



# **BEACH KINDER EXTREME WEATHER POLICY**

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## **Quality Area 2**

### **PURPOSE**

This policy aims to:

- Provide a framework around which well-informed decisions may be made by Hampton Community Kindergarten Inc. to cancel Beach Kinder session/s in response to forecast weather conditions, and ensure that parents/guardians understand this framework
- Ensure the health and safety of all children and educators when the weather conditions become extreme during a session
- Provide guidelines for educators in the event of extreme weather during a Beach Kinder session
- Provide an appropriate mechanism for communication of session cancellations in extreme weather conditions
- Impress upon parents/guardians that they may collect their child from a Beach Kinder session at any time in response to the weather conditions (or for any other reason).

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

#### **1. VALUES**

Hampton Community Kindergarten Inc. is committed to:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment for children and educators participating in the Beach Kinder program
- Facilitating a beach kinder experience in a variety of (safe) weather conditions, including rain, to allow children to experience nature across as broad a spectrum as possible and without compromising the safety of the participants
- Accessing appropriate resources to enable well-informed determinations to be made regarding weather conditions
- Facilitating effective and timely communication to parents and guardians regarding weather conditions, cancellations or relocation of children in the event of extreme weather
- Respecting the right of parents/guardians to remove their child from a Beach Kinder session at any time in response to the weather conditions (or for any other reason).

#### **2. SCOPE**

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators and parents/guardians with an enrolled child, or who wish to enrol a child at Hampton Community Kindergarten Inc.

#### **3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION**

Hampton Community Kindergarten's Beach Kinder program is intended to operate across a broad spectrum of weather conditions, allowing the children to experience nature and its elements across the seasons. Whatever the weather, children are encouraged to take the lead in playing, exploring and learning in a beach or natural environment. However, extreme weather conditions may arise periodically which can put the wellbeing and safety of the children and educators at risk. This policy provides the parameters within which the kindergarten can make determinations to cancel beach kinder sessions in response to forecast extreme weather conditions and ensure appropriate communication channels are in place to inform participants. It also provides a framework for educators in the event that extreme weather conditions arise during a session and provides procedures for

effective evacuation to a safe location.

Relevant legislation includes but is not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- *Education and Care Services National Law 2010*
- National Quality Standard
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

**Bureau of Meteorology:** Australia's national weather, climate and water agency. Website [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au) . Various iphone/ipad apps use BOM data (eg Pocket Weather)

**Extreme Weather:** weather that threatens the immediate or long-term safety of individuals, as a result of rain, lightning, wind or heat. The risk to individuals' wellbeing is guided by the Bureau of Meteorology's forecast conditions. An extreme weather table is shown below. Beach kinder sessions will be cancelled if any of these determinants are met:

Weather Condition	Extreme weather determinant causing cancellation
Forecast temperature	35 degrees Celsius or greater <b>AND</b> kindergarten teacher decides that it would be appropriate to cancel beach kinder  Thermometer to be placed at the site and if it reaches the above temperature children are to return to kindergarten or be sent home if necessary.  Note there is no pre-set minimum temperature. Thermals and clothing layers should be worn on very cold days (Refer Protective Clothing Policy)
Forecast wind speed	In excess of 45km per hour <b>AND</b> kindergarten teacher decides that it would be appropriate to cancel beach kinder, based on a final assessment at the site.
Forecast of electrical storm	Thunder storm/electrical storm forecast
Hampton beach flooded at or near the Beach Kinder site	On flooding advice from Bayside City Council
BOM weather warnings of extreme storm conditions and excessive rainfall	On warning issued by the Bureau of Meteorology

In addition to the above, Hampton Community Kindergarten has the discretion to cancel a session/s if it views the weather to be poor for Beach Kinder purposes, even if the extreme weather determinants in the above table are not reached. Weather warnings from the Bureau of Meteorology for the area may also necessitate cancellation.

**Protective Clothing:** Refer to Beach Kinder Protective Clothing Policy

## 5. SOURCES AND RELATED KINDERGARTEN POLICIES

### Kindergarten policies

- Delivery & Collection of Children (main kindergarten policy)
- Excursions & Service Events Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Beach Kinder Protective Clothing Policy (Beach Kinder Specific)
- Beach Kinder Extreme Weather Policy (Beach Kinder Specific)
- Beach Kinder Identification and Visibility Policy (Beach Kinder Specific)
- Beach Kinder Emergency Evacuation Policy (Beach Kinder Specific)
- Beach Kinder Snake Awareness Policy (Beach Kinder Specific)
- Beach Kinder Dog Awareness Policy (Beach Kinder Specific)
- Occupational Health & Safety Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Inclusion & Equity Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Sun Protection Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Water Safety Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Supervision of Children Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Nutrition, Oral Health & Active Play Policy (main kindergarten policy)
- Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy (main kindergarten policy)

## PROCEDURES

### General

The Committee is responsible for:

- An Extreme Weather Policy which gives clear guidelines to educators and parents about extreme conditions that will necessitate cancellation of a bush kinder session/s and Beach Kinder provides guidance and procedures for educators in the event of extreme weather during a Beach Kinder session
- All parents/guardians being aware of this policy and are provided access to the policy upon request
- Ensuring communication channels are in place to facilitate notification to parents/guardians in the event of cancellation of a Beach Kinder session or if the group has been evacuated to a safe location in response to extreme weather conditions.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are comfortable at all times with the forecast weather conditions, while their child is attending a Beach Kinder session. If for whatever reason, a parent/guardian feels concern for the wellbeing of their child due to the weather conditions, they should consider withholding their child from the session or collect their child from a session in the event that extreme weather arises during a session.
- Ensuring protective clothing is worn by their child to suit the weather conditions and ensure a change of clothes is provided (including shoes) (Refer to Beach Kinder Protective Clothing Policy)
- Ensuring they carry a mobile phone with them and be contactable at all times while their child's Beach Kinder session is in progress
- Reading and being familiar with the policy
- Bringing relevant issues to the attention of both educators and committee **In the event of forecast extreme or bad weather** in cases of forecast extreme weather (see definition above), Hampton Community Kindergarten will make the decision to cancel the beach kinder program for the sessions affected. In addition to the extreme weather determinants detailed in the table under 'Definitions', the Hampton Community Kindergarten has the discretion to cancel the session if it views the weather to be unsuitable for beach Kinder purposes.

Educators are responsible for:

- Monitoring the weather forecast via the Bureau of Meteorology website (or via mobile phone app) the day prior to the Beach Kinder session
- Making a determination to cancel or conduct the beach kinder sessions the next day based on the weather forecast
- Providing a notice to parents/guardians/ educators of the status of the Beach Kinder session/s as follows:
  - By broadcast SMS to the Beach Kinder group any changes or cancelation of Beach Kinder sessions in a timely manner where possible.
  - Note that a Beach kinder session may be cancelled at short notice or any other time by broadcast SMS based on updated weather information.
- Ensuring that on high wind days (forecast wind speed > 45km/h) that at least two volunteers be tasked with managing gear and tents on that day
- Keeping their mobile phone with them on the day of the session to receive notice of cancellation in cases of extreme weather updates which necessitate cancellation

### In the event of weather becoming extreme during a session

Educators are responsible for:

- Undertaking the following actions in each of the weather conditions listed in the table below:

Weather condition	Staff Actions
<p><b>Heat</b></p> <p>Risks include sunburn, heat stress, heat stroke, dehydration,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Monitor children for heat exhaustion/heat stroke (see Attachment 1 for symptoms and treatments)</li> <li>● Offer water for hydration at regular intervals</li> <li>● Establish activities in shaded areas and encourage children to play in the shade</li> <li>● Ensure application of sunscreen every two hours</li> <li>● Ensure appropriate protective clothing including hats. [Refer Beach Kinder Protective Clothing Policy for more information]</li> </ul>
<p><b>Rain/Hail/Cold</b></p> <p>Risks include child getting wet (and onset of hypothermia), injury from hailstones</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Monitor children for wet clothing and change if necessary (with assistance of volunteers)</li> <li>● Ensure appropriate clothing is worn (e.g., waterproof clothing, gloves)</li> <li>● Encourage wearing of appropriate clothing, including coats, gloves, scarves etc.</li> <li>● Seek shelter in heavy rain or hail [See Relocation Procedures below]</li> </ul>
<p><b>Electrical storm activity / Lightning</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Move children away from trees</li> </ul>

Risks include lightning strike, trees/tree limbs falling as a result of lightning strike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seek indoor shelter [See Relocation Procedures below]</li> <li>● See Attachment 2 for Lightning Safety Fact Sheet</li> </ul>
<p><b>High winds</b></p> <p>Risks include falling trees/tree limbs, blowing particles (sand dirt) into eyes, Bush Kinder structures blowing down/away etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure structures and dangerous items are secure</li> <li>● Move children away from trees</li> <li>● Seek shelter if necessary [See Relocation Procedures below]</li> <li>● Any equipment/structures must be moved by at least two educators /volunteer to minimise risk of injury</li> <li>● If the children are being moved, follow the 'Relocating to a safe position' instructions below</li> </ul>

- In the event of illness or injury during a session as a result of weather conditions, the Illness Policy and Incident and Medical Emergency Management Policy must be followed.
- Contacting parent/guardian in the event that a child is ill or injured in accordance with the Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Collecting their child at any time during the session if they are not comfortable with the weather conditions

### Procedures for Relocating to a Safe Position

#### *Relocation Safe Zones*

Hail, torrential rain	Seek shelter under the Picnic Shelter (Refer Map at Attachment 3, assembly point B)
Electrical storm/lightning, extreme winds	Evacuate to the Picnic Shelter (Refer Map at Attachment 3 assembly point B)

If conditions necessitate evacuation from Hampton Beach, follow the procedures in the Emergency Evacuation Policy (Beach Kinder specific)

#### *Procedures for relocating*

If the Beach Kinder group is required to relocate to a safe position in response to the weather

- Keep children calm
- Ensure attendance book is in the teacher's backpack along with other necessary items such as medication
- Count / check off against the sign in sheet to ensure all children are accounted for

- With the exception of the teacher's backpack, leave Beach Kinder gear at the site – it can be collected later
- En route to new location (see below for appropriate locations), calmly walk children in pairs, keep group close together and ensure no child deviates from the group.
- Educators/adult volunteers to be positioned at the front and back of the group, and flanking the group where possible
- Notify emergency services if required
- On arrival at safe assembly point, conduct a full count/roll call to ensure all children are accounted for
- Wait for the extreme weather to pass and when it does, resume normal activities, following same relocation procedures to return to the Beach Kinder site
- If the weather does not look like it will pass soon, a broadcast SMS should be sent to all parents, advising of the new safe location for pickup purposes.

## **EVALUATION**

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- Seek feedback regarding this policy and its implementation with parents/guardians of children participating in the Beach Kinder program. This can be facilitated through discussions and the annual service survey.
- Review the service's actions in response to extreme weather conditions
- Ask educators to share their experiences and observations in relation to the effectiveness of this policy.
- Regularly review the policy and service practices to ensure they are compliant with any new legislation, research or best practice procedures.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke – Symptoms and Treatments

Attachment 2: Lightning Action Guide and First Aid Guidelines

Attachment 3: Beach Kinder site map showing safe relocation zones in the event of extreme weather

## **AUTHORISATION**

The Approved Provider of Hampton Community Kindergarten Inc. adopted this policy on:

07 March 2024

# ATTACHMENT 1

## Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke – Symptoms and Treatments

Department of Human Services December 2008

**Heat exhaustion** is a serious condition that can develop into heat stroke. Warning signs may include:

- Pale and sweating
- Rapid heart rate
- Muscle cramps, weakness
- Dizziness, headache
- Nausea, vomiting
- Fainting

**Heat stroke** is a life-threatening emergency. It occurs when the body is unable to prevent the temperature rising rapidly. The symptoms may be the same as for heat exhaustion, but the skin may be dry with no sweating, and the person's mental condition worsens. They may stagger, appear confused, have a fit, or collapse and become unconscious.

### What to do for heat exhaustion

- Get the person to a cool area and lie them down
- Remove outer clothing
- Wet skin with cool water or wet cloths
- Seek medical advice

### What to do for heat stroke

- Call an ambulance
- Get the person to a cool area and lie them down
- Remove clothing and wet skin with water, fanning continuously
- Position an unconscious person on their side and clear the airway

## ATTACHMENT 2

### LIGHTNING ACTION GUIDE AND FIRST AID GUIDELINES

#### LIGHTNING ACTION GUIDE

Source: Emergency Management Australia

##### Be Prepared

- Check with your local electrical contractor for advice on surge protectors and lightning conductors.
- Have an emergency kit on hand, including a battery operated radio, torch and spare batteries.
- Keep a list of emergency numbers handy. **Act Safe** If caught outdoors:
  - Seek shelter in a hard top vehicle or solid building.
  - Never shelter under a tree or a group of trees.
  - If far from shelter crouch down, don't lie flat.
  - If boating or swimming, leave the water immediately.
  - Avoid metal objects such as ladders, umbrellas, fences and clothes lines.
  - Secure pets in a safe place. If indoors:
    - Disconnect computers, televisions and other electrical/electronic appliances.
    - Avoid using fixed line telephones unless essential.
    - Keep clear of windows.
  - Avoid metal fixtures, such as roofs, guttering, downpipes and taps. **After the lightning**
    - Keep your radio tuned to local media for updated weather reports and power outages.
    - Confirm location and safety of family members and immediate neighbours.
    - Check operation of essential household items and check fuse box for surge protection/fuse/circuit breaker impact. For further information contact your local State Emergency Service office. [www.ema.gov.au](http://www.ema.gov.au)

#### FIRST AID RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LIGHTNING VICTIMS

Source: Department of Sport & Recreation, Government of Western Australia

Most lightning victims can survive their encounter with lightning, especially with timely medical treatment. Individuals struck by lightning do not carry a charge and are safe to touch in order to render treatment. The following First Aid is recommended: **First** Call 000 or nearest Emergency Service and provide directions and information about the likely number of victims.



## **Response**

The first tenet of emergency care is 'make no more casualties'. If the area where the victim is located is a high-risk area (mountain top, isolated tree, open field, golf course etc.) with a continuing thunderstorm, the rescuers may be placing themselves in danger.

## **Evacuation**


It is relatively unusual for victims who survive a lightning strike to have major fractures that would cause paralysis or major bleeding complications unless they have suffered a fall or been thrown a distance. As a result, in an active thunderstorm, the rescuer needs to choose whether evacuation from very high-risk areas to an area of lesser risk is warranted and should not be afraid to move the victim rapidly if necessary. Rescuers are cautioned to minimise their exposure to lightning as much as possible.

## **Resuscitation**


If the victim is not breathing, start mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. If it is decided to move the victim, give a few quick breaths prior to moving them. Determine if the victim has a pulse by checking the pulse at the carotid artery (side of the neck) or femoral artery (groin) for at least 20–30 seconds. If no pulse is detected, start cardiac compressions as well. In situations that are cold and wet, putting a protective layer between the victim and the ground may decrease the hypothermia that the victim suffers which can further complicate the resuscitation.

**ATTACHMENT 3**



 Main entry and exit point from the beach leading from the main beach path to Small Street which takes us back to the bus stop.

**X** – Marks the spot where there is a shelter shed should this be required in poor weather, an emergency or evacuation.

 Identifies the path main we will use to enter and exit the beach and evacuate if need be.