



Wandana  
Preschool – Year 6

Respect • Belonging • Learning

## WANDANA CHILD PARENT CENTRE

### OPEN-FIRE POLICY

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#### Purpose

Wandana Preschool is committed to providing rich, hands-on learning experiences that foster children's development, curiosity, and resilience. The incorporation of a fire pit within our outdoor learning environment offers unique educational opportunities, including:

Building children's understanding of fire safety, risk assessment, and responsible behaviour. At Wandana our aim is to provide an environment that encourages risk taking and allows for children to explore and discover the world for themselves. *Encounters with certain types of risk help children to learn how to manage those risks* (Gill, 2007 *No Fear Growing up in a risk adverse society*)

Enhancing children's connection to the natural world, inviting exploration and reflection in a supervised and supportive setting.

We respectfully acknowledge and incorporate Aboriginal perspectives on fire as a traditional tool for caring for Country and sustaining communities. At Wandana CPC the use of fire pits provides opportunities for children to connect and learn about Aboriginal cultural practices, sustainable land management ("fire on Country"), and the value of sharing knowledge and stories. This reflects our commitment to recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and contributions.

The fire pit is an intentional resource at Wandana Preschool, supporting a holistic approach to learning, responsibility, community, and respect for the natural world.

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#### Policy Statement

The safety and wellbeing of children, staff, and the wider community are paramount. At Wandana our fire pit will only be used in strict accordance with the Department for Education's Outdoor Learning Environments requirements, the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) regulations, and relevant local council policies.

#### Core Requirements

Safeguards must be in place to ensure all activities are at an appropriate level for the children's abilities and understanding. To help children with this, educators will first discuss the importance of fire and the safety rules about being beside the fire in depth with children leading up to lighting the fire. Families will also be notified in advance if a fire will be lit at preschool as part of the learning curriculum.



Prior to lighting the fire and before visiting the area children should have had the opportunity to ask questions and be given information about fire safety.

Only children willing to participate will be included in the activity those with fears of fire will have the opportunity to talk to staff for reassurance.

When all the children are together at the fire pit it is a requirement that they remain seated on the stone wall and the tree trunks encircling the pit, unless otherwise directed by an educator.

### Approval and Regulations

- Fire pit use and installation must be approved by the site leader and comply with all local council requirements and the EPA's Environmental Protection (Air Quality) Policy 2016.
- A fire pit risk assessment must be completed and reviewed every 12 months
- A firepit safety checklist must be completed prior to each open-fire pit use.

### Location and Construction

- Fires must only be lit within the designated and approved fire pit area.
- Educators will ensure that a minimum 2,000mm (2m) radius area around the fire pit is kept clear of debris and flammable materials before and during use.
- The fire should be surrounded by an internal barrier of stones, to maintain the size on the fire.

### Materials Used

- Educators will ensure that only charcoal is to be used within our open fire pit in accordance with the guidelines for metropolitan Adelaide and townships.
- Educators will ensure that no CCA-treated timber or any wood/timber containing toxic substances (including paint finishes) is to be used.

### Safety Equipment

- There must always be a trained adult present within the fire circle when a fire is lit or hot embers remain, educators will never leave a fire unattended or unsupervised.
- Children and educators must wear appropriate footwear around the fire.
- Children are able to use a green stick (fresh stick) to cook on the open fire (toast, marshmallow, twists) whilst under close educator supervision.
- Educators will ensure that a tap and hose are accessible at the fire pit area and that a full bucket of water will be kept close by during use.
- Educators will ensure that sufficient sand/equipment to extinguish fire must be kept close by during use.
- Educators will ensure that a fire blanket and first aid kit are easily accessible.
- Educators will ensure that a metal shovel is located withing fire-pit area and easily accessible for use if needed.
- Designated educator to be responsible for lighting and extinguishing the fire.



## Environmental and Health Considerations

- Fire pit use must be monitored to minimise smoke and air quality impact.
- Educators will identify any children who suffer from Asthma and keep them under close supervision during the use of the fire pit.
- Activities must be suspended on days declared as 'Total Fire Ban' or when CFS fire danger warnings apply.

## Supervision and Training

- Only trained and approved staff will ignite, tend, and extinguish fires.
- Children will be supervised at all times near the fire pit and provided with clear instructions regarding safety behaviours.

## Record Keeping

All relevant risk assessments, permissions, and incident reports are to be documented and stored in line with Department for Education policy.

## Review

This policy is to be reviewed every 3 years, or following any critical incident or regulatory update.

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## References:

Department for Education, SA: Outdoor Learning Environments (2025 v1.6) [Outdoor learning environments standard](#)

EPA Environmental Protection (Air Quality) Policy (2016) [Environment Protection \(Air Quality\) Policy 2016 | South Australian Legislation](#)

Local Council Guidelines

## Key NQS Quality Areas and Regulations Linked to Fire Pit Policy

### Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice

Element 1.1.1 Approved learning framework: Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes.

Element 1.2.2 Responsive teaching and scaffolding: Intentional teaching around fire safety, science, and cultural knowledge.

### Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety



Element 2.1.1 Wellbeing and comfort: Ensuring children’s physical health and comfort during outdoor experiences.

Element 2.2.1 Supervision: Actively supervising children around the fire pit.

Element 2.2.2 Incident and emergency management: Risk assessment, emergency procedures, and having first aid resources available.

Element 2.2.3 Child protection: Ensuring environments and practices are safe and supportive.

Quality Area 3: Physical Environment

Element 3.1.2 Upkeep: Ensuring the fire pit area is safe, clean, and fit for purpose.

Element 3.2.1 Inclusive environment: Outdoor environment invites open-ended interactions and engagement.

Element 3.2.3 Environmentally responsible: Learning about fire as a natural force and responsible land management (“fire on Country”).

Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children

Element 5.1.1 Positive educator to child interactions: Supporting respectful and trusting relationships, managing risk-taking play.

Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

Element 6.2.3 Community engagement: Engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to share perspectives on fire.

National Regulations

Regulation 82 Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment: Applies to ensuring the environment remains safe from additional risks.

Regulation 84 Awareness of child protection law

Regulation 97 Emergency and evacuation procedures: Fire pit procedures must be incorporated.

Regulation 168 Education and care service must have policies and procedures: Specifically requires risk management, excursions, and emergency policies.

Regulation 170 Policies and procedures to be followed

Regulation 171 Policies and procedures to be kept available



## Procedure creation and revision record

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Approved by site leader:	Robyn McLachlan
Created by:	Daniela Gambaro (Preschool Coordinator)
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