

Policy on effective management of accidents/incidents: HS 10

Date of issue: November 2013

Date for review: November 2015

Policy Number: HS 10

Policy prepared by: EH Policy Reference Group

Background to the policy statement:

EtonHouse is committed to the pursuit of excellence and leadership in educational services and practices. At EtonHouse early learning settings (incorporating schools and preschools), we owe a duty of care to children and their families to ensure that children experience safe and secure learning environments and are protected from situations which may cause harm to them either physically or psychologically.

The responsibility of duty of care involves awareness and supervision of the children for whom staff are responsible and where possible the anticipation of potential hazards.

This does not mean that every accident/incident can be prevented; however staff have a responsibility to ensure that the environment is as safe as possible to minimize the occurrence of potential hazards and / or injury. This includes careful supervision of children's movement throughout the school/preschool campus at all times during the day.

For the purposes of this policy, an 'accident' is defined as an incident that, despite all due care and attention, results in some physical harm to a child or staff member. For example, despite careful playground supervision, two children may run into each other when playing, or a child may be hit with a ball as part of their play.

An 'incident' is regarded as any event or occurrence which places a child or adult at risk physically and or psychologically. For example, a disturbance at the school/preschool involving an individual (known or otherwise) who disturbs the routine, or disrupts the curriculum/transitions of children and causes harm or fright to children or adults.

Incidents that are likely to attract media and or public attention, for example, incidents which are life threatening or have a significant impact on the safety and security of children must be reported directly to the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) or relevant Government Authority/Agency in settings out of Singapore. These incidents include, (but are not confined to):

- Children's school bus transportation to their respective destination;
- Children missing from the setting;
- Death, or severe life threatening injury by accident or force;
- Mass food poisoning;
- Outbreaks of infectious diseases;

- Terrorist activity/bomb threats/civil emergency situations;
- Serious damage to property including malicious situations;
- Fire of suspicious origin;

Aim/purpose of the policy statement:

- To ensure a proactive approach in ensuring that children and adults experience a physically and psychologically safe and secure environment;
- To ensure that centre management and the appropriate government Authorities/Agency are informed of serious accidents/incidents as per the requirements of current legislation;
- To support all staff in an ongoing appraisal of the school/preschool environment, and the practices and procedures aimed at addressing and managing risk;

Policy statement:

To ensure the safety of children and adults at EtonHouse schools and preschools there must be a process of ongoing risk assessment and risk management. Staff must exercise responsible duty of care in the planning of curricula experiences and must at all times be diligent in their supervision of children's movement throughout the school/preschool campus to ensure children's care and safety.

Implementation practices and procedures:

- All staff are required to hold a current First Aid Certificate. A current/updated list of qualified first aid trained staff and information about available refresher courses must be maintained by the Principal/Preschool Director;
- Children learn through adult example. As professionals we must convey an attitude of care within our interactions and support children in our care by role modelling and setting a positive example;
- The key to a safe environment is sound supervision. Outdoor play, in particular must be supervised at all times, as the nature of children's play activity in this area raises the potential of accidents occurring. Young children must be supervised at all times when transiting between learning and curriculum experiences and must not be left alone unduly at any time whether indoor or outdoor;
- Staff must demonstrate prudent judgment when planning learning experiences to ensure that learning experiences are sufficiently challenging without placing children at risk. We support the premise that young children learn best through hands on learning. Children must however be supported in handling objects necessary to their learning with care and attention e.g. scissors and sewing needles;

- Children are to be supported in their awareness of keeping themselves safe. For example, to walk inside and on stair wells, to sit (not stand) on chairs;
- Children should be supported in their interactions with others to ensure they learn to be considerate of their friends and to use equipment/resources carefully so as not to cause harm to others e.g. we keep the sand in the sand pit; we use words not hands;
- All equipment must be checked regularly for wear/tear/breakage. Any equipment which shows evidence of wear (splinters; cracks; rough edges) must be removed until repaired/replaced as soon as possible so that children continue to benefit from the educational program provided;
- All materials, especially for preschool age children must be of a non toxic nature. Care must be taken with infants and toddlers to ensure that equipment pieces are not too small and do not come away and cannot be mouthed or swallowed by young children;
- Regular fire drill procedures must be practiced by all staff and children (see EH Policy statement HS 11: Policy and procedures for fire safety awareness and fire prevention);
- Medication is to be administered in strict accordance with the doctor's written instruction. Administration of medication records must be maintained by the school/preschool (see EH policy statement HS 09: Policy on the administration of medication);
- The location of first aid kits must be known to all staff. First aid kits must be kept well stocked. There must be a staff member appointed whose responsibility it is to regularly check the first aid kit contents to maintain levels and to check for expiry dates;
- Adults must use disposable gloves when managing blood spills and bodily fluids; Care must be taken to thoroughly sanitize areas which have come into contact with blood/bodily fluids;
- The environment must be planned for safety e.g. storage of chemicals (disinfectants and cleaning agents) must be out of children's reach, preferably in a locked cupboard. There must be no child access to hot water at any time (this includes staff drinks);
- Cleaning personnel must identify e.g. wet/slippery floors as potential hazards to children and other staff. Spills in the classroom should be wiped up immediately to prevent slips and falls;

- All personnel undertaking maintenance work must keep their work tools in such a way that children cannot gain access. Work areas should be clearly signed as such to prevent access by children and adults;
- Each class must maintain a confidential incident book to record dated observations of concerns connected to children/parents. This information must be shared with the Principal/Pre School Director for follow up advice/support;
- Staff are required to record a detailed written report outlining a full description of any accident/incident. These reports are to be signed by the necessary accountable parties (i.e. those who witnessed the accident/incident). Further reporting to MSF and or other relevant Government Authorities may also be required by the centre licensee/supervisor;
- Security guards must be briefed on all arrivals and departures to ensure only authorized personnel are permitted onto the campus. No child must leave the setting unaccompanied or with an adult unknown to the Principal/Preschool Director/Class teacher of the school/preschool. Staff must make verify with the parent if anyone other than the parent(s) or nominated emergency contact attempts to collect a child. Visitors to the school/preschool must report to the administration office upon arrival;
- Should parents organize play dates leading on from the school/preschool day, parents must notify the office in writing (one day in advance) as to who will be collecting their child;
- All gates and exit points are to be secured and well maintained at all times. Children must not be allowed unaccompanied access to the car park at any time. Signs reminding parents and visitors to close doors/exits to car parks must be in place;
- All due care should be exercised prior to fogging the school/preschool campus. Where possible fogging should be undertaken outside of school/preschool hours, preferably on week ends;
- Staff engaged by external bus carriers must report accidents/incidents which occur under their supervision.
- External bus personnel are **not permitted** to give food (including sweets) to children'

Evaluation of this policy: A review of this policy and implementation procedures will be conducted every two years. This review will be undertaken in collaboration between the Preschool Directors, Vice Principals and staff of the EtonHouse Education Centre (the EH policy reference group). Current child care legislation will also be reflected in any policy revision.