	Ongoing	Moderate
Walking	Dog poo	Low		All	Ongoing	low
Bush tucker walk	Child ingests non-edible plant	High	Discuss safe/unsafe foods, do not eat any plants unless strictly advised, watch for poisoning signs	Educator	Ongoing	Low
General	Sun burn/Sun stroke	Low	Temperature within shaded creek area is significantly lower than other areas of the school. Hat, sun safe clothes, remind to drink water bottles. Spare hats and water bottles provided as per sun safe policy. Parents to apply sunscreen as per sun safe policy.	Educator	ongoing	

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022	NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1	PAGE	8 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.	



	Ticks		Wear appropriate clothing, repellent as per Tick policy and parent agreement.	Educator	Ongoing	
	Mosquitos	High	Wear appropriate clothing, repellent as per mosquito policy and parent agreement	Educator	Ongoing	
Toileting	Supervision of children whilst assisting a toileting child	Medium	Ensure visual supervision of children. Communicate supervision requirements with another educator. Encourage independence with support and assistance as necessary. Ensure fresh nappy change of children who are still in nappies. Cleaning of toilets – refer to Cleaning Procedure of Bush Toilets	Educator	Ongoing	
	Handwashing	Low	Water, environmentally friendly soap, hand towels and rubbish bag to be available. Rubbish bag to be collected at the end of excursion and disposed of in main bins.	Educator	Ongoing	
Fire Drill		Low	Fire drills undertaken in collaboration with whole school. Staff to collect children and escort to school oval for head count and clearance.	Educator/Director	Ongoing	
Lock Down		Low	Lock down drills undertaken in collaboration with whole school. Staff to gather children and take upstream to	Educator/Director	Ongoing	

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022	NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1	PAGE	9 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.	



			designated hidey hole. If Lockdown during Art, children to join Year 5 classroom.			
Communication with Office/ability to contact	Limited mobile service	Low	School to provide walkie-talkies. Sync to same channel before leaving.	Educator/Director	Ongoing	
Water Play						
Activity	Hazard identified	Risk assessment (use matrix)	Elimination/control measures	Who	When	
Wading in water	Submerged items, flash flooding, drowning	Medium	Monitor weather conditions; assess water flow, creek bed and rock pool safety continuously; practice water retreat/flood safety protocol	All	Ongoing	
Investigating Rock Pools	Bite/sting/ catfish/ eels;	Low	Animals are generally scared off by the noise and movement of children; practice rock pool checks; educate children on identifying potential animal hazards	All	Ongoing	
	Slip and fall (head/spinal injury; broken bones; impaling on item);	Moderate	Allow children to take as much time as needed moving between rocks and spaces; use movement supports	All	Ongoing	

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022		NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1		PAGE	10 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.		



Jumping into rock pools/water	Spinal injury, head injury, broken bone; impaling on submerged item	Severe	Guide children in safe water entry requirements- walk and wade entry,	All	Ongoing	
Water/River Play	Drowning	Severe	Head count: children to wade (not swim); discuss water safety and swim capabilities with parents and children.	All	Ongoing	
Stick Play						
Activity	Hazard identified	Risk assessment (use matrix)	Elimination/control measures	Who	When	
Swords	Poke/strike another child	Moderate	Discuss 'safe' stick play (no eyes, face or within personal space, etc)	Educator	Ongoing	
Pointers	Poke another child; poke eye	High	Discuss 'safe' stick play (no eyes, face or within personal space, etc)	Educator	Ongoing	
Running	Fall and impale	High	Create stick play boundaries – sticks must point away from body	Educator	Ongoing	
Hitting/drumming/beating	Piece flies off into eye	Low	Discuss safe stick play- choice of sticks	Educator	Ongoing	
Whittling	Cut self;	Moderate to High	Teachable moments' of whittling technique- away from hand. Wear glove on non-whittling hand	Educator	Ongoing	

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022	NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1	PAGE	11 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.	



Stomping to break sticks	Twist ankle; splinters in leg or foot	Low	First aid kit. Teachable moment on safe stick choice, how to break/saw instead.	Educator	Ongoing	
Breaking	Splinters	Low	First aid kit.	Educator	Ongoing	
Sawing	Cut self;	Low	Use junior hacksaw- glove on non-working hands. Teachable moments on sawing technique	Educator	Ongoing	
FIRE PLAY						
Activity	Hazard identified	Risk assessment (use matrix)	Elimination/control measures	Who	When	
As long as fire lit and still glowing	Hot ground.	High	Fire to be lit in raised fire bowl on flat ground only	Activity leader	Ongoing	
	Falls or burns	High	In the event of any falls, burns etc., the workshop leaders are current first aid trained, and First-aid kits will always be located on site.	Activity leader	Ongoing	
	Burns	Moderate	Workshop leader will always light and maintain the fire. For some designated fire activities, children will use flint and fire bowl	Activity leader	Ongoing	

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022		NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1		PAGE	12 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.		



			to light fire during fire work/exploration, under the close supervision			
	Burns	High	Always supervise children closely. Rope Circle around fire not to cross without assistance. One on one approach to the fire for cooking/marshmallow toasting	Activity leader	Ongoing	
	Burns	High	Take children through the process of lighting fires. Make children aware to be careful when moving around the lit fire. Children to remain seated when not involved in fire work or cooking.	Activity leader	Ongoing	
	Sparks/fire create unintentional blaze	High	Appoint a fire warden. Ensure at least one team member who is supervising fire play has completed fire training annually. Staff will ensure a suitable site is found to light fires away from any possible flammable material e.g.: over hanging tree's bushes or brambles.	Activity leader	Ongoing	
	Burns	High	Tongs will be used by workshop staff to remove cooking from fire. Cooked items will be allowed to cool before unwrapping	Activity leader	Ongoing	
	Extinguishing fire	Moderate	Sand or water buckets will be available to put out fires – workshop staff will use the sprinkle method to put out any lit fires and extinguished at the end of the session. Staff will not leave area until certain fire is extinguished.	Activity leader	Ongoing	

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022	NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1	PAGE	13 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.	



Tree Climbing						
Activity	Hazard identified	Risk assessment (use matrix)	Elimination/control measures	Who	When	
Tree climbing	Debris on the bush/garden floor	Low	Inform children of trip hazard and possible risk to allow self-evaluation. Remove where appropriate and children can't assess severity of risk	All	Ongoing	
	Dead wood in tree canopy and dead branches in climbing area	Low-Moderate	Remove dead wood if appropriate and /or avoid the hazard area. Raise awareness of possible fragility of dead wood.	All	Ongoing	
	Slippery surfaces	Low	Raise children's awareness of the hazard and allow self-evaluation. Support children in evaluating weather conditions.	All	Ongoing	
	Drop heights	Moderate	Allow children to self-risk assess and judge own ability. Monitor landing location and involve children in removing serious hazards or change landing location. Support children where	All	Ongoing	

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022		NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1		PAGE	14 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.		



	Protruding branches/stick	Low-Moderate	Remove serious hazards children will not be aware requested. of through consultation with children allowing them to evaluate and self-risk assess	All	Ongoing	
	Unstable/sick tree	Low-Moderate	Contact tree expert for annual assessment if appropriate	All	Ongoing	
Dynamic Risk Assessment						
Activity	Hazard identified	Risk assessment (use matrix)	Elimination/control measures	Who	When	Modified Risk
Determining if creek space is operational	Adverse weather events	Medium	Staff to check BOM (bureau of meteorology) for severe rain events. Educator to monitor cloud cover and wind speed	Educator	Before opening/Ongoing	
	Flooding	Medium	Principal and Lead Educator to monitor river height and flow. Notice of closure to be posted on FB page to notify parents.	Principal/Educator	Before Opening/As required	
	Fire Play	Medium	Lead educators are to monitor and document the daily fire safety with the local council to	Principal/ Lead Educators	Prior to starting fire	

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022		NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1		PAGE	15 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.		



			assess the risk level that the weather conditions or fire bans have on fires.			
	Over-head safety	Medium	Principal and Educator to conduct site assessment, monitor trees for breakage and debris in conjunction with weather and wind events. Notice of closure to be posted on FB page to notify parents.	Principal/Educator	Before opening/ongoing throughout day	
	Including voices of the children	Low	Children are included in the daily benefit risk assessment at the creek, learning to Look Up, Look Around and Look In.	All/Children	Every morning	

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022		NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1		PAGE	16 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.		

Risk Benefit Assessment Plan prepared by	Katchia Avenell & Otty Steinmuller	Date	January 2022
Prepared in consultation with:	Dee Farquharson, Wi'ra Staff as of January 2022, Wi'ra 2022 enrolled Children		
Communicated to: All Parents	Via Facebook, Foyer display		
Venue and safety information reviewed and attached	Yes / No Comment if needed: Not applicable in this assessment		
<p>Reminder: Monitor the effectiveness of controls and change if necessary. Review the risk assessment if an incident or significant change occurs.</p>			

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022	NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1	PAGE	17 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.	



Risk Matrix						
Consequence						
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Almost	Moderate	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Likely	Moderate	Moderate	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Possible	Low	Moderate	High	High	Extreme
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate	High	High
	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	High

LAST REVIEWED	19/01/2022		NEXT REVIEW	19/01/2023
VERSION	1		PAGE	18 of 18
DOCUMENT NUMBER	QA 2.10	This document may be subject to change without notice and is available online. Note: Document is uncontrolled when printed.		