Introduction

Bega Valley Shire Council education and care services are committed to providing healthy environments for children, families and staff.

Strategies

Tobacco, drug and alcohol free environment

Bega Valley Shire Council premises are free of tobacco, drugs and alcohol. These items are not allowed within 30 metres of any education and care service.

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will ensure:

- Any person affected by these substances is not permitted entry to an education and care service.

Safe environments

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will

- Require all Educators, Staff and others use practices that ensure the health, safety and well-being of people in the workplace
- ensure Educators, Staff and others undertake regular inspections of grounds and equipment.
- Workplace Health and Safety Officer is consulted about risk management
- All Educators, Staff and others are consulted about, understand and follow safe work practices
- Ensure there are expert inspections and review of the environment for:
  - pests, spiders, vermin (annually)
  - fire safety (6 monthly)
  - hot water (12 monthly)
  - carpark and traffic (ongoing review)
  - sandpit, soft-fall environment (ongoing review)
  - work health and safety hazards and risks (ongoing) – see Environmental checklist
Safe equipment

The Nominated Supervisors will

- Review equipment, materials and the play environment
- Consult with families and children when purchasing or upgrading areas

Educational Leaders will:

- Consider age, skills, group dynamics, the requirements of adequate interaction and supervision when selecting and setting up environments for children
- Identify the requirements for care and safe use of toys, equipment and materials in the environment.
- Ensure water play area is supervised at all times and that containers of water are never left unattended.
- All climbing equipment is located on the certified soft-fall area and at least 1.3 meters away from poles, fences and other objects.

Educator, Staff and others will ensure:

- all equipment and play areas are checked for:
  - stability,
  - broken pieces,
  - insect infestation,
  - wear and tear.
- Document and report and health and safety issues immediately
- Undertake a risk assessment for any near miss or hazards and identify strategies to address these risks or hazards
- Remove any risks or hazards from the workplace
- Ensure signs are placed on any items that cannot be removed to warn others of the risk or hazard

Hazardous materials

Educators, Staff and others will ensure:

- All household cleaning products, household products and medications are kept in their original containers, or clearly labelled and stored in cupboards or shelves not accessible to children. This means out of reach or with childproof locks.
- Knives or other dangerous items are stored in a locked cupboard or storeroom and kept out of reach of children.
- The door to the laundry and poisons storage area is kept locked at all times and any hazardous materials are kept in a cupboard with a child-proof catch.
- Power points have protective shutters, or are fitted with protective plugs.
- Children are only permitted in play areas. This means children under 5 will not enter the in kitchen, laundry, staff room or adult bathrooms.
- The door to the kitchen is be kept closed when not in use
- Liquid spills (e.g. water) on floors are cleaned up immediately. Particular attention should be given to the bathroom area and the lunch area.
- Plastic bags are stored out of reach of children at all times.

**Supervision of the environment**

Educational Leader, Educators and others will:

- Supervise children in and around the services at all times in ways that reflect each child’s skills, abilities and learning style and the types of experiences that children are undertaking (See also: BVSC Respectful Behaviours Policy)
- Position themselves where they can interact with children and reach them quickly if needed, particularly when children are using climbing equipment
- Ensure supervision maintains child: staff ratios and responds effectively to individual skills and group dynamics
- An educator or other staff member is always in the outdoor playgrounds/ softfall areas if it is in use by children.
- Be aware of the special interaction, care and supervision requirements of infants and toddlers, particularly when these children are involved in play in close proximity of older children.
- Ensure all staff breaks are covered so that staff: child ratios remain consistent throughout the day.
- Inform other educators if leaving the room or outdoor area for any reason and if necessary, ask another staff member to replace them in their role.
- Students, volunteers, and visitors are not given sole responsibility for supervision of children at any time.

**Preventing the spread of infection**

There are 4 steps to the spread of infections

1. The person with the infection spreads the germ into the environment
2. The germ must survive in the environment
3. The germ is passed to another person
4. The next person becomes infected.

Preventing the spread of infection will be based on 4 key elements:

- Information provided to families, children and staff about good hygiene, immunisation and exclusions (Refer Immunisation, exclusion and medication policy)
- Effective hand washing
- Personal protection
- Environmental hygiene and infection control

**Information to families**

The Nominated Supervisor and Educational Leader will

- Ensure information about good hygiene, immunisation and exclusion is published, displayed and promoted with staff, families and children.

**Effective handwashing**

All children, families Educators, Staff and others will

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap (or soap-substitute) and water following the established procedure:
before preparing food
before serving food
before eating food
before administering medication
after wiping a nose
after toileting
before and after changing a child's wet/soiled nappy or pants
before and after administering first aid.

Personal protection

Educators, Staff and others will

- Use disposable gloves in the following circumstances:
- when involved in handling blood, body fluids or preparing/serving food
- when they have broken skin (e.g. cut, abrasion, dermatitis) and are at risk of exposure to infection
- when handling food

Environmental hygiene and infection control measures

Individual use

Educators, Staff and others will

- ensure the following items are for Individual use and/or cleaned and disinfected/sanitised between children:
  - beds, bedding and bed linen
  - face washers
  - clothing
  - hats
  - combs, brushes or other hair items
  - dummies, toothbrushes, bottles, food utensils

Cleaning, sanitising, disinfecting

Educators, Staff and others will:

- Ensure all shared items of equipment, toys and spaces will be regularly cleaned, sanitised, disinfected following procedures displayed in the education and care service, material safety data sheets and individual care instructions using the following as a guide:
  - Immediately:
    - Blood or body fluid spills: Soap and hot water, disposable towel
    - Clothing, cloths, materials soiled by blood or body fluids: Sanitising solution prior to hot water washing in the machine, or follow procedure for isolation and containment outlined in the service.
Between Children (and when soiled):
  i. Beds/ cots
  ii. Bedding and clothing: Hot water machine wash
  iii. Soiled face-washers, bedding and clothing items: Sanitising solution prior to hot machine wash
  iv. Dummies: Individual use and clean with hot soapy water
  v. Nappy change surfaces: Following displayed guidelines

Daily:
  i. Items placed in mouths by infants or children who are unwell: Dishwasher, hot water and soap, or sanitising solution. Air dry

As necessary and regularly throughout the day, following displayed guidelines:
  i. Bathrooms, toilets: Disinfectant
  ii. Tables, chairs: Hot soapy water
  iii. Floors: Hot soapy water

Weekly
  i. Plastic construction materials, puzzles, blocks, soft toys etc: Disinfect and air dried; Hand washed in detergent and hot water, rinsed and air dried; Hot water was in machine and air dried
  ii. Beds/ Bedding

Maintain environmental cleaning records

Educators will:
- Keep a record showing date and items cleaned and disinfected.

Evaluation

No person affected by tobacco, drugs or alcohol has access to an education and care service. Good personal and environmental hygiene and safety practices are followed by children and adults.

Legislative requirements

- Education and Care Services National Regulations, 2011
- NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000

References

- Bega Valley Shire Council policy 3.02 Land Under BVSC Jurisdiction and subsequent procedure 3.02.2 Outdoor smokefree Bega Valley Shire Council policy 5.05 Work Health and Safety and subsequent procedures
- Bega Valley Shire Council Children’s Services, Immunisation, Illness exclusion and Medication Policy, Operational Draft, June 2012
- Community Child Care Co-operative, Sample Policy, Infectious diseases
- National Health and Medical Research Council, Staying Healthy in Child C