

OP52 Risk Management Policy

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1 Purpose

The Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations do not define risk. However, section 167 of the National Law requires the Approved Provider ensures that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury. Further, Quality Area 2 of the National Quality Standards is aimed at safeguarding and promoting children's health, safety and wellbeing while minimising risks and protecting children from harm, injury, or infection.

Additionally, Safe Work Australia has a code of practice for guidance for any persons conducting a business who have a duty of care to their employees. This Code of Practice on how to manage work health and safety risks is an approved code of practice under section 274 of the Work Health and Safety Act (the WHS Act).

This policy details the key principles adopted by Petit ELJ to ensure that appropriate precautions are taken within each service to ensure hazards and risk are identified, assessed and managed to ensure a safe environment is provided for all children, employees including contractors, families and visitors.

2 Scope

The Approved Provider, Operations Managers, Nominated Supervisor/Centre Director, and employees including contractors are all responsible for ensuring they are aware of and appropriately manage any hazards and risks which may cause harm, injury or infection within Petit ELJ services.

3 Definitions

Excursion – Any outing away from the principal place of care (ie. outside the Petit ELJ premises) is considered an "excursion". For clarity this does not include activities which may take place in the centre carpark as this area is a part of the centre premises and the children are not leaving the premises, and includes regular outings.

Incursion - means an activity organised by the service whereby an external third party is engaged to visit the service to run an activity or educational program designed to promote culture and diversity. These visits can occur on an ad-hoc, one-off or regular basis. For clarity, activities which take place in the centre car park such as a visit from the local Fire Service are classified as an incursion.

Hazard – refers to a situation or element that could result in an individual getting injured. Not every hazard will have a harmful outcome. Understanding the likelihood and potential severity of harm is essential in mitigating hazards without unnecessarily restricting risk and challenge from the learning environment. Recognising the possibility and potential severity of harm will help to determine whether the hazard needs to be managed and to what extent. Examples of possible hazards include: open water trough in a play space, a broken piece of equipment that is unstable, unsafe or has sharp edges, outbreak of possible infectious disease.

Regular transportation – The transportation by the service or arranged by the service of children to and from school to support OSHC programs, where the circumstances relevant to a risk assessment are substantially the same for each occasion on which the child is transported.

Risk- A risk is any situation where the outcome is uncertain, where there is a chance that harm will occur. A risk of harm to someone occurs when a hazard can't be removed. If a hazard can't be eliminated, the potential for injury must be minimised and the risk managed on an ongoing basis ([SafeWork NSW](#)).

Risk assessment – is one part of risk management. It is the process by which specific risks are evaluated and addressed. Undertaking a risk assessment means evaluating or deciding which risks are significant and how they should be addressed. It involves critical reflection on the benefits and hazards identified within the service, such as an experience, excursion, practice, piece of equipment or learning environment.

Risk management – describes the efforts of the whole service or organisation to mitigate risks and hazards. It is the term applied to a logical and systematic process of establishing the context, identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating, monitoring and communicating risks associated with any activity, function or process in a way that will enable organisations to minimise accidents and maximize safety.

Stakeholder – a person or group of people who have an interest in a business a person such as an employee or customer. They have a sense of responsibility toward it and an interest in its success.

4 Policy principles

Petit ELJ is committed to the health and safety of all stakeholders in Petit ELJ's services.

- All children have the right to be safe. The provision of safe environments for children, employees including contractors, families, and visitors is essential for the prevention of harm, injury, or infection.
- Petit ELJ is aware that effective risk management starts with a commitment to health and safety from those who operate and manage the business. Involvement and co-operation of all employees including contractors is a vital step.
- Risk management involves the identification and assessment of potential hazards and the developing of Risk Assessment and Management Plans to implement actions and control measures to ensure identified risks are managed appropriately or eliminated.
- Risk management also involves the continual monitoring, evaluation and review of Risk Assessment and Management Plans.
- Risk benefit analysis forms a vital part of Petit ELJ's approach to risk assessment as this ensures risks and benefits are considered alongside each other. It allows legislative requirements to be met while promoting a reasonable and balanced approach to learning and play.
- Risk assessments will include not only consideration of what is an acceptable risk but also consideration of the consequences of not offering children to take on acceptable risks in their play.
- Supervision is critical to the safety of children. Adequate supervision is dependent on the context in a setting at a particular time, considering the abilities of the individual children and the specific features of the environment. It is recognised as one strategy to mitigate risks and hazards that may arise in the daily routines and play of children.
- Management of risks and hazards is embedded in daily practice of each Petit ELJ service.

5 Policy implementation

RISK MANAGEMENT CYCLE

Petit ELJ ensures that all employees including contractors understand they have a duty of care to follow the principles of risk management in their day-to-day duties to ensure the safety of children, staff, families and visitors at all times.

The principles of risk management are embedded in the risk assessment and management cycle as follows:

1. Identify the hazard or potential hazard

- A hazard is anything that could cause harm such as broken or dangerous equipment, poor practices, or systems. A hazard could also be new equipment introduced to children – although the equipment is meeting all safety standards, children will need to be educated in the correct use of the equipment.
- Types of hazards can be biological, chemical, environmental, facilities (building premises, furniture, equipment), vehicles, machinery, the manual handling of equipment, and social-emotional. People including children, can also pose a risk through their behaviours.
- **In practice:** hazard identification can be done by:
 - being vigilant across the whole of the service environment
 - through the use of Petit ELJ [Safety Check List – Outdoor Daily](#), [Safety Check List – Indoor Daily](#)
 - discussing hazards and hazard identification at team meetings on a regular basis

2. Assess the risk

- After identifying hazards or risks, the next step is to assess the risk of harm or potential harm by considering the following:
 - How likely is it to happen?
 - How often might it happen?
 - How serious is the outcome?
 - What are the possible consequences?
 - Are there any potential benefits to children’s learning, development, and well-being?
- The Risk Matrix, which is outlined in the Petit ELJ [Risk Assessment and Management Plan Form](#), is to be used in this assessment process. The Risk Matrix assists in identifying and prioritising the level of risk by looking at the likelihood that a negative event may occur, and the severity of the consequence should it occur.
- **In practice:** the [Risk Assessment and Management Plan Form](#) is used to guide and document the assessment of the risk of possible harm in Petit ELJ services.

3. Manage the risk

- The next step is to identify and implement an appropriate level of control measures to manage the risk or hazard.
- Control measures are strategies and actions to be implemented to manage, eliminate, or reduce hazards and potential risks. Control measures significantly reduce the likelihood of the hazard or risk causing harm.
- The following table outlines 3 levels of control measures and provides examples:

Hierarchy of control		Examples of control measures
Level 1 (Most effective)	Elimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Remove the hazard. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken toy or damaged resource is disposed of or removed from use until repaired. ○ Change the practice. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food delivery taken directly to the kitchen to eliminate manual handling of bulky items to kitchen by educators
Level 2	Substitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Replace heavy items with those that are lighter, smaller and / or easier to handle

Hierarchy of control		Examples of control measures
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Replace damaged equipment with new equipment
	Isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Secure the hazardous area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Separate unwell children from others ● Barricade off a wet floor to avoid slipping hazards
	Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Change procedures and / or routines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use ergonomic cots with a higher base height to reduce manual handling and back injuries for educators ● Provide adult sized chairs for educators
Level 3 ** (Least effective)	Administrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implement new systems and process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rotate educators between different tasks to avoid repetitive strain ● Arrange workflows to avoid peak physical and mental demands towards the end of a shift
	Personal Protective Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use gloves while changing nappies or cleaning bodily fluids ○ Wear closed-in shoes to avoid injury ○ Wear hats and sunscreen outside

** Level 3 control measures are considered the least effective as they rely on consistent implementation.

- **In practice:**
 - Risks or hazards relating to unsafe or broken equipment / furniture / machinery or to hazardous objects will be addressed immediately through the removal of the item or by barricading it from further use until repair or replacement.
 - Items requiring repair will be recorded in the Maintenance Book
 - Other hazards or risks including all serious hazards or risks must immediately be notified to the Nominated Supervisor /Centre Director or Responsible Person who will determine how they are to be appropriately managed.

4. Evaluate the risk

- After managing the risk or hazard using appropriate control measures, the next step is to evaluate the current risk or potential harm and decide if the processes and / or practices implemented have effectively eliminated or controlled the risk by considering the following:
 - Is the likelihood and consequence of the risk of harm now reduced?
 - How well is the risk of harm managed or eliminated?
- If the risk of harm is still high, then the following is to be considered:
 - What alternative control measured can be introduced?
 - Is this the best possible outcome?
- **In practice:** the Risk Matrix, which is outlined in the Petit ELJ Risk Assessment and Management Plan Form will help determine if the best possible outcome has been implemented.

5. Review the Risk

- It is crucial to monitor the risk of harm regularly as this ensures that the risk of possible harm continues to be managed as low risk.

- The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor / Centre Director, educators and employees including contractors and sub-contractors must be vigilant in scanning and assessing the risk of potential harm with any Petit ELJ service.
- **In practice:** this can be done by:
 - completing Petit ELJ Safety Check List – Outdoor Daily and Safety Check List – Indoor Daily
 - completing regular WH&S inspections
 - discussing risk assessment and management at team meetings on a regular basis
 - regularly reviewing the Assessment and Management Plans within the service including those for Regular Transportation, Excursions, Medical Conditions and Health requirements and COVID-19.

AREAS OF RISK

- The Petit ELJ Risk Assessment and Management Plan Form is used to ensure effective risk management has been undertaken, and that all elements of the risk assessment have been clearly communicated with educators and employees including contractors, who will be directly involved with any situation in which the hazard or risk may occur
- The Nominated Supervisor / Centre Director must ensure that the Risk Assessment and Management Plan Form is used to document the service's assessment of identified risks and hazards in the following instances:
 1. The physical environment of the service.
 - This Risk Assessment and Management Plan Form is in respect of identified risks or hazards located within the service premises – both indoors and / or outdoors and should include areas not usually accessible to children.
 - The focus of this Risk Assessment and Management Plan Form is on the hazard or risk itself rather than its location, recognising that many hazards are associated with moveable objects such as furniture, resources, equipment, and machinery.
 - It will include any water hazard at the service and or water-based activity undertaken at the service.
 - It will include activities that involve risk taking for children.
 - It will include regular incursions within the service. Ad-hoc / irregular / one-off incursions will be subject of a separate Risk Assessment and Management Plan Form.
 - It will include the use of glass in the service.
 - It will include the use and selection of chemicals in the service.
 - It will include as a control measure, supervision plans for children in outdoor and indoor areas, including supervision of nappy changing / toileting, and during meal and sleep routines to guide all staff with supervision in these environments.
 - This Risk Assessment and Management Plan Form must be revised / updated when:
 - the service environment is changed or renovated
 - a new environment, experience, activity, or event is implemented or introduced
 - new equipment or resources are introduced
 - a supervision plan is updated
 - a serious incident has occurred, or complaint has been received
 - at least annually
 2. Potential emergencies (prepared in conjunction with the service's Emergency Management Plan [EMP])

3. Out of hours activities held at the centre such as Christmas Parties, Working Bees, Fundraising Events.
4. Incursions which are undertaken on an ad-hoc, one-off or irregular basis such as reptile show, visit by local Fire Service.
5. Regular transportation. Petit ELJ's Regular Transportation of Children Risk Assessment and Management Plan Form must be used in this instance.
6. Excursions. Any activity or experience that require the children to leave the service's secured premises is an excursion. Petit ELJ's Excursion or Regular Outing Proposal and Risk Management Plan Form must be used in this instance.
7. Children with a diagnosed medical condition or health requirement. Petit ELJ's Medical Condition or Health Requirement Risk Management Plan Form must be used in this instance.
8. Coronavirus COVID-19. Petit ELJ's Coronavirus COVID-19 Risk Management Plan Form must be used in this instance.

6 Responsibilities

Approved Provider:

It is the responsibility of the Approved Provider to:

- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that Nominated Supervisors/ Centre Directors, and employees follow and participate in this *Risk Management Policy* and related procedures
- Ensure that copies of this policy, related procedures and forms are readily accessible to Nominated Supervisors/ Centre Directors, employees and stakeholders and are available for inspection.
- Make sure any notification in relation to serious incidents is within the regulated timeframes as per the *Managing Reporting Requirements and Notifications Policy*.

Operations Managers:

It is the responsibility of the Operations Manager to:

- Keep the Approved Provider abreast of any legislative requirements that are not being met or that have changed.
- Monitor compliance at a service and site level and ensuring staff and students have completed the training on policies and procedures.
- Complete all training requirements – reading this policy and associated documents within their 3-month induction period and annually thereafter.

Nominated Supervisor/Centre Director

It is the responsibility of the Nominated Supervisor/ Centre Director to:

- Ensure all new furniture, equipment and resources purchased by the service meets current Australian Safety Standards and is in good working order prior to its introduction to the service.
- Ensure plants and seedlings introduced into the service are checked to ensure they are not harmful to children prior to their introduction to the service.
- Ensure risk assessments are prepared in accordance with this policy which identify potential risks and hazards within the service, and these risk assessments are reviewed at least annually by Nominated Supervisor / Centre Director or when a significant change or serious incident occurs.
- Ensure that serious risks or hazards are immediately dealt with. This may include advising the Facilities Manager via a Request for Reactive Work Order.

- Monitor the Maintenance Book and the Maintenance Log to ensure all risks are appropriately assessed and managed and as a continuous improvement strategy
- Regularly review the Maintenance Log to ensure all items of hazard or potential hazard are being reported to the Petit ELJ Facilities Manager and actioned on a timely basis.
- Complete all training requirements – reading this policy and associated documents within their 3-month induction period and annually thereafter.
- Ensure employees and students are familiar with and follow all policies and procedures as developed by Petit ELJ. This includes ensuring compliance with all related policies and procedures.

Educators:

It is the responsibility of Educators to:

- Ensure electrical cords and cords for blinds are kept out of reach of all children and are secured to walls or removed if can't be eliminated or controlled.
- Ensure hot drinks are made and consumed in areas away from children at all times, they are not to be carried through the rooms and placed in kitchenettes they are to be consumed in staff room only.
- Ensure all power points have a power point protector fitted when not in use.
- Be aware of unsafe or broken equipment and resources or damage to building, hazardous material or objects or any risk that could place staff, children, or stakeholders at risk. If able to they must remove or secure the equipment or area from use and advise the Nominated Supervisor/ Centre Director of the need for its replacement or repair.
- Ensure children do not enter storage sheds or areas where outdoor play equipment is stored at any time.
- Ensure that children are not taken into kitchen areas or laundry areas at any time.
- Complete a Safety Check–List - Outdoor Daily and a Safety Check–List - Indoor Daily to ensure the environment is safe for children.
- Ensure that any matter requiring immediate attention during the educators' checks is reported to the Nominated Supervisor / Centre Director's attention and is recorded in the Maintenance Book.
- Ensure they are familiar with and follow all policies and procedures as developed by Petit ELJ. This includes ensuring compliance with all related policies and procedures.
- Complete all training requirements – reading this policy and associated documents within their 3-month induction period and annually thereafter.
- Ensure that they ask for clarification if any information is unclear.

7 Reporting and Compliance

Links to NQS and Legislation

Education and Care Services National Law (2010)	
Section 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011	
100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available

172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
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National Quality Standards		
Quality Area 2 Childrens Health and Safety		
2.2 Safety		
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.

Links to related procedures and forms

- OP52-F001 Risk Assessment and Management Plan Form
- OP52-F002 Maintenance Book
- OP52-F003 Coronavirus COVID-19 Risk Management Plan Form
- OP52-F004 Request for Reactive Work Order
- OP52-F005 Maintenance Log
- OP12-F006 Regular Transportation of Children Risk Assessment and Management Plan Form
- OP24-F002 Excursion or Regular Outing Proposal and Risk Management Plan Form
- OP42-F001 Medical Condition or Health Requirement Risk Management Plan Form
- OP51-F022 Safety Check List – Outdoor Daily
- OP51-F021 Safety Check List – Indoor Daily
- OP23 Emergency Evacuation and Lockdown Policy
- OP40 Managing Reporting Requirements & Notifications Policy
- OP51 Safe Play Spaces Policy
- OP55 Supervision Policy
- OP57 Water Safety Policy

Links to references and further reading

- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority- *Risk assessment and management guidelines*
- Education and Care Services National Regulations.
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations.
- Guide to the National Quality Framework.
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010.
- National Quality Standard.
- Code of Ethics.
- United Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Safe Work Australia Code of Practice
- <https://www.poisonsinfo.nsw.gov.au/Factsheets/Poisonous-Plants-Factsheet.aspx>

- <https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/our-services/queensland-poisons-information-centre/plants-mushrooms/>
- https://www.kidsafensw.org/imagesDB/wysiwyg/GROWMESAFELY-PlantstoAvoid_2014_1.pdf

8 Approval and Review Details

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	DETAILS
Approval Authority	COO
Administrator	Operations Managers
Next Review Date	12 months from date of acceptance