

Emergency and Evacuation Policy

1. Purpose:

At Y Whittlesea, we recognise that clear, practiced emergency and evacuation procedures are essential for protecting the safety and wellbeing of children, families, staff, and visitors. Emergencies can occur without warning, so all team members must be confident in responding calmly and effectively. Regular drills ensure preparedness, support children's resilience, and help everyone know what to do when it matters most.

2. Scope:

This policy applies to all Early Years operations and services of The Y Whittlesea, management, contractors, educators, volunteers, students and families.

3. Policy Statement:

Y Whittlesea is committed to maintaining robust emergency and evacuation practices in line with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, particularly Regulation 97. We apply a comprehensive emergency management approach encompassing prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

Each service site must:

- Display an up-to-date emergency and evacuation floor plan near all exits.
- Maintain an Emergency Management Plan (EMP) based on an annual and situational risk assessment.
- Practice and review emergency evacuation drills every three months, ensuring all children and staff participate regularly.
- Consider the needs of all children, including infants, non-ambulant children, and those with disability or additional support needs.
- Communicate with families about procedures and drills.
- Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities and are trained in emergency response, including the use of emergency equipment.

We recognise our responsibility to keep everyone safe and to support recovery following critical incidents through debriefing, wellbeing supports, and procedural review.

4. Responsibilities

Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor

- Ensure emergency and evacuation policies and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed.
- Ensure each service has a clearly displayed and up-to-date emergency and evacuation floor plan.
- Provide adequate training and resources to respond effectively in emergency situations.
- Ensure regular emergency drills are scheduled, documented, and reviewed for improvement.
- Report serious incidents to the Regulatory Authority within required timeframes.

Educational Leader / Room Leaders

- Support implementation of procedures in collaboration with the Nominated Supervisor.
- Ensure all educators and staff understand their roles during emergency situations.
- Promote calm, consistent leadership during emergency drills and actual events.
- Assist in debriefing sessions following drills or real incidents to identify lessons learned.

Educators and Staff

- Participate in training and regular emergency drills.
- Know and follow the emergency procedures specific to their service.
- Take immediate and appropriate action during emergencies to ensure the safety of all.
- Remain calm, provide reassurance to children, and support their emotional wellbeing during and after incidents.
- Ensure attendance rolls and emergency contact details are always accessible.

Families

- Familiarise themselves with the service's emergency and evacuation procedures.
- Provide up-to-date contact details and ensure authorised pick-up persons are listed.
- Support the service by remaining calm and following staff instructions during an emergency event.
- Reinforce importance of safety drills at home to support children's understanding and confidence.

5. Related Policies and Procedures:

- Child Safe Environment
- Excursions & Regular Outings
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Evacuation maps – refer to sites
- Emergency Management Plans – Site specific

6. Legislative and Industry Requirements: [Link here](#) to Legislative Compliance Register

7. Consequences of breaching this policy: All elements of this policy must be adhered to, and any breach will be dealt with in accordance with the [YMCA Whittlesea Disciplinary and Termination Policy](#).

8. Policy owner: The General Manager of Early Years is responsible for keeping this policy current - including making amendments as required, and regular reviews as scheduled.

9. Document Control: Review of this policy will be undertaken every two years, or prior as required by law, in consultation with appropriate Y People.

Version:	Description of Amendment	Amended by	Date	Release Date
4.0	Reviewed and moved to new template	Farryn Burrill	27/11/2024	July 25
3.0	Policy transferred to new template, referencing to YMCA changed to The Y	Belinda Turner	08/07/2021	July 21
2.0	Policy reviewed	Geny Zambello	20/12/2013	Jan 14
1.0	Policy created and implemented	Taryn Nelson	29/11/2012	Dec 2012