



Physical Environment & Equipment Policy

Aim

The Preschool operates within a licenced premises that has met all regulatory guidelines and service inspections . We aim to ensure that this standard is maintained by meeting compliance guidelines and offering all stakeholders a safe and respectful place to engage with.

Implementation

Maintenance

The premises is owned and operated by Sutherland Presbyterian Church through the Preschool Management Committee.

Any building maintenance requests are processed by communicating them to the Director. The maintenance is then to be formally recorded using the Hazard/ Maintenance Identification Procedure form, available in the office. Staff are also requested to make a note of any hazard or maintenance needs in the Communication Diary to alert other members of the team.

Any equipment that is in need of repairs is removed from usage, labelled as damaged and reported to the Director using the above process.

High quality equipment

All equipment and resources purchased by the Preschool, or accepted as donations, must meet a standard of quality that means it will be sturdy and withstand use by multiple children over an extended period.

Resources should be expected to support the Preschool's pedagogical approach and therefore be:

- Open ended e.g. can be used in a range of ways depending on the child's engagement
- Play based e.g. invite exploration and investigation in a child-focused manner
- Holistic e.g. supporting the development of a range of skills
- Multi-purpose e.g. can be used in a range of experiences
- Inclusive of a range of ages, abilities and cultures
- Encourage children to play in social groups

High quality learning environment

The learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, should support children to engage in safe and meaningful experiences.

The environment should be inclusive and respectfully represent a range of cultures and backgrounds of our stakeholders and community.



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The environment is to be consistent and accessible to the children, allowing them to have agency and a sense of security within the premises.

Children should be encouraged to have a voice in changes to the layout of the environment and any major works that may be undertaken so then feel a sense of belonging to the process.

Children should be given information and feedback that allows them to make safe choices within the learning environment, including the need for supervision, caring for resources, minimising impact on others in their play, and ways to manage risk in their play.

Any major works or renovations are to be approved by Sutherland Presbyterian Church through the Preschool Management Committee and communicated to the families and employees so they are aware of any changes to accessing and using the space during the time of the works.

Any works that involve the loss of a space for a period of time must be communicated to ACECQA and a waiver applied for during this time.

Any incidents that occur demonstrating a need to address a particular part of the environment will be addressed and changes made to that space as required.

Long-term Storage of Large Equipment

The majority of large equipment such as bikes and other gross motor equipment which are not currently in day to day use in the playground, will be stored in the large shed in the church backyard (behind the manse) where metal shelving is provided. Heavy objects will be stored down low for WHS purposes. Empty storage crates will be stored in the second small shed in the front yard.

Very limited equipment is to be stored under the church as this is a WHS issue for staff and also prevents ventilation/ access under the church.

Back Care

As childcare can often put repetitive strain on employees due to the low nature of the environment and children and the needs to move equipment (and children) on a regular basis, it is important that appropriate manual handling guidelines are followed. These include:

- Using stairs to help children up and down from change table when they can walk.
- Getting down to children's level instead of picking children up.
- Sitting on adult sized furniture where possible.
- Carrying items, including children, in the front of the body and close to the body, not on the hip or out away from the body.
- Bending knees to get to items instead of the back.
- Placing regularly used items that are heavier on middle shelves to allow them to be reached without bending or stretching.
- Making sure walkways are clear at all times to minimise trips and falls.
- Making sure any spills are clearly marked with a wet floor sign to minimise slips.



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- Any large, heavy (16kg+) or awkwardly shaped items are identified as 2 person lift and are never lifted alone. This includes beams, tables, large easels etc.
- If needing to work up high step ladders or ladders are to be used, not standing on chairs or tables as they were not designed for this and may move or cause injury.



16.1 to 40kg
This product requires a two person lift
- use proper lifting techniques
CAUTION

	3 kg	7 kg
Shoulder height	7 kg	13 kg
Elbow height	10 kg	16 kg
Knuckle height	7 kg	13 kg
Mid lower leg height	3 kg	7 kg



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Compliance evidence

Education and Care Services National Regulations (2023) 103-115

National Quality Standards 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 4.2, 5.2, 7.1

Supports Child Safe Standards: 8. New in the 2024 version.

Review Dates

Date of last review: Sept 2020

Date of current review: Apr 2024

Date of next review: Sept 2026

Approved by: Lisa Collins (Director)/ Barbara Black (Preschool Committee/ Treasurer)