**Supervision of Children**

**Rationale**

To ensure the safety of users, particular children under 8 years of age.

**Objective**

To ensure that every child that accesses and uses the Makino Aquatic Centre (MAC) is suitability supervised in the facility, resulting in an enjoyable experience at the MAC.

That a safe environment is maintained at all times for customers.

**Linked Policies / Procedures**

DOP-6 Managing Pool Alone Cases

MDC Annual Fees and Charges Booklet

**Procedure**

All children under 8 years of age are to be actively supervised by a caregiver 16 years or over to ensure the safety of both themselves and other users.

The initial check on whether a child needs to be supervised or not, will be undertaken by the Customer Service Officer(CSO’s) at reception. Responsibility lies, however with all staff to ensure that children entering MAC or within the facility are either suitably supervised or meet the criteria to be alone in the complex.

Every child between the age of 12 months and under 8 years must be given a coloured wristband by an CSO or a member of staff covering reception prior to entry into the complex.

The wristbands must be placed on the child in a visible area, i.e. wrists, attached to togs etc. Wristbands are not to be placed on ankles.

It is not the responsibility of Life Guards(LG) to babysit or be the primary supervisor of children.

**Children Accessing Makino Swim School**

The CSO or Person covering reception needs to ask the caregiver with the child, whether the child will swim prior to lessons or after lessons. If the child will swim or there is a chance they will want to have a swim/play prior to or after Makino Swim Lessons then a wristband must be issued to children under 8.

**Under 5 years of age rule**

All children under the age of 5 years MUST be accompanied in the water and be within arm’s reach of a caregiver 16 years and over. Refer to MDC Fees and Charges booklet for entry charges

The ideal ratio of children under the age of 5 years to adults is **2 children per supervising adult**. However, the CSO and Lifeguard Shift Supervisor has some discretion regarding this ratio based on the pool space utilised and age of other children being supervised (eg An adult has triplets or there is another supervising adult not necessarily in the water). Adult and child to be issued a red band.

**Under 8 years of age rule**

All children between the ages of 3 and 8 years must be actively supervised by a caregiver 16 years or over. Child to be issued a green band.

**Actively Supervised means**: watching your child at all times, able to provide immediate assistance.

**Children over 8 years of age**

Children over the age of 8 years may be in the complex on their own, however they cannot supervise/ be responsible for a child(ren) under 8 years of age. In accordance with PoolSafe and as defined in the Under 8 rules above, a person must be at least 16 years old to be classified as a caregiver (able to supervise children).

**Questioning of children**

The CSO or Person covering reception will need to ask a child their age to determine whether they meet the criteria to be present in the facility on their own or not. Questions such as ‘how old are you?’ should not be used, as children may be aware of the over 8 years of age rule, instead questions such as ‘what’s your date of birth?’ or ‘what year were you born in?’ This will allow for a more accurate answer to be obtained.

The LG may also question a child on poolside if concerns are raised that the child may be under the age of 8 years. Such questions may be ‘who is with you today?’ or ‘What’s your date of birth?’ etc. If a child identified that they are with a caregiver then the caregiver should be approached to confirm that they are responsible for the child and remind them of the rules in place for supervision of children if concerns are raised.

Signage can be found at the reception, around the complex and in the advertising brochures confirming the rules in place for children under 8 years of age.

**Pool Alone**

Children who arrive at MAC under the age of 8 years without a caregiver 16 years or over with them, will become Pool Alone cases. Please refer to DOP-6 Managing Pool Alone Cases for further information.

**Schools Visits**

If a School is visiting for dedicated Learn to Swim lessons, or they have booked the Learn to Swim pool for use, then these children do not need to wear a wristband.

If a school is visiting for free swim/ free play / End of Year celebrations etc., then all children under 8 years of age must be issued and wear the appropriate coloured wristband.

**Group Visits**

All children under the age of 8 years, who are part of a group, are to wear the appropriate coloured wristband.

The exception to this rule is those children that are with **Dolphin Swim Club** or **Feilding amateur Swim Club (FASC)** or any swim club, where they are undertaking dedicated Learn to Swim Training / Training and do not need to wear a coloured wristband. If those children under 8 years of age decide to free swim/play before or after their booking time then they must be issued and wear the appropriate coloured wristband. Refer to MDC Fees and Charges Booklet for associated costs.

**Reference**

Aquatic Facility Guidelines 2015