



## 7.14 (f) Fencing and Verandah Policy

<b>Policy number:</b> 7.14(f)
<b>Date last reviewed:</b> July 2024
<b>Reviewed by:</b> Child Care Team

This policy relates to	
Family Day Care/Venue Care	
National Quality Standards	<p>2.1.1 Each child’s wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child’s need for sleep, rest and relaxation.</p> <p>2.2.1 At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.</p> <p>3.1 The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.</p> <p>3.1.1 Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.</p> <p>3.1.2 Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.</p> <p>3.2 The service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning.</p> <p>7.1.2 Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.</p> <p>7.13 Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service.</p>
Policies	<p>Engagement or registration of FDC educators</p> <p>Emergencies, Lockdown and Evacuation policy</p> <p>Swimming and Water Safety</p>

### Policy

Each Family Day Care premises should have access to a suitable and appropriate outdoor play space that meets the needs of the children being provided education and care in each family day care residence or venue in terms of their age, developmental stage and considering the program being offered.

Regulation 104 requires an approved provider to ensure that any outdoor space used by children at an education and care services premises is enclosed by a fence or barrier that is of such a height and design that children of preschool age, or under cannot go through, over or under it. The intent

of regulation 104 is that, even if the service (FDC educator) fails to provide adequate supervision, children under school age should not be able to leave the premises unaccompanied or undetected. Educators should also consider/assess the children enrolled and their developmental and behavioural abilities when risk assessing your fencing.

To maintain compliance with the Education and Care National Regulations, educators must ensure their displayed property plan includes all fences, barriers and verandas that exist anywhere within the boundaries of their family day care residence or venue including all areas inaccessible to children during their time in care.

### **Secure Fencing Recommendations**

- Educators will have a full safety audit prior to starting as an educator and this will include a fencing assessment.
- Annual safety review will include fencing being check by coordinators
- Educators are required to provide a safe and shady outdoor play area with secure fencing that prevents children from being able to go over, under, around or through. Fencing needs to prevent access to all potential risks to children including water hazards, roads, animals and pets or poisonous products.
- The heights of fencing may vary dependant on the risks. It is recommended that fencing should be 1.2 metres high. Increased fence height may be required in situations where there is a higher risk to children. Water on the property or neighbours property is considered high risk and will require extra consideration.
- To increase safety for children, fencing should not provide footholds that allow a child to climb outside the fence.
- Active supervision is required where children exhibit risk taking behaviours to ensure children remain safe.
- Fencing should be regularly maintained and checked as part of daily safety audit and water hazard safety daily reminders to ensure that there are no gaps in the fencing that would allow a child to go over, under, around or through the fencing.
- The environment needs to be planned to ensure that there are no structures or equipment placed close to fences that provide an opportunity for climbing over the fence, paying particular attention to those areas near pools, water hazards or water features. Refer to pool fencing requirements.
- Moveable items that could create climbing opportunities need to be considered particularly if the height of the item would allow a child to climb over the fence. Fixed items need to be 900mm to 1metre away from fences.

- Fences that have mid rails may need preventative measures in place depending on the height of the middle bar and height of the fence to prevent climbing shade cloth, bamboo rolls, wedge to prevent foot hold on middle bar. (Wedge is available at Bunnings)
  
- Gates and doors are required to have childproof catches that prevent access to hazards including pools, dams, waterways, roads and areas that have not been safety checked. Gates need to be free of foot holds and meet the same height requirements as fencing.
  
- Dogs and animals that may cause injury to children are required to be housed in separate areas with secure fencing.

### **Pool Fencing Requirements**

The National Construction Code 2019 1800mm high fencing to boundaries

- Fencing away from the boundary is a minimum height of 1200mm
- Gap between pickets is a maximum height of 100mm
- Gates swing into the pool space
- Non climbable zone 900mm located on the inside of the fence
- The latch (if less than 1500mm above ground level) located on the outside of gate

Educators who have a pool/spa will be required to have a certified safety certificate (current within 6 months) from licensed pool safety inspector, prior to commencement this will include the above requirements. Pool safety certificate must be in line with state and local council planning requirements. Educators with pools/spas are required to complete a FDC Pool/water hazard/water features daily safety check each day.

The educator will be required to have a new certificate supplied to the coordination unit in the event that there are renovations or changes to the environment that may affect the original pool certificate.

Educators are responsible to maintain the fencing to the original certificate standard of approval. Educators are required to advise the coordination unit of any changes that occur or may occur, that could compromise the original pool safety certificate. Educators are to provide a pool safety certificate from licensed pool safety inspector every 2 years to the coordination unit.

If there are maintenance issues or changes are observed that may affect or compromise the pool safety certificate a new certificate will be requested from licensed pool safety inspector, and this may result in the suspension of care until resolved and a new certificate has been supplied.

Changes to the fence or gate may also lead to the coordination unit requesting a further certificate for safety reasons.

Items around the pool area must not be easily moved by children to allow climbing the fence- light chairs, tables equipment should be secured to prevent this occurring (could tie bottom of chairs to table or peg items down) climbable items should be 900mm to 1 metre away to prevent children climbing on the fence.

## Staircases and Verandahs

Staircases must be inaccessible to children to whom the staircase poses a safety hazard. Stairs should have:

- Handrails, with 1-metre-high gates at the top and bottom of stairs and gaps less than 100mm; **or**
- A documented risk management plan developed in consultation with the coordination unit.

Verandahs should have vertical railing no greater than 100mm apart with no horizontal or near horizontal parts that would allow children to climb, with no greater gap between the bottom rail of 100mm. Verandahs with a fall height are a higher risk play area. Educators should ensure that children are well supervised, and that careful selection and placement of verandah furniture limits the risk of children falling from the verandah.

Keep all furniture, potted plants and other climbable objects away from railings and the edges of decks, verandahs and balconies.

Try to place only heavy items of furniture on the deck, veranda so that children cannot move them or tie the table and chairs together so they cannot be pushed to the edges.

Educators must prevent access to all verandahs, decks and balconies unless children are actively supervised. Doors must be key locked with keys hung by door out of reach of children.

Regular checking of any wood for rot, rusty nails or termite damage that could become a potential hazard should occur and be documented as a hazard with immediate action taken to prevent any possible risks to children.

### Relevant Legislation

<https://www.qld.gov.au/law/your-rights/legal-and-property-rights/laws-for-building-houses-and-pools/pool-fencing-and-safety-laws>

Pool Legislation (Safety Certificate) AS1926

Building Act 1975

[www.legislation.qld.gov.au/legisln/current/b/builda75](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/legisln/current/b/builda75)

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

165 Offence to inadequately supervise children

167 Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards

174 Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

25(1)(c) Additional information about proposed education and care service premises

26(1)(l) Application for service approval—family day care service

116 Assessments of family day care residences and approved family day care venues

116a Inspection of swimming pools, water features and other potential water hazards at family day care

116b Inspection report



116c Compliance with fencing requirements for swimming pools at family day care residences and approved family day care venues

168(2)(h) Education and care service must have policies and procedures – providing a child safe environment

169 Additional policies and procedures – family day care service

170 Policies and procedures to be followed

171 Policies and procedures to be kept available

172 Notification of change to policies or procedures

**Associated Beaucare policies and documents**

[Appendix A Legislation](#)

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