
ARANDA AFTERS ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED



WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Implemented	Updated/Reviewed	Next Review Due By
March 2015	January 2016	March 2017

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1 REFERENCES

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS

2.3.2	Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury
4.2.1	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.
4.2.2	Educators, co-ordinators and educators work collaboratively and affirm, challenge, support and learn from each other to further develop their skills, to improve practice and relationships.
4.2.3	Interactions convey mutual respect, equity and recognition of each other's strengths and skills.
7.3.2	Administrative systems are established and maintained to ensure the effective operation of the service.
7.3.4	Processes are in place to ensure that all grievances and complaints are addressed, investigated fairly and documented in a timely manner.

NATIONAL REGULATIONS

168	Policies and procedures are required in relation to health and safety
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2 AIM

Aranda Afters Association Incorporated [Aranda Afters] aims do everything possible to protect the health, safety and welfare of all educators and other people who may be affected by our operation including our children and their families.

3 IMPLEMENTATION

DUTY OF CARE

The Approved Provider and the Director will ensure they take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of all educators, staff, volunteers, children, their families and any other people impacted by the service operations.

This includes identifying and eliminating or reducing all reasonably foreseeable hazards and providing appropriate training and instruction.

Our educators, staff and volunteers will also ensure they take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that their conduct does not adversely affect the health and safety of other people.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the:

Australian Work Health and Safety Act (2011) - <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2013C00253>; and

4 RESPONSIBILITIES AND DELEGATIONS

4.1 The Director and senior staff are to take action to ensure:

- This policy is implemented in their area of control.
- Safe systems of work and work health and safety (WHS) procedures and guidelines are implemented, risks are managed so far as is reasonably practicable and that they strive for continuous safety improvement.
- Employees and others undertaking work are supervised and receive the instruction, information and training necessary to safely perform their duties.
- Meaningful consultation takes place with employees, their representatives and others on WHS issues.
- Workplace incidents are reported and investigated to ascertain the circumstances leading up to the incident, and appropriate action is taken to prevent further incidents from occurring.
- Effective emergency response plans and procedures are in place which include the provision of first aid and actions to support the resumption of normal operations.
- Audit and other compliance requirements are complied with and appropriate document management processes are in each workplace.
- Employees with injury or illness are managed in accordance with the relevant guidelines.

4.2 Employees and others undertaking work are to:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and those under their supervision; and take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others.
- Comply with any reasonable instruction or lawful direction as far as they are reasonably able, including wearing personal protective equipment supplied by the employer as required.
- Cooperate in following health and safety guidelines and procedures.
- Report incidents and hazards, and participate in training and consultation as required.

4.3 All children, students and visitors, while participating in programs operated by Aranda Afters, or who are visiting or conducting business at Aranda Afters, are to:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety; and ensure that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others.
- Report health and safety issues and participate in consultation in work health and safety matters affecting them.
- Follow Aranda Afters procedures in relation to work health and safety.

5 CONSULTATION, COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

Aranda Afters will share information about health and safety matters with educators, staff, and volunteers – as appropriate – and encourage them to express their views or raise issues. This process will be guided by our ***Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*** and ***Record Keeping and Retention Policy***.

We will involve our Health and Safety Representative in the consultations (if applicable).

5.1 Aranda Afters will consult with educators, staff, and volunteers when:

- Identifying hazards and assessing risks arising from work.
- Proposing changes that may affect the health and safety of workers.
- Carrying out activities prescribed by the Work Health and Safety Regulation.

5.2 Aranda Afters will also consult with educators, staff, and volunteers when making decisions about:

- Ways to eliminate or minimise risks.
- The adequacy of their facilities.
- Consultation procedures.
- Resolving health and safety issues.
- Monitoring their health and safety or the safety of workplace conditions.
- How to provide health and safety information and training.

5.3 Consultation with our educators, staff, volunteers and health and safety representatives (if applicable see below) means:

- Relevant work health and safety information is shared.
- They have a reasonable chance to express their views.
- They are given a reasonable opportunity to contribute to the decision making process.
- Their views are taken into account.
- They are advised of the outcome of the consultation in a timely manner.

5.4 Our educators, staff, and volunteers are entitled to:

- Elect a health and safety representative.
- Request the formation of a health and safety committee.
- Cease unsafe work.
- Have health and safety issues resolved in accordance with an agreed issue resolution procedure.
- Not be discriminated against for raising health and safety issues.

6 HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

A Health and Safety Committee (HSC) can facilitate cooperation between the Approved Provider and educators, staff and volunteers in developing and implementing measures to ensure health and safety at our service.

At least **five** (5) of our educators, staff, and volunteers, or our Health and Safety Representative (HSR) (if one has been elected), can request the establishment of a HSC. We will establish a HSC within 2 months of a request. We can also establish a HSC without a request. At least half the members of a HSC won't have been nominated by the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor. A HSR can consent to be a member of the committee. Aranda Afters will ensure:

- An HSC (if elected) has access to any information related to workplace hazards and the health and safety of workers, except for personal or medical information which would identify individual workers.
- An HSC meets at least once every three months or at any reasonable time at the request of at least half of the committee members.
- HSC members are able to take paid leave to comply with their health and safety duties.

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES

Our educators and staff can elect a Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs). If a request is made for a HSR, our Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will:

- Commence negotiations with workers about the number of HSRs and any deputy HSRs, and which workers will be represented by the HSRs (in groups called work groups) within 14 days.
- Give all educators and staff the chance to nominate as a HSR and to vote in an election if there is more than **one** (1) candidate.
- Notify workers of the outcome of the negotiations as soon as possible.

The Approved Provider and Director must keep a current list of all HSRs and deputy HSRs and display a copy at the workplace. The list must also be given to the Work Health and Safety Regulator.

7.1 A HSR can:

- Inspect the workplace of their work group.
- Accompany a workplace health and safety inspector during an inspection.
- Be present at an interview with a worker that the HSR represents (with their consent) and the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor or an inspector about health and safety issues.
- Request a health and safety committee be established.
- Monitor compliance measures by the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor.
- Represent the work group in health and safety matters.
- Investigate complaints from members of the work group.
- Inquire into any risk to the health or safety of workers in the work group.
- Request the assistance of any person, including a union, whenever necessary.

- Issue Provisional Improvement Notices in the form and manner prescribed in the legislation (these Notices must be adhered to and displayed).
- Direct workers to cease unsafe work where the HSR considers there is a serious health and safety risk if consultations the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor do not resolve the issue.

7.2 Our service will ensure HSRs and deputy HSRs:

- Are never prevented from carrying out any of their duties.
- Are able to give people assisting them access to the workplace.
- Can take paid leave to attend to their health and safety duties.
- Can take paid leave to attend an initial work health and safety course or annual refresher training approved by the regulator within 3 months of their request to attend. Aranda afters will pay the course costs and reasonable expenses.
- Can access any resources, facilities and assistance that they reasonable require to undertake their duties.

HSRs or Deputy HSRs are elected for **three** (3) years unless they leave the work group, are disqualified, resign or the majority of workers they represent agree they should not represent them. They are not personally liable for anything done, or not done, in good faith while carrying out their role.

8 BULLYING, DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than others because they have a particular characteristic or belong to a particular group of people, such as age, race or gender.

Various anti-discrimination, equal employment opportunity, workplace relations, and human rights laws make it illegal to discriminate or harass a person in the workplace. Work Health and Safety laws include protections against discriminatory conduct for workers raising health and safety concerns.

HARASSMENT

Harassment involves unwelcome behaviour that intimidates, offends or humiliates a person because of a particular personal characteristic such as race, age, gender, disability, religion or sexuality. It is possible for a person to be bullied, harassed and discriminated against at the same time.

WORKPLACE BULLYING

Workplace Bullying is repeated and unreasonable behaviour towards a worker or a group of workers. Our service will not tolerate bullying in any form because it may have a detrimental effect on the psychological, emotional and/or physical wellbeing, health and safety of our educators and staff. Amendments to the Fair Work Act 2009 make it illegal to bully a person in the workplace from 1 January 2014.

Unreasonable behaviour includes actions that victimise, humiliate, intimidate or threaten and may be intentional or unintentional. It can occur directly and by using information technology such as email, texting and social media. While one incident of unreasonable behaviour is not considered to be workplace bullying, it may escalate and it will not be ignored.

Everyone in the workplace, irrespective of their position, deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. No one should suffer bullying while going about their work. This can put at risk the health, safety and well-being of all employees.

Generally, workplace bullying is any behaviour or series of behaviours that is unreasonable or undesirable at the place of work and/or in the course of or related to employment which intimidates, humiliates and/or undermines a person or a group of people.

8.1 Bullying will generally meet the following four criteria:

- It is repeated.
- It is unwelcome and unsolicited.
- The recipient(s) considers the behaviour to be offensive, intimidating, humiliating or threatening.
- Based on the available information, the behaviour would be considered offensive, intimidating, humiliating or threatening to the individual it is directed at, or, for that matter, others who are witness to or affected by it.

8.2 Bullying behaviour may be directed upwards or downwards and towards co-workers. There is no finite list of bullying behaviours, however, the following types of behaviour, where repeated or occurring as part of a pattern of behaviour, could be considered bullying:

- Abusive, insulting or offensive language or comments.
- Unjustified criticism or complaints.
- Continuously and deliberately excluding someone from workplace activities.
- Withholding information that is vital for effective work performance.
- Setting unreasonable timelines or constantly changing deadlines.
- Setting tasks that are unreasonably below or beyond a person's skill level.
- Denying access to information, supervision, consultation or resources that adversely affects a worker.
- Spreading misinformation or malicious rumours.
- Changing work arrangements, such as rosters and leave, to deliberately inconvenience a particular worker or workers.
- Excessive scrutiny at work.
- Being subjected to constant ridicule and being put down in front of colleagues.
- Being repeatedly subjected to practical jokes.
- Being the victim of loud and abusive, threatening or derogatory language usually when other employees are present.
- Leaving offensive messages on email or by telephone, including offensive messages through the use of SMS and material posted on the internet.

8.3 Reasonable actions taken by the Director and Approved Provider to direct or control the way work is carried out is not bullying behaviour. Examples of reasonable behaviour include:

- Setting reasonable performance goals, standards and deadlines.
- Rostering and allocating working hours where the requirements are reasonable.

- Deciding not to select a worker for promotion where a reasonable process is followed and documented.
- Informing a worker about unsatisfactory work performance when undertaken in accordance with any workplace policies or agreements such as performance management guidelines.
- Informing a worker about inappropriate behaviour in an objective and confidential way.
- Implementing organisational changes or restructuring.
- Termination of employment without follow correct processes.

8.4 The Director and Approved Provider will:

- Ensure all educators, staff, visitors and volunteers are aware of and comply with our *Code of Conduct*.
- Investigate and manage incidents of workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination in accordance with our Grievance Guidelines located in this Policy.
- Consult with educators, staff and volunteers during staff meetings when:
 - identifying the risk of workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination
 - making decisions about procedures to monitor and address workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination
 - making decisions about information and training on workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination
 - proposing changes to the way work is performed or rosters managed as this may give rise to the risk of workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination
- Provide appropriate information, instruction, training or supervision to educators, staff, visitors and volunteers to minimise the risks to their health and safety from workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Contact the Police if there are incidents of workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination that involve physical assault or the threat of physical assault, or a visitor engages in bullying behaviour, harassment and discrimination and refuses to leave the Service.

8.5 Educators, staff, parents, visitors and volunteers will:

- Consider whether something they do or don't do will adversely affect the health and safety of others.
- Comply with any reasonable instruction, policy and procedure given by the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor in relation to workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Report all incidents of workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination using our Grievance Guidelines.
- Talk to the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor if they have any questions about workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination.

8.6 **NB:** Matters related to student behaviour, including bullying and harassment, are covered in our *Code of Conduct*.

IDENTIFYING WORKPLACE BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

The Director and Approved Provider will minimise the risk of workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination occurring.

8.7 The Director, Approved Provider and staff will reduce the risk of workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination through:

- Talking to educators, staff and volunteers (or conduct an anonymous survey) to find out if bullying is occurring or if there are unreasonable behaviours or situations likely to increase the risk of bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Monitoring patterns of absenteeism, sick leave, staff turnover, grievances, injury reports, workers compensation claims and other such records to establish any regular patterns or sudden unexplained changes.
- Watching for any changes in workplace relationships between educators, staff, volunteers, visitors and/or managers.
- Seeking feedback on the professionalism of workplace behaviours in exit interviews and from supervisors and where relevant families
- Monitoring issues raised by our Health and Safety Committee (HSC) and/or Health and Safety Representative (HSR) – if an HSC or HSR is elected.

8.8 The Director and Approved Provider will implement measures to prevent and respond to workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination, such as:

- Implementing a *Code of Conduct*.
- Providing educators, staff, volunteers and visitors with information about our bullying, harassment and discrimination policy and relevant procedures at staff meetings and through the other forms of communication utilised by Aranda Afters.
- Implementing suggestions and complaints procedures which deal with bullying complaints in a confidential, reliable and timely way (see Suggestions and Complaints Policy).
- Implementing effective performance management processes.
- Clearly defining jobs and seeking regular feedback from educators and staff about their role and responsibilities.
- Reviewing and monitoring workloads and staffing levels.
- Including educators and staff in decision making which affects their roles and responsibilities.
- Consulting with educators and staff as early as possible about any changes that affect their roles and responsibilities.
- Promoting and modelling positive leadership styles (eg: communicating effectively and providing constructive feedback both formally and informally).
- Organising relevant leadership training for managers and supervisors (eg: on performance management).
- Mentoring and supporting new and poor performing leaders, educators or staff.
- Facilitating teamwork and cooperation.
- Ensuring supervisors act in a timely manner on any unreasonable behaviour.

8.9 The Director and Approved Provider will regularly review measures to prevent and respond to workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination.

The Director and Approved Provider will implement a review of the bullying, harassment and discrimination policy and procedures if there is an incident of workplace bullying; at the request of a Health and Safety Committee and/or Representative (if elected); or when new or additional information about bullying becomes available or at the scheduled review date.

Information will be obtained from reports, exit interviews and records of sick leave and workers compensation claims.

8.10 The Director and Approved Provider will ensure staff receive training about Workplace Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination.

The Director and Approved Provider will organise face-to-face training, as required, to ensure all educators, staff and volunteers can recognise workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination. Training will cover:

- Our bullying, harassment and discrimination policy and procedures.
- Measures used to prevent bullying, harassment and discrimination from occurring.
- How to report workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- How bullying, harassment and discrimination reports will be responded to.
- Where to go for more information and assistance.

8.11 The Director and Approved Provider, and other educators and staff who may be involved in resolving workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination will be familiar with conflict resolution skills and undertake training in that area if required.

9 STRESS MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Stress is a process, not a diagnosis, and stress affects people in different ways.

WHAT IS STRESS?

The level and extent of stress a person may feel depends a great deal on their attitude to a particular situation. An event which may be extremely stressful for one person can be a mere hiccup in another person's life.

Stress is not always negative. Happiness, physical activity, confidence, joy and love are all positive forms of stress. Positive feelings can actually improve our resistance to stress, while negative feelings like uncertainty or dissatisfaction lower it.

WHEN IS STRESS A PROBLEM?

Stress becomes a problem when the demands on a person exceed (or they feel they exceed) their ability to cope. A variety of factors can contribute to a person feeling stressed, such as environment (work, home, etc), lifestyle or emotional issues.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF STRESS?

There are many symptoms of stress, and rather than acknowledge the signs we may push ourselves harder pretending that everything is fine.

Stress can be prevented by escalating through recognising the warning signs which include uneasiness/feeling of guilt when relaxed; tension; changes in appetite; heavier smoking and drinking; butterfly stomach; dry mouth; difficulty in concentrating; frustration; short tempered; and sleeplessness.

UNDERSTANDING THE STRESS PROCESS

- Pressure is inevitable — dealing with it is important.
- Stress is cumulative — if you don't deal with it, it gets worse.
- Stress can cause huge chemical imbalances in the body.
- Stress affects every organ in the body and can reduce energy levels by up to 70%.
- Moods affect our response to situations.
- Stress is linked to lifestyle.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM FEELING STRESSED?

9.1 If an educator feels stressed in any way they should:

- Approach the Director and talk together to see if the situation can be remedied in any way.
- Approach the Approved Provider, or if relevant a Union official if the educator feels unable to approach the Director.
- Accept opportunities to have stress alleviated (including counselling if recommended).

9.2 The Director and Approved Provider will:

- Discuss the cause of the stress with the educator or staff member and discuss viable options to alleviate it.
- Refer educator/staff member to counselling if required.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of educator stress management procedures.
- Monitor workloads to ensure educator is not overloaded or overwhelmed.
- Monitor overtime hours and regular working hours to ensure educator is not overworked.
- Monitor holidays to ensure educator is taking, or at least aware of, their entitlements.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not taking place.
- Be aware that educators may be suffering personal stress e.g. a death in the family or separation and offer additional support.
- Raise any issues in a sensitive manner.
- Support an educator or staff member on stress leave.
- Work with the educator or staff member on stress leave to set up at return to work plan.
- Monitor and discuss with the educator /staff member their stress levels in the workplace after they return to work.

10 NOTIFICATION OF DEATH, SERIOUS INJURY OR ILLNESS

10.1 The Approved Provider and Director must notify the Work Health and Safety Regulator as soon as they become aware of a death, or a serious injury or illness that results in:

- Immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital; or
- Immediate treatment for;
 - the amputation of any part of the body
 - a serious head injury
 - a serious eye injury
 - a serious burn
 - the separation of skin from an underlying tissue (such as de-gloving or scalping)
 - a spinal injury
 - the loss of a bodily function
 - serious lacerations; or
- Medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance.

10.2 A serious illness is:

- Any infection to which the carrying out of work is a significant contributing factor, including any infection that is reliably attributable to carrying out work:
 - with micro-organisms
 - that involves providing treatment to a person
 - that involves contact with human blood or body substances, or
 - involves handling or contact with animals, animal hides, skins, wool or hair, animal carcasses or animal waste products.

10.3 A dangerous incident is also notifiable under the legislation. Dangerous incidents include:

- An uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance.
- An uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire.
- An uncontrolled escape of gas or steam.
- An uncontrolled escape of a pressurised substance.
- Electric shock.
- The fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or thing.
- The collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, any plant that is required to be authorised for use in accordance with the regulations.
- The collapse or partial collapse of a structure.
- The collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation.
- The inrush of water, mud or gas in workings, in an underground excavation or tunnel.

The approved provider or nominated supervisor must notify the regulator by telephone or in writing (including by facsimile or email) as soon as possible after the injury, illness or incident. If notified by telephone, the regulator may require a written notice of the incident within 48 hours.

Records of the incident must be kept for at least 5 years from the date that the incident is notified. The approved provider/nominated supervisor must ensure the site where the incident occurred is left undisturbed as much as possible until an inspector arrives or as directed by the regulator.

11 SOURCES

- Education and Care Services
- National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011
- Aranda Primary School “Working With Potting Mix” procedure.

12 APPENDIX 1 – WORKING WITH POTTING MIX

Potting mixes may contain bacteria that can be harmful to adults and children. When using potting mix Kidsafe NSW recommends:

- Purchasing a product that complies with the Australian Standard (AS 3743).
- Reading the manufacturer's instructions printed on the bag before using the mix.
- Being careful not to inhale airborne particles before exposing the potting mix to children,. Wear a paper mask that fits over your nose and mouth.
- Opening the bag slowly prior to the children arriving.
- Dampening the mix with a light spray of water to reduce the risk of airborne particles.
- Placing the potting mix in a tray to enable children to scoop it into pots and on to plants.
- Always wearing gloves when handling potting mix. Rinse or dispose of gloves afterwards.
- If children are using the potting mix, provide children with adequate fitting gloves if available. Alternatively, encourage children to use tools (such as a trowel, spade or old spoon).
- Washing hands thoroughly with soap and water after using potting mix.
- Storing potting mix securely away from children.