

MPC: RISK ASSESSMENTS STATEMENT

The well-being of children, and their development and learning, is the fundamental focus for all decision making in all aspects of our centre. (extract from MPC philosophy)

In addressing risk management, we endeavour to:

- Acknowledge children as being capable and competent and as significant problem solvers in the kindy environment.
- Remain aware of the differences between individuals and their abilities in all areas of development and the impact this may have on their ability to manage situations and assess risk.
- Assess benefits alongside risk.
- Differentiate between risk and hazard. Risk is viewed in many and varied ways. We champion the benefit of risk as an opportunity for children to practise assessing hazards as well as developing a willingness to try something new, persevere, persist and build resilience. Being able to manage difficult situations, physically, socially and emotionally, is a powerful learning experience for young children. Facing these situations, with the support of adults, can have a significant psychological impact on children, building resilience and an “I can” attitude.
- Create a safe, but challenging environment that has many options. We re-frame *can children really do this* to see *what children can do*. Rather than doing to or for children we encourage children to make decisions thus building their agency.

As educators we look for opportunities rather than constraints. (extract from MPC philosophy). Continual vigilance is undertaken by staff to support the wellbeing of children at all times. In addition, reflection and collaboration between staff are ongoing so that decision making can be implemented as needed. Responses to situations are thereby able to be made as soon as a potential hazard is identified. These responses may include strategies such as the positioning of adults, problem solving discussions with children individually or at group time, alterations to equipment or removal of equipment. As educators become more familiar with children’s competence, capabilities and dispositions these understandings also inform decisions in relation to individual children. Kindy provides a managed environment in which young children can take considered risks with support close to hand.

Benefit/risk assessment is the responsibility of all stakeholders: staff, committee, parents and children. Work Health & Safety audits are undertaken each term in accordance with WH&S regulations. A system for reporting and addressing hazards is established. We understand that adults will have varying views and tolerances for risk and we endeavour to listen to these views and share relevant research. We model an approach to children which demonstrates that they are considered to be capable and competent problem solvers. We involve children in experiences and discussions which encourage them to actively consider, and respond proactively to, the safety of themselves and others in their environment.