

Intereach Family Day Care Facilities and Equipment Procedure



Applies to	Intereach Family Day Care (FDC)				
Policy	NQS Three: Physical Environment Policy				
Version	3.0	Date approved	30/03/2026	Next review date	30/03/2029

1. Objective

To ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of children by maintaining safe, clean, and functional facilities and equipment in all Family Day Care residences, in alignment with the Education and Care Services National Law, National Regulations, and the National Quality Standard.

In all decisions related to assessing, maintaining, or approving facilities, equipment, or environmental arrangements, the safety, health, and wellbeing of children remains the paramount consideration.

2. Background

Family Day Care educators provide education and care within the home environment; therefore, the safety and suitability of facilities, furniture, equipment, and materials play a critical role in protecting children from harm and hazard.

The National Law and Regulations require that all Family Day Care environments are secure, well-maintained, hazard-free, and appropriately equipped to support children's learning and wellbeing.

Maintaining safe facilities and equipment ensures high-quality care and reduces risks of injury, illness, and environmental hazards.

3. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Nominated Supervisor and Coordination unit staff to:

- Be familiar with and implement the Facilities and Equipment Procedure and support educators in line with this procedure to:
 - ensure Family Day Care Residences meet the physical environment and equipment requirements as outlined in the education and care National Law and Regulations and Intereach Family Day Care policies and procedures;
 - ensure outdoor and indoor facilities, equipment and environment are suitable for their purpose;
 - ensure educators complete and document daily safety checklists;
 - ensure relevant national, state and local government requirements are adhered to; and,
 - complete an initial home safety risk assessment and reassessment at least annually.

It is the responsibility of the Educators and staff to:

- always adhere to the facilities and equipment procedure along with any other relevant policies and procedures;
- provide adequate supervision to all children within the environment and while using equipment;
- maintain a safe, clean and hazard free environment;

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- complete and record daily safety checks; remove any unsafe items immediately from use;
- conduct risk assessments for higher risk experiences and any renovations being undertaken; and,
- maintain all equipment in good repair; follow manufactures instructions and applicable Australian Standards.

It is the responsibility of families to:

- inform educators of any accessibility needs or known risks relevant to their child;
- provide feedback or raise any concerns about facilities and/ or equipment; and,
- follow safety expectations when entering / leaving the residence or venue.

4. Procedure

4.1 Facilities

4.1.1 Building, repairs and maintenance

- A safe and secure environment is to be provided through prompt attention to building and equipment repairs and maintenance;
- Buildings and all equipment are to be maintained in a safe, clean condition and in good working condition at all times;
- Prior to undertaking any considerable renovations or alterations, educators must consult with the coordination unit to assess the potential impact on the health, safety, and wellbeing of children.
 - A risk assessment will determine whether education and care can continue or must be suspended until renovations are completed
 - If it is determined that education and care cannot be safely provided during the renovation period, the educator must cease providing education and care until the renovations are complete.
- If education and care are allowed to continue, families must be informed of the renovations and the risk minimisation strategies in place.
- Once renovations are completed:
 - The educator must complete a new Home Safety Risk Assessment Audit document;
 - Staff from the coordination unit will conduct a site review to assess the updated environment;
 - Education and care can only recommence once the coordination unit confirms the space is safe and suitable.

4.1.2 Glass

- Any glass surface under 0.75 metres must be approved safety glass or must not be accessible to children.
 - This includes any glass in areas within, a family day care residence or an approved venue, including areas that are used by children to access the approved space such as a front door.
- If glazed areas such as glass panelled doors and low-level windows are accessible to children, then they must be:
 - glazed with safety glass if the Building Code of Australia requires this; or
 - treated with a product that prevents glass from shattering if broken (such as a safety film); or,
 - guarded with barriers that prevent a child from hitting or falling against the glass; and,

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- where glass is present in a door or side panel it is marked to be visible at child and adult height with glass safety stickers.
- FDC educators must provide evidence of any products that are applied to prevent shattering to the Coordination Unit and ensure the documentation is available for inspection at the premises.

4.1.3 Water Safety

- The Water safety procedure is to be followed in relation to any swimming pools, spas, ponds, dams, and water features.
- Ensure all handwashing taps are either regulated to a maximum of 50°C, covered with a lockable device, mixer tap lock or switched off. Options included fitting a:
 - tempering valve – these are fitted to the water pipeline and mix hot and cold water to a specific temperature, adjustable between 35°C and 50°C, or,
 - hot water shutdown devices – these are fitted to the end of a tap and automatically cut off water flow once the water reaches the pre-set temperature.
- Hot water systems accessible to children are checked to ensure that elements do not pose a risk to children, where required these are covered or made inaccessible to prevent harm.

4.1.4 Outdoor Space

Outdoor spaces allow children to explore the natural environment.

- Appropriate shade is to be provided.

4.1.5 Fencing

- Any outdoor space used by children is enclosed by a fence/barrier of height and design that children of preschool age or under cannot go through, over, or under.
- Where secure fencing is not available, entrances and exits to premises are locked.
- Gates and fences are secure and regularly inspected; surfaces are free of sharp objects and other hazards.

4.1.6 Indoor spaces

- Indoor areas are to be well-ventilated, have adequate natural/artificial light, and are maintained at an appropriate temperature.
- Heating and cooling systems, including controls and cords, are to be maintained and kept out of reach of children.
- The Nappy Changing, Toileting and Bathing Procedure is followed.
- Laundry facilities or other arrangements are in place for soiled clothing.

4.1.7 Pest management

- A clean, safe, vermin-free environment is maintained.
- Records of any pest control (inspection and/or eradication) are kept and available on request.

4.1.8 Storage and Chemicals

- Storage areas are cleaned and tidied as necessary.
- Strictly adhere to the direction for use on product labels.
- All hazardous items are stored in a designated secured/inaccessible area.
 - Hazardous chemical signs are displayed where chemicals are located.
- The use of chemical substances is avoided where possible and the least dangerous product that will do the job will be chosen.

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- Chemicals and detergents are chosen with child-resistant lids or caps.
- Safety Data Sheets (SDS) are maintained for all chemicals used.
- Safe and secure storage is provided for all indoor and outdoor equipment, ensuring appropriate equipment remains accessible to children to encourage independence (where safe to do so).

4.2 Equipment Safety and Use

4.2.1 General

- Children are encouraged to respect equipment.
- Manufacturer instructions are readily available and followed.
- Australian Standard documentation (where applicable) is maintained.
- All equipment/resources are clean, in good condition, and regularly washed.
 - Broken equipment is removed or made inaccessible.
- All materials are checked for potential hazards before use.
- Tools, especially sharp/hot tools used for activities, are handled safely with close supervision.
- Button batteries are not used in resources/equipment in the education and care space.
- Pillows and bean bags that contain "beans" are not used in the service setting (small play bean bags excepted).

4.2.2 Sleep & Nursey Furniture

- Educators must ensure that:
 - They are familiar with the safe sleep and rest procedure
 - All sleep furniture complies with Australian safety standards, including:
 - Cots: **AS/NZS 2172**
 - Portable cots: AS/NZS 2195
 - Bassinets are not used
- Infant sleep products and inclined non-sleep products must be supplied with safety information on the use of the product and warning label affixed to the product during its lifecycle at the service.
- Use of inclined sleep products. These products must have an incline of no more than 7 degrees to reduce the risk of suffocation from chin to chest position.
- A range of inclined non-sleep products not intended for sleep, such as rockers and bouncers, are now covered under the mandatory standards. These products must only be used for their intended purpose, and children must not be left unsupervised when using these products.
- All sleep furniture and equipment is checked daily.
- Prams and strollers are fitted with a 5-point harness, red actuator brake, and meet Australian Standards.
- Highchairs are fitted with a 5-point harness and meet Australian standards.
- Australian Standard documentation (where applicable) is maintained.

4.2.3 Play, Trampolines and Surfacing

- Play equipment is regularly maintained: lubricate bearings, re-tension fastenings, sand wooden components (to remove splinters), paint/treat surfaces as needed.
- Trampolines:
 - Mini-trampolines or trampolines with secure netting only.

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- Only one person on a trampoline at any time.
- No additional resources (e.g., balls) to be used on trampolines.
- A higher-risk experience risk assessment is required.
- Only trampolines with nets or those less than 60 cm in height are permitted.
- All play equipment over 60 cm is recommended to be placed on certified impact-attenuating surfacing.
 - Where certified surfacing is not used, equipment must be on soft surfacing (e.g., well-maintained lawn), positioned away from barriers and other equipment.
 - Higher-risk experience risk assessments are required where certified surfacing is not present.
- Bikes with accessible chains and motorised toys are made inaccessible to children (bikes with chain guards are permitted).

4.2.4 Sandpits

- Sandpits are covered, regularly raked, and maintained to prevent contamination.

4.2.5 Swings

- Use of swings is permitted only with a higher-risk experience risk assessment completed and approved.
- Written permission from families is to be obtained before children use swings.
- Swing requirements:
 - Must have no more than three (3) swings per bay.
 - Swing frames are secured in ground (e.g., pegs or concrete footings).
 - There is no unintended access to the top of the frame.
 - Swings are set up on certified surfacing with a minimum impact area of 1500 mm between each piece of moveable equipment.
 - Suitable loose-fill materials include bark mulch, wood chips, wood fines, grape seed, and sand

5. Supervision

- Refer to the [Supervision](#) of Children procedure.
- Children are always adequately supervised when using equipment and during higher-risk play.
- Sleep rooms allow for visibility and frequent checks in line with safe sleep procedures.

6. Emergency response

- Medical advice is sought immediately if poisoning or potentially hazardous ingestion, inhaled, skin or eye exposure has occurred. Poisons Information Line is contacted on 131126 for more information and/or Triple Zero ('000') is called to request an Ambulance.
 - If a serious incident occurs the Nominated Supervisor will contact the Regulatory Authority through the NQA IT System. (*Refer to Notification of serious incident Procedure*).

7. Monitoring, evaluation and review

This procedure will be reviewed every three years and incorporate feedback and suggestions from children, families, educators, coordinators, volunteers and students.

8. National Quality Framework

Element	Concept	Description
3.1.1	Fit for purpose design	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.
3.2.1	Use inclusive environment	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
3.2.2	Resources support play-based learning	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.

9. Context

Standards or other external requirements	Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, (2017), National Quality Standards (2020) Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017), Guide to the National Quality Framework (2020) Immig, J. (2000), The Toxic Playground Caton, S, Roche, D. (1999), Managing the Risks in Children's Services EPA. Handling Pesticide Waste, www.epa.nsw.gov.au Tarrant, S. (2002), Managing OHS in Children's Services Kidsafe. (2020), FDC Safety Guidelines, 7th edition Tansey, S. for NCAC (2006) Safety in Children's Services http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/educator-resources
Legislation or other requirements	Education and Care Services National Regulations consolidated 2017 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 Building Code of Australia
Internal Documentation	Children's Services Physical Environment Policy FDC Home Safety Risk Assessment Audit Assessment and reassessment of FDC residence and venue WHS Incident Response Procedure Children's Services Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness procedure Water Safety Procedure Nappy Changing, Toileting and Bathing procedure Supervision Procedure (of Children)

10. Document control

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Next review date
1.0	11/06/2020	R. Phillips - Acting Senior Manager, Children and Family Services	11/06/2023
2.0	03/03/2023	M. Piffero – General Manager, Operations	03/03/2023
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