Occupational Safety and Health Policy

Policy Statement:
Mt Hawthorn Out of School Hours Centre protects the health and safety of children, staff, parents and visitors to the Centre by maintaining awareness of the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984, and ensuring appropriate Codes of Practice are followed at the Centre.

Procedures:
A Health and Safety policy and procedure handbook concerning the Occupational Safety & Health (OSH) of the occupants and users of the Centre will be produced and followed.

The Management Committee will ensure that information about the Occupational Safety and Health Act, Regulations, Codes of Practice and Guidelines are made available to staff and parents of children attending the Centre.

Employer and employee responsibilities for Occupational Safety and Health are included in the Occupational Safety & Health Handbook. These responsibilities are highlighted to new staff and committee members as part of their induction. The Management Committee will ensure that young workers are given adequate supervision and on the job training to enable them to work safely.

A Safety & Health Representative (SHR) may be elected by the staff at the Centre if a staff member requests this to happen. The SHR will be responsible to receive and investigate all hazards and reports of breaches to the safety and health of employees, in consultation with the Management Committee.

The Management Committee understands their responsibility to consult and cooperate with an elected SHR, other employees, or Safety and Health Committee, in regard to OSH issues, and will actively support and encourage staff involvement in these areas.

The Management Committee may decide to appoint a senior staff member as Safety Officer, particularly if the staff have not elected an SHR, or where the Management Committee is not on hand to monitor safety and health at the service on a daily basis. The role of the Safety Officer will be to oversee day to day activities and report to the Management Committee on safety and health issues at the Centre.

The Management Committee or staff of the centre may request the establishment of a Safety and Health Committee. The committee will oversee policy development, planning, monitoring programs, emergency procedures, safety and health training, trends in accident and illness reports, accident investigations and the introduction of any new processes or tasks that could affect employees safety and health in the workplace. At least half the members of the Committee will be elected employee representatives, and will also include the Management Committee.

A training program is organised every 12 months to ensure the Management Committee and staff can identify:
- key elements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, including the content in general terms, responsibilities that apply to them, and consequences of failing to comply;
- the Centre’s health and safety procedures and policies;
- safe and healthy workplace practices, including immunisations, hygiene practices etc;
- how to report hazards; and
- how to have a say in safe work practices and procedures.

Staff must report all incidents leading to risk of injury including those leading to high stress levels. Positive steps will be taken to remove hazards and understand and minimise stress suffered by individual staff members.

Play areas and equipment will be checked regularly by the staff to ensure they are in a hygienic, clean and safe condition and do not pose a hazard to children, and that soft fall surfaces under and around outdoor play equipment are adequate and evenly spread. (Children Community Services (Outside School Hours Care) Regulations 2006, Regulation 33 & 35.) Staff will notify the SHR or Safety Officer of any equipment and/or area that is not clean or in a safe condition, and will write details on an OSH Incident/Accident Report.

Staff will record their daily checks on a Daily Safety Checklist.

All new equipment will be checked against Australian Standards.

The Management Committee will ensure that furnishings and equipment are provided that will limit risk of injury or ill health in the workplace i.e. adult size chairs for staff, appropriate storage systems, safe electrical appliances and circuit breakers installed etc.

The Management Committee will ensure that health and safety practices followed in the centre comply with the Children and Community Services (Outside School Hours Care) Regulations (2006), Health Regulations, Australian Standards & Occupational Safety & Health Act (1984) and will allocate sufficient resources in the annual budget to ensure a healthy and safe environment. This will cover direct costs such as provision of safety equipment, maintenance of buildings, fittings and equipment, purchase of safety and health advice, training and resources.

Staff will record all injuries or illness (to children and adults) in the Centre’s Accident/Illness Record. Details entered will include: date, time, place of incident, injury or condition, brief description of events, adult witnesses, any anticipated treatment or outcome. (See Policy on Health for Accident/Illness Record Form).

Injuries or illness to staff must be recorded on an Employee Incident/Accident Report, and staff will record all incidents with the potential to cause injury or illness on a Hazard Report Form.

All work related injuries and diseases or ‘near misses’ will be investigated to determine the causes, and action taken to prevent similar events in the future.

Employees with special needs including pregnancy, a medical condition such as epilepsy or asthma, physical or intellectual disabilities, dyslexia or any other condition that means the person is unable to read, and people who are young and inexperienced, will be given special consideration of their safety and health needs. This will be achieved through careful consultation with the employee, and documentation, monitoring and review of the strategies established to ensure their special needs are met.
OSH issues and incidents will regularly be discussed at staff meetings.

The Management Committee will ensure that appropriate workers compensation cover is available to all employees of the Centre and that employees understand the importance of reporting injuries or illness which occur during the course of their work. Employees will also be informed about the time deadlines for completing workers compensation forms, and be provided with information about what can be compensated.

The Management Committee will ensure that injured employees are provided with appropriate rehabilitation and health care services and that a flexible rehabilitation program is implemented in the centre until they are fully recovered.

The Management Committee will review OSH policy with the staff team at least annually, or after a major incident has occurred, to ensure that the system in place is working, and as a general rule there is enough time for staff to complete OSH tasks allocated to them. The review will identify who is responsible for various tasks, what resources are required, and when tasks are to be completed.

MSDS Data file will be updated regularly and all products which contains chemicals will be locked away.

The Centre is a non-smoking area. This includes all indoor and outdoor play areas and anywhere that is within sight of the children.

Sources:
Managing OHS in Children’s Services, Sue Tarrant, Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Sydney
Occupational Health and Safety in Children’s Services – Orientation Manual & Video – Community Services, Health, Tourism & Hospitality Faculty TAFE NSW
Children and Community Services (Outside School Hours Care) Regulations 2006 – Regulations: 33; 35; 85
OSHQA Quality Practices Guide – Principles 6.3; 7.2; 7.3
NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

National Regulations: regulation 100
Storage_of_any_harmful_cleaning_or_similar_products

Harm and hazards

National Law: section 167

2.7 Approved providers, nominated supervisors and family day care educators must ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury.
3.8 Laundry or hygiene facilities on the service premises must be located and maintained in a way that does not pose a risk to children. If laundry facilities are located in areas which children can access, the authorised officer should consider what steps are being taken at the service to keep hazardous materials out of reach of children. For example, chemicals, soiled clothing, nappies, and linen should be stored where children cannot access them.

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care (Nov 2010) – Element 2.1.3; Element 2.1.4; Element 2.3.2; Element 2.3.3; Element 3.1.2
Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
Framework for School Age Care in Australia

DATE UPDATED: May 2015    REVIEW DATE: May 2016