

## 2.8 Chemicals

**Applies to:** All Koorana staff working in Preschools, families attending Koorana Preschools and Preschool cleaners.

### Purpose

1. To use chemicals in Preschools correctly and safely to protect staff, children, families and visitors from the dangers and risks associated with chemical products.
2. To encourage the use of natural and non-toxic products including cleaning agents wherever possible within our Preschools.

**Version: 1**

**Date approved: 20/4/2016**

**Next review date: 20/4/2018**

**Approved by: CEO**

**Policy context:** This policy relates to

Standards or other external requirements	National Quality Standards – Quality Area 2 – Standard 2.1, Element 2.1.3, Standard 2.3, Element 2.3.2 <a href="http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/NQF-Resource-03-Guide-to-NQS.pdf">http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/NQF-Resource-03-Guide-to-NQS.pdf</a>
Legislation or other requirements	Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 <a href="http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/2010/104">http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/2010/104</a> Education and Care Services National Regulations [(2)(h) under Regulation 168] <a href="http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-regulations">http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-regulations</a> Work Health and Safety Act 2011 <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2016C00887">https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2016C00887</a> Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 <a href="http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2011/674">http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2011/674</a>
Contractual obligations	N/A
Resources	NSW EPA – Chemicals Management <a href="http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/pesticides/chemicalmgt.htm">http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/pesticides/chemicalmgt.htm</a> St John Ambulance Australia - first aid quick ( <a href="http://www.createl.com.au/assets/files/St%20John%20Ambulance%20First%20Aid%20Quick.pdf">http://www.createl.com.au/assets/files/St%20John%20Ambulance%20First%20Aid%20Quick.pdf</a> ) Kidsafe NSW Inc ( <a href="http://www.kidsafensw.org/home-community/poisoning-prevention/">http://www.kidsafensw.org/home-community/poisoning-prevention/</a> )

	<p>Staying Healthy in Childcare, 5th Edition, 2012</p> <p><a href="http://www.imagineeducation.com.au/files/GapTraining/Staying_Healthy_5th_Edition.pdf">http://www.imagineeducation.com.au/files/GapTraining/Staying_Healthy_5th_Edition.pdf</a></p> <p>NSW Early Childhood Environmental Education Network (<a href="http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nsw_branch/eceen.html">www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nsw_branch/eceen.html</a>)</p> <p>Safer Solutions (<a href="http://www.saferolutions.org.au">www.saferolutions.org.au</a>)</p>
--	---

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	<p>2.4 Child Safe Environments</p> <p>2.5 Infection Control – Minimise Spread of Infectious Diseases and Exclusion</p> <p>2.6 Hand Washing</p> <p>2.7 Nappy Changing and Toileting</p>
Forms, record keeping or other organisational documents	<p>(M)SDS</p> <p>Chemical Register</p>

Definitions
<p><i>"Koorana" means Koorana Child and Family Services Incorporated.</i></p> <p><i>"Parents" includes a legal guardian.</i></p> <p><i>"Staff" is a Koorana staff member working in the Preschool, e.g. Educator, Administrator or Key Worker. This may also include other Koorana staff such as Case Managers, Early Linker, Therapists, Head Office Administrators, Home and Community Based Key Workers and Koorana Management when visiting or working in the Preschool.</i></p> <p><i>"(M)SDS" means (Material) Safety Data Sheets</i></p> <p><i>"WHS" means Work Health and Safety</i></p>

## POLICY STATEMENT

In New South Wales, every year thousands of children need medical care for poisoning from products commonly found in and around the early childhood education and care centres or family homes. Most accidental poisonings occur to children younger than five.

Children are more susceptible and vulnerable to chemical exposure as their bodies are still developing and the play, practices and behaviour of children leave them open to greater exposure to chemicals in and around the early childhood education and care centres or family homes.

Implementation of appropriate storage can help to eliminate or minimise the risk of exposure to children. Furthermore, using alternatives to toxic products can help to remove or minimise these health risks to children.

## **PRACTICES**

### **Preschools will**

- Develop and maintain a Chemical Register of all products.
- Dispose of chemicals appropriately that are no longer required or past the expiry date.
- Ensure all containers holding chemicals are adequately labelled and include the following information:
  - Chemical name of the product.
  - Correct proportions to be used if chemicals are to be diluted.
- Collect a (M)SDS for each chemical product and retain them in a readily accessible location.
- Provide first aid resources which meet the requirements for the chemicals being used.
- During the staff induction process or when new chemicals are purchased the Preschool Leader will supply adequate information, training, supervision and documented procedures in the use/storage/disposal of the chemicals in the service including where the (M)SDS are located. The Preschool Leader will inform staff of their responsibility under the WHS Legislation and current regulations.
- Ensure there is adequate ventilation in areas where chemicals are used.
- Ensure chemically based products are substituted with the least toxic option without compromising hygiene, unless no alternative product available.
- Use the minimum dose required for cleaning when using a chemical product.
- Provide information and support to staff and families about chemical alternatives and safe storage of chemicals that will protect children's health.
- Use detergent and warm water as the primary agent for effective general cleaning purposes, followed by rinsing and drying.
- Remove dirt, food or other particles as quickly as possible from surfaces and clean surfaces with warm water and detergent and dry them with a paper towel as standard practice to reduce the need for harsher chemicals.
- Use water-based products or natural products.

### **Purchasing**

- The Preschool will purchase products that are the least hazardous/toxic chemical, product or equipment for the job.
- Where available Preschools will choose chemicals with child resistant lids or caps.
- Staff will read the label before purchasing any chemical product to ensure that it is appropriate for its intended use, how it will need to be stored and the first aid equipment required.

### **Storage**

- Preschools will store chemicals securely out of the reach of children in a locked cupboard or in an area/room that is inaccessible to children.

- When storing any chemical or dangerous substances, staff need to be aware of their responsibility under WHS Legislation.
- Simple warning signs are to be displayed where chemicals are kept.
- Containers are to be well sealed and childproof closures are used wherever possible.
- All dangerous cleaning materials (including detergents), poisons and other dangerous substances are stored in their original labelled container. Where required substances can be decanted into smaller correctly labelled containers.
- Chemicals are not to be decanted into drink or food containers.

### **Use and handling**

- When using any chemical or dangerous substances, staff need to be aware of their responsibility under WHS Legislation.
- Staff will follow the manufacturer's instructions for use.
- Staff will not mix chemicals and will only use chemicals for their intended use.
- Staff will wear protective clothing if recommended, e.g. gloves.
- Ensure adequate ventilation when using products.
- Potentially toxic chemicals will not be used while children are present.
- When cleaning products are stored or diluted in labelled spray bottles:
  - Staff will use the stream nozzle instead of the mist nozzle to minimise the amount of spray mist in the air.
  - The nozzle will be pointed away from persons to prevent injury.
  - Small areas are sprayed at a time.
  - Staff will not use the spray bottle near the children or other adults to prevent injury and inhalation.

### **Disposal**

- Disposal of unwanted chemicals, medication, substances or equipment, is to be done safely and in accordance with manufacturer's instructions, WHS Regulation, local council regulation or Department of Health advice as relevant.
- Disposal of empty bottles/containers will be done in an environmentally appropriate manner wherever possible e.g. recycling.