

ECEC PROVIDING A CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Version Control Panel

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POLICY STATEMENT

All children, students, employees and visitors have a right to a safe and healthy environment. Staff have a 'duty of care' to facilitate effective hygiene and safety procedures in the management of the physical environment to meet the developmental needs of children. Reasonable care is required to protect children from foreseeable risk of infection and injury.

Staff members who work with children are obligated to report any beliefs or concerns about harm to, and abuse or exploitation of children.

Staff will comply with relevant legislation, regulations and guidelines on Health and Safety in the education and care facilities. With regard to Providing a Child Safe Environment we will:

- promote hygienic cleaning practices
- provide clean and safe premises, furniture and equipment that is in good repair
- provide on-going training opportunities around effective hygiene and safety procedures in the management of the physical environment in the centre
- ensure staff receive child protection and mandatory reporting training
- supervise effectively by creating environments that are safe and responsive to the needs of the children

National Regulations: 4; 77; 82-89; 97-98; 101(20(f)103-115; 168; 170-171; 176-177

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care: Element 2.1.2; Element 2.2.1 Element 2.2.3; Element 3.1.1; Element 3.2.2; Element 6.1.1; Element 7.1.2; Element 7.1.3; Element 7.2.1

Signed:



Date: 17/01/2025

Paul Greaves
Director of Catholic Education

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to:

- a) provide the requirements, according to the Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy
- b) provide the guidelines for providing child safe physical environment practices
- c) provide templates and checklists

RATIONALE

All CENT services must ensure child safety by operating safe and supportive environments including indoor, outdoor and online. All children, employees and visitors to CENT services have a right to a safe and healthy environment that is free from risk. In order to ensure this, reasonable care is required to protect children and employees from foreseeable risks of any harm.

SCOPE

This Procedure will commence from the date of approval. It replaces all other Providing a Child Safe Environment Procedures for Early Learning Centres, Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) facilities and Preschools of Catholic Education Northern Territory (whether written or not).

GUIDELINES

Requirements

Building and Resources

- All equipment and furniture are safe, clean and in good repair.
- The outdoor space is enclosed by a fence or barrier that is approved according to the NT Building Act and NT Building Regulations. The fence or barrier will be of a height and design that children preschool age or under cannot go through, over or under it.
- There is sufficient furniture, materials and developmentally appropriate equipment for all children.
- The indoor areas are well ventilated, have adequate natural light and are maintained at a comfortable temperature.
- The unencumbered indoor floor space meets the requirements of 3.25m² per child and the outdoor space meets the requirements of 7m² per child.
- The outdoor space allows the children to explore and experience the natural environment
- Regularly check all equipment and furniture. Repair or discard those in disrepair.
- Clean all surfaces and floors daily.
- Regularly wash and clean toys and play equipment.

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Hygiene, health and toileting

- Maintain each child's status of immunization on the enrolment record.
- There are adequate, developmentally and age appropriate toilets and hand basins with convenient access.
- There are adequate spaces so that the rights and dignity of children are maintained, e.g. when changing nappies (if applicable), and/or clothing contaminated with faeces or urine.
- Gloves are used when changing nappies and/or clothing. Nappies to be disposed of in a designated bin, in reference to clothes, soiled clothes are to be placed in a plastic bag or alternative and kept in a designated place inaccessible to children until parents take them home.
- Display posters with hand washing techniques in areas where hands are washed
- Display nappy change procedure, if relevant to your service
- Ensure children, staff, volunteers and visitors wash hands correctly with soap and running water
- Ensure that toilets, flush buttons, hand basins, taps and door handles and nappy change areas are cleaned daily.
- Ensure staff and visitors also use additional barriers such as non-latex disposable gloves where appropriate including where they are likely to be exposed to blood, faeces, urine or other body fluids.

Staffing

- There is an adequate area for administration, discussions with families and private instructions.
- Encourage staff to be fully immunized and encourage families to maintain the immunization of their children.
- The centre is a tobacco, vape, drug and alcohol-free environment
- Ensure approved training in Mandatory Reporting is provided annually, for quality twice a year
- Follow the clear and documented guidelines regarding Catholic Education's position on drug and alcohol issues in the workplace (WHS 17 Drugs and Alcohol Procedure).

Chemical storage

- The centre will maintain a register of all hazardous substances kept on the premises.
- All potentially dangerous products will be stored in their original labelled containers. The labels will be easy to read. They will be kept out of reach of all children and unauthorized adults. The storage areas will be clearly labelled to assist relief and casual staff.
- All cleaning products are used in accordance with the manufacturer's written instructions.

Supervision

- Services must maintain set educator-to-child ratios at all times based on the ages and number of children being educated and cared for at the service.
- Educators conduct indoor and outdoor safety checks daily.

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- Educators will make professional judgments to determine an approach to supervision considering the environment, the children, and the context of the activities children participate in.
- If a child is unaccounted for by staff, the nominated supervisor or delegate will notify the approved provider and parents. If the child has not been located after 30 minutes, the Police will be contacted. All phone calls, discussions and procedures taken to be documented. QECNT will be notified within 24 hours of the incident.
- OSHC staff will supervise or have a procedure in place to monitor children going to and from the toilets and the transition from school to the OSHC.
- Staff will ensure head counts, ratio checks are conducted and be actively monitoring and supervising children.
- Risk assessments will be in place and reviewed annually to allow educators to determine and monitor the level of supervision required for particular activities such as carpentry, excursions, and loose parts. Alternatively if children are participating in low risk activities then the educator can focus their attention on engaging with children.
- Rosters are in place to ensure ratios are maintained at all times.
- Educators will be actively engaged with children to support their learning, observing and engaging where necessary.
- Educators need to be aware of the environment so they can identify appropriate positions for maximum vision of children at all times.

Safe online environments

- Identify and mitigate risks to the safety and wellbeing of children in online environments when using technologies
- Ensure parents are aware of any online programs used in the service and all are age appropriate, monitored and child safe

Management of devices/capture and storage of images of children

- All staff must only use service issued/approved devices when taking images or videos of children
- All staff are prohibited from having and using personal electronic devices that can take images or videos on their person whilst with children
- Parental authority on enrolment forms is required if any recording of children, including images, videos, and the service enrolment form states the purpose for which any images are to be used, including on any social media platforms
- If closed-circuit television (CCTV) is used in any education and care service the families need to be informed of the purpose of its use, how the data is stored, kept, secured and accessed, CCTV signs must be displayed on all sites using CCTV.

TRAINING

The service provider and nominated supervisor are to ensure that all staff, whether paid or unpaid, are inducted into using 1Place compliance platform to complete the safety indoor and outdoor checklists to ensure that the indoor and outdoor environment is clean and safe.

Staff complete all mandatory and online SALT training as required. Records are to be kept of staff who complete the Mandatory Reporting training.

All staff are to be orientated on the management of devices and online safety protocols.

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VARIATIONS

CENT reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this Procedure from time to time.

ACCOUNTABILITY

This Procedure applies to all employees and volunteers of Early Learning Centres, preschools and OSHC. It is the responsibility of the service provider and nominated supervisor to ensure that all staff, whether paid or unpaid, receive training in practices providing for a child safe environment.

All general risk assessments to be completed at the beginning of the year.

REFERENCES

Related Policies, Legislation and Documents

These documents should be used to support the Providing a Child Safe Physical Environment Policy and Procedure.

- [CEO.SS.3100.1.1 Work Health & Safety Policy](#)
- [CEO.SS.3103.2.1 WHS Incident and Hazard Management Procedure](#)
- [CEO.ECEC.2303.1.1 ECEC Healthy Eating and Food Handling Policy and Procedure](#)
- [CEO.SS.3108.4.3 Site Plant Maintenance Checklist](#)
- [CEO.SS.3108.2.1 CENT Fleet Vehicle Procedure](#)
- [CEO.T&L.2301.1.1 ECECAccidents, Emergencies and First Aid Policy](#)
- [CEO.Safeguarding 1100. 4.3a CENT Code of Conduct](#)
- [CEO.T&L.2311.1.1 Infectious Diseases and Infestations Policy and Procedure](#)
- [National Health and Medical Research Council \(2024\) Staying Healthy \(6th Ed\)](#)
- [Education and Care Services Law](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- [National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care](#)
- [The Early Years Learning Framework V2](#)
- [My Time Our Place Framework V2](#)
- [CENT Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [CENT Code of Conduct](#)
- [National Catholic Safeguarding Standards](#)
- [CEO.SS.3106.2.1 Chemical Management Procedure](#)
- [CEO.SS.3106.3.1 Chemical Management Guideline](#)
- [CEO.T&L.2307.4.2 Daily Indoor Hazard Identification Checklist](#)
- [CEO.T&L.2307.4.3 Risk Assessment Emergency Evacuation and Lockdown](#)
- [CEO.T&L.2307.4.4 Risk Assessment Safety and Play](#)
- [CEO.T&L.2307.4.5 Risk Assessment Stray Animals](#)
- [CEO.T&L.2307.4.6 Risk Assessment Template](#)
- [CEO.T&L.2307.4.7 Risk Assessment Working with Children & Vulnerable Adults Risk Assessment Form](#)
- [CEO.T&L.2307.4.8 Daily Outdoor Hazard Identification Checklist](#)

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