

Bush Kinder Emergency Evacuation Policy

Purpose

NQS: Quality Area 2

This policy is a special circumstance policy which augments the main Maribyrnong Kindergarten Emergency and Evacuation Policy and the Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy and should be read in conjunction with those policies. This Bush Kinder policy only details the specific evacuation procedures for children, staff and volunteers attending the Bush Kinder program in response to an emergency or hazard that may arise during a session.

This policy aims to:

- Set out clear and safe evacuation principles and procedures for Bush Kinder participants in response to an emergency situation of any type
- Increase awareness and implementation of emergency and evacuation procedures at Bush Kinder amongst staff and the broader kindergarten community
- Provide an appropriate mechanism for communication of the evacuation procedures for requirements for Bush Kinder sessions to parents and to children.

Policy statement

1. Values

Maribyrnong Kindergarten Inc. is committed to:

- Providing a safe environment for children, staff and volunteers participating in the Bush Kinder program
- Ensuring that an appropriate response is provided, which meets the needs of participants during and following emergency incidents
- Providing effective procedures in place to manage emergency incidents at the Bush Kinder site.

2. Scope

This policy applies to children, parents, staff, committee members, authorised persons, volunteers and students on placement working at Maribyrnong Kindergarten.

3. Background and legislation

There are a multitude of possible emergency situations that may arise at Bush Kinder. These include, but are not limited to:

- Fire / Bushfire
- Chemical hazards
- Missing child
- Aggressive dogs off leads
- Other animal intruders
- Uninvited person/stranger (threatening, causing a nuisance or unease for staff and participants)

- Toxic leak
- Hostage/siege
- Natural events, such as extreme weather, floods, severe winds, thunderstorm or earthquake
- The involvement of firearms or other weapons
- Hazardous substances incidents
- Medical emergency (refer to Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness policy).
- Accident.

The aim of this policy is to provide the appropriate response to such an incident or emergency to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all Bush Kinder participants.

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

Assembly point: A predetermined and mapped safe place for the Bush Kinder group to meet after an emergency evacuation. **[Refer to Attachment 1 for Bush Kinder assembly points]**

Emergency: A sudden, unforeseen crisis (usually involving danger) that requires immediate action.

Emergency evacuation: Emergency evacuation is the immediate and rapid movement of people away from the threat or actual occurrence of a hazard.

Evacuation route: A predetermined and mapped safe route to move people away from a threat or danger. At Bush Kinder, the route taken will depend on the emergency/danger. **[Refer to Attachment 1 for Bush Kinder evacuation routes]**

Hazard: The potential to harm a person's health or safety that can arise from the environment, equipment and substances, poor work design and inappropriate practices and procedures.

5. Sources and related policies

Service policies

- Excursions and Service Events Policy
- Bush Kinder Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
- Bush Kinder Extreme Weather Policy
- Bush Kinder Protective Clothing Policy
- Bush Kinder Snake Awareness Policy
- Bush Kinder Dog Awareness Policy
- Bush Kinder Flora and Fauna Awareness Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Incident, Illness, Trauma & Illness Policy

- Sun Protection Policy
- Water Safety Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy
- Bush Kinder Play Benefits and Risk Policy
- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy
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Procedures

General

The Committee is responsible for:

- Following all requirements in Maribyrnong Kindergarten's main Emergency and Evacuation Policy and the Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy
- Establishing, monitoring and reviewing the Bush Kinder (Benefits) Risk Assessment which identifies a number of potential hazards and risks and mechanisms for their treatment
- Establishing, monitoring and reviewing (in consultation with staff) emergency evacuation procedures, a series of safe evacuation routes and assembly points in response to a range of potential emergency situations **[Refer to Attachment 1 for Bush Kinder evacuation procedures, routes and assembly points]**
- Ensuring emergency evacuation procedures are included in teachers' documentation carried at Bush Kinder
- Ensuring a fully equipped first aid kit is included with the Bush Kinder gear and equipment
- Ensuring all teachers and volunteers are aware of the location of first-aid kit at Bush Kinder

- Providing a fully equipped portable first-aid kit
- Developing a regular training schedule for Bush Kinder staff that includes the operation of communication systems, evacuation procedures, including evacuation routes and safe places; and occupational health and safety and first aid
- Ensuring that all children, staff, parent, students, volunteers and visitors understand the requirements of this policy including conducting practice drills
- Ensuring new Bush Kinder staff, students and volunteers have an understanding of the Bush Kinder policy and procedures in relation to emergency evacuation in their induction procedure
- Ensuring procedures are in place at Bush Kinder to identify which staff are in attendance at any one time, such as the sign-in sheet. This can then be used to ensure that all staff are accounted for in the event of an emergency.

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring the safety of the children, fellow staff members and volunteers in their care and protecting them from hazards at Bush Kinder
- Being aware of the Bush Kinder evacuation procedures set out in this policy, along with the evacuation routes and assembly points in the different emergency scenarios as set out in Attachment 1.
- Providing awareness and support to children before, during and after emergencies
- Providing input into the development of procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency situation, and contributing to the review of the procedures following an emergency incident

- Informing the committee and reporting notifiable incidents to the DEECD
- Ensuring that all children, staff and volunteers are accounted for in the event of an evacuation

Parents are responsible for:

- Reading and being familiar with the policy
- Bringing relevant issues to the attention of both staff and committee
- Ensuring children are signed in and out as per the requirements of Maribrynong Kindergarten's Delivery and Collection of Children Policy (both the main policy and the Bush Kinder Policy)
- Supporting children's awareness and education in emergency situations
- Following the directions of staff during an emergency, incident or drill.

Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes the proprietor (committee) will:

- Seek feedback regarding this policy and its implementation with parents of children participating in the Bush Kinder program. This can be facilitated through discussions and the annual parents survey.

- Ask staff to share their experiences and observations in relation to the effectiveness of this policy.
- Regularly review the policy and centre practices to ensure they are compliant with any new legislation, research or best practice procedures.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Bush Kinder Evacuation Procedures, Assembly Points and Evacuation Routes.

Authorisation

Endorsed by the Maribyrnong Kindergarten Committee of Management on

Review Date

This policy will be reviewed yearly

Review date: 10th November 2025

Next review date November 2026

Attachment 1

Bush Kinder Evacuation Procedures, Assembly Points and Evacuation Routes.

Evacuation Procedures

Whatever the emergency, incident or situation that necessitates the evacuation, the following procedures are to be followed by staff and volunteers

- Keep children calm
- Ensure sign-in sheet 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 Bush 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
- Teachers/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.
- Notify parents via Audri Post of new location for collection (if required) and notify DEECD (if required)
- If the evacuation/relocation is for weather reasons, wait for the extreme weather to pass and when it does, resume normal activities if appropriate and safe to do so, following same relocation procedures to return to the Bush 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.

Safe Zone Assembly Points and Routes

The safe zone assembly points will differ depending on the nature of the emergency:

Evacuation Point 1: BBQ shelter / Rotunda

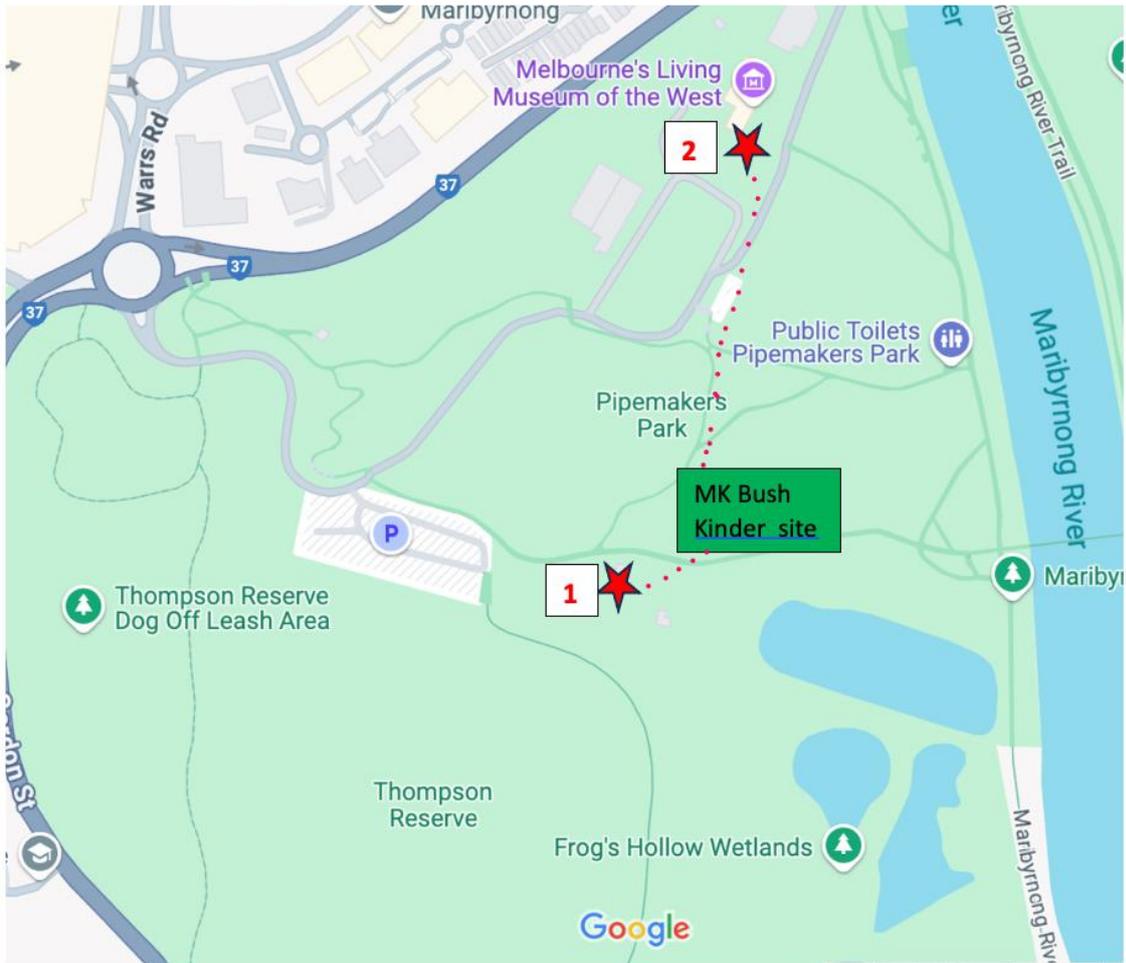
Group to wait here until torrential rain and/or hail has passed and it is safe to resume normal activities.

Shelter may be sought in the Melbourne's Living Museum of the West if the weather shows no signs of abating (see Evacuation Point 2 below).

Route: Take shortest safe route possible



★ Evacuation Points



SEVERE STORM, EXTREME WINDS

Evacuation Point 2: Melbourne's Living Museum of the West

Group to wait here until storm passes and see to resume activities (recommend 30 minutes after electrical storm activity has ceased)

Route: Take shortest safe route possible

Evacuation Point 3: To be decided at the time of emergency.

If it is necessary to evacuate Pipemaker's Park altogether, staff will make an informed decision as to where they will evacuate the park. Families will be notified via Audiri.