

<b>Document name:</b>	Emergency and Evacuation Policy
<b>Document Type:</b>	Policy
<b>Document Number:</b>	
<b>Domain:</b>	Meli Kindergarten Services
<b>Regulation:</b>	National Quality Framework
<b>Regulatory Area:</b>	Quality Area 2
<b>Version:</b>	1.0
<b>Document Status:</b>	Published
<b>Effective Date:</b>	5/11/2023
<b>Review Date:</b>	5/11/2026
<b>Approver:</b>	CEO
<b>Custodian:</b>	Executive Director Services

This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*.

## 1.0 Purpose

This policy will provide a framework for:

- The development of specific emergency and evacuation procedures, practices, and guidelines at Meli Kindergarten Services (Meli).
- being informed by a risk assessment that identifies potential emergencies at Meli
- raising the awareness of everyone attending Meli about potential emergency situations and appropriate responses.

## 2.0 Values

Meli is committed to:

- providing a safe environment for all children, staff and persons participating in programs at Meli
- having a plan to manage emergency situations in a way that reduces risk to those present on the premises
- ensuring effective procedures are in place to manage emergency incidents at the service
- ensuring an appropriate response during and following emergency incidents to meet the needs of the children, their families, staff, and others at the service
- informing parents/guardians how communication will be provided in a case of emergency

## 3.0 Scope

This policy applies to Meli as the Approved Provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, educators, other staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Meli, including during offsite excursions and activities.

## 4.0 Background

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* define an emergency in relation to an education and care service as any situation or event that poses an imminent or severe risk to the persons at the service premises e.g., flood, fire or a situation that requires the service premises to be locked down.

Comprehensive emergency management includes prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. Services are required to have policies and procedures in place detailing what needs to be done in an emergency, including an emergency and evacuation floor plan. These policies and procedures must be based on a risk assessment that identifies potential emergencies relevant to the service (*Regulation 97*).

Meli maintains policies and procedures that include comprehensive information to effectively handle all potential emergency situations within the Meli service environment.

Meli maintains policies and procedures that meet workplace, health, safety and wellbeing requirements, and a risk management system that includes risk management plans and service site reviews.

Early childhood services have a duty of care to all attending the facility including the children, staff, volunteers, students, visitors, and contractors. It is also a requirement under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 that employers provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

Meli kindergartens maintain an Emergency Management Plan (EMP) as part of its everyday 'best practice' operations and regularly rehearses the emergency evacuation procedure at each site (*Regulation 97*). Each Meli kindergarten site will:

- Rehearse the procedures every 3 months and review and document it,
- Involve everyone present at the service at the time of the rehearsal. This includes all staff members, volunteers, children, and the responsible person who is present at the time of the rehearsal.

A copy of Meli's emergency and evacuation policy and procedures are always available for inspection at the service premises or on request.

In accordance with Element 2.2.2 of the National Quality Standard, Meli will develop emergency and evacuation procedures in conjunction with relevant authorities/experts.

## 5.0 Definitions

**Country Fire Authority and Fire Rescue Victoria** services respond to a variety of fire and emergency incidents. They are also involved in a range of other activities including:

- a) fire safety building inspections
- b) delivering community awareness, education, and safety programs
- c) post-incident analysis and fire investigation
- d) fire prevention planning and land use planning at a municipal level.

**Emergency drill/rehearsal:** Practicing anticipated emergency scenarios or events, designed to help clarify roles and responsibilities, provide training, and verify the adequacy of the emergency response.

**Emergency Management Plan (EMP):** a written set of instructions for the service to prepare for and respond to emergencies. A guide to preparing an emergency plan and an Emergency Management Plan template are available on the DE website (refer to Sources below).

**Emergency services:** Includes ambulance, fire brigade, police, and state emergency services.

**Evacuation floor plan:** An evacuation plan is used where it is deemed necessary to evacuate the immediate area or building to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and adults. It may also have the name 'evacuation diagram'

**Evacuation route:** Continuous path of travel (including exits, public corridors, and the like) from any part of a building to a safe place

**Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV):** respond to fires, complex rescues, road crashes, emergency medical calls and hazardous chemical spills. The FRV aims to reduce the incidence and impact of fire and other emergencies through the delivery of educational strategies that assist the community, including:

**Fire safety adviser:** A specified role in some jurisdictions. May coordinate fire safety management plans, fire and evacuation plans, procedures, review, and practice, and give or arrange instruction to staff on evacuation and the operation of firefighting equipment.

**Hazard:** a source or situation with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these.

**Incident Management Team (IMT):** Is the group of incident management personnel comprising of the incident controller and other personnel appointed to be responsible for the functions of operations, planning, and logistics

**Lock down:** A security measure taken during an emergency to prevent people from leaving or entering a building or premises until the threat or risk has been resolved

**Lock in:** A security measure taken during an emergency to prevent people from leaving a building or premises until the threat or risk has been resolved.

**Lock down:** A security measure taken during an emergency to prevent people from leaving or entering a building or premises until the threat or risk has been resolved

**Planned closure:** services identified as being at high fire risk and on the DE's Bushfire at-Risk Register will close on days determined to have a fire danger rating of Code Red by the Emergency Management Commissioner. Where possible, four to seven days' notice of a planned closure will be provided. Services not on the Department's Bushfire at-Risk Register will remain open, unless directly threatened by fire or another emergency.

**Risk management:** a structured approach to managing uncertainty related to a threat; including the identification, assessment and prioritisation of risks followed by co-ordinated and economical application of resources to minimise, monitor, and control the probability and/or impact of those risks.

**Risk assessment:** A systematic process of evaluating the potential risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking and determining suitable mitigations.

**WorkSafe Victoria:** the manager of Victoria's workplace safety system. WorkSafe Victoria:

- a) strives to prevent workplace injuries, illness, and fatalities
- b) provides benefits to injured workers and helps them to return to work
- c) enforces Victoria's occupational health and safety laws
- d) provides reasonably priced workplace injury insurance for employers
- e) provides an emergency response service 24 hours per day.

## 6.0 Responsibilities

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider (Meli) and persons with management control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators, and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensuring the <i>Emergency and Evacuation Policy</i> and its procedures are in place ( <i>Regulations 168</i> ) and available to all stakeholders ( <i>Regulations 171</i> )	R	✓			
Taking reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, and volunteers follow the policy	R	✓			

and procedures and are aware of their responsibilities ( <i>Regulations 170</i> )					
Completing the DE Emergency Management Plan and attaching a copy to this policy	R	✓	✓		
Ensuring the service's emergency management contact details are up to date on NQA ITS online portal	R	✓			
Identifying if the service is on the BARR	R	✓			
Conducting a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies that the service may encounter at least once every 12 months, or as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safe evacuation of children from the service ( <i>Regulation 97(2)</i> )	R	✓	✓		
Conducting a risk assessment of emergency evacuation routes and assembly points	R	✓	✓		
Ensuring any necessary updates to the emergency and evacuation policies and procedures are implemented as soon as practicable after reviewing the risk assessment	R	✓	✓		✓
Developing instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency ( <i>Regulation 97(1)(a)</i> )	R	✓	✓		
Appointing an Incident Management Team (IMT) to oversee safety at the service in the event of an emergency	R				
Developing an emergency and evacuation floor plan ( <i>Regulation 97(1)(b)</i> )	R	✓			
Ensuring that a copy of the emergency and evacuation floor plan and instructions are displayed in a prominent position near each exit at the service premises, and near each exit that forms part of the evacuation route out of the service ( <i>Regulation 97(4)</i> )	R	✓	✓		
Ensuring that the emergency and evacuation drills are rehearsed and documented at least once every 3 months by everyone attending the service. If it has been identified both a lock down and evacuation response procedure in the risk assessments, and incorporated them in the emergency plan, they will both need to rehearse every three months ( <i>Regulation 97(3)(a)</i> )	R	✓	✓		
Ensuring that all staff, students, volunteers, and visitors are aware of emergency evacuation points	R	✓	✓		
Ensuring up-to-date portable emergency contact lists are held in each room within the service and that evacuation procedures state who will carry this list during evacuation	R	✓	✓		
Developing procedures that consider collecting children's medication and managing children's medical conditions	R	✓	✓		
Providing feedback regarding the effectiveness of emergency and evacuation procedures to inform policy, procedures, and manuals etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Testing alarms and communication systems regularly, such as monthly	R	✓			
Ensuring that those working at, or attending the service, have access to a phone (or similar means) for immediate communication with parents/guardians and emergency services ( <i>Regulation 98</i> ), and that phone numbers of emergency services are displayed	R	✓			
Identifying potential onsite hazards and taking action to manage and minimise risks	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring all infrastructure and service equipment are regularly checked for condition and maintenance, including emergency exit lighting	R	✓			
Ensuring the location of first aid kits, fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment are clearly signposted	R	✓			
Ensuring all emergency equipment is maintained on a regular basis in accordance with requirements specified by regulations, such as the Australian Standards Building Code e.g. fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, evacuation kits, sprinkler systems and alarm or duress systems	R	✓			

Providing a fully equipped portable first aid kit ( <i>refer to Administration of First Aid Policy</i> )	R	✓			
Ensure that designated emergency exits/routes are always kept clear to ensure that everyone can exit safely in the event of an evacuation	R	✓	✓		✓
Keeping lock-down areas in a state of readiness so they are safe for children, staff, and visitors to use	✓	✓	✓		✓
Attending regular training to ensure that they can deal with emergency situations e.g., first aid ( <i>Regulation 136</i> ), emergency management and OHS training	R	R	✓		✓
Regularly reviewing, evaluating, and updating emergency management plans, manuals, and procedures (at least annually or following an emergency incident)	R	✓	✓		✓
Developing procedures to debrief staff following emergency incidents	✓	✓	✓		✓
Providing support to children before, during and after emergencies		✓	✓		✓
Conducting checks of documentation and practices to ensure all requirements of this policy are being complied with	R	✓	✓		✓
Informing the nominated supervisor or persons in day-to-day charge or, in their absence, the approved provider or person with management and control, about any serious incidents or notifiable incidents at the service			✓		✓
Notifying DET in writing within 24 hours of a serious incident, change of circumstances and/or complaints	R	✓			
Completing the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record where required	R	✓	✓		✓
Notifying DET within 7 days of an incident that required the service to be closed, or a circumstance that posed a significant risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child attending the service ( <i>National Law: Section 174(2)(c); Regulations: 175(2)(b) &amp; (c), 176</i> )	R	✓			
Reporting notifiable incidents in the workplace to WorkSafe Victoria	R	✓			
Where possible engaging with Fire Rescue Victoria and/or Country Fire Authority regarding fire safety awareness and training for the service, including demonstrations of fire equipment, basic fire safety, smoke alarm, fire blankets and escape plans	✓	✓	✓		
Identifying staff and children requiring additional assistance in the event of an emergency	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that emergency contact details are provided on each child's enrolment form and that these are kept up to date	R	R	✓	✓	
Ensuring that an attendance record is completed and maintained to account for all children attending the service ( <i>Regulation 158</i> )	R	R	R	R	
Keeping a written record of all visitors to the service, including time of arrival and departure	R	R	✓		
Ensuring all staff, parents/guardians, children, volunteers, and students on placement understand the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency	R	R	✓	✓	✓
Ensuring there are induction procedures in place to inform new staff, including casual or relief staff, of the emergency and evacuation policy and procedures	R	✓			
Ensuring all staff, parents/guardians, children, volunteers, students on placement and others attending the service are accounted for in the event of an evacuation	R	✓			
Developing procedures to deal with loss of critical functions, such as power/water shut off.	R	✓			
Ensuring that children are adequately always supervised and protected from hazards and harm ( <i>refer to Supervision of Children Policy</i> )	R	R	R		
Raising children's awareness about potential emergency situations and appropriate responses.		✓	✓		✓

## 7.0 Evaluation

To assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, Meli will:

- a) review the policy to determine whether it adequately addresses a range of potential emergency situations
- b) regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness particularly following an emergency
- c) review procedures, including evacuation procedures, to determine their effectiveness, including timing and processes
- d) use information gained from checks on documentation and practices and the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record to inform proposed changes to this policy
- e) revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required by legislation, research, policy, and best practice
- f) consult with emergency services such as the MFB and CFA, to ensure the policy and procedures meet current best practices
- g) notify all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (*Regulation 172 (2)*).

## 8.0 Resources

Emergency Management Plan Template: <https://www.vic.gov.au/emergency-management-early-childhood-services>

## 9.0 Related Meli policies and procedures

- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Administration of Medication Policy
- Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Staffing Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy

## 10.0 Relevant legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 97, 98, 168(2)(e)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

## 11.0 Sources

- Community Early Learning Australia – CELA's Simple Guide to bushfire advice for children's services: [cela.org.au/2020/12/04/bushfire-advice-2020](https://cela.org.au/2020/12/04/bushfire-advice-2020)
- Department of Education, Bushfire At-Risk Register: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/pages/bushfirerisk.aspx>
- Department of Education, Emergency Management Requirements: [www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/emergencymanagementrequirements.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/emergencymanagementrequirements.aspx)
- Fire Rescue Victoria: [www.frv.vic.gov.au](http://www.frv.vic.gov.au)
- Country Fire Authority: [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au)
- State Emergency Service: [www.ses.vic.gov.au](http://www.ses.vic.gov.au)
- WorkSafe Victoria: [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au)