



POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Document Name:	Child Safe Environment
Review Dates:	31/05/22; November 2024
Review Cycle:	3 years
Approved By:	Executive Director
Approval Date:	31/05/19; 19/11/2021

CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT

1. POLICY STATEMENT AND/OR PURPOSE

Catholic Early Learning and Care recognises the importance of providing a safe environment for all children at our services. All children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment that safeguards and promotes their health and safety. Children often challenge their own abilities, but are not always able to recognise the potential risks involved. Through supervision, thoughtful design and arrangement of children's environments, Catholic Early Learning and Care strives to prevent or reduce injury to any child in our care.

This policy confirms our commitment to:

- Ensure the service environment is safe, inclusive and empowering for children, families, educators, staff, volunteers and visitors.
- Embed social and emotional learning and safety education in the educational program.
- Ensure families, children, educators and staff are key partners in safety initiatives.
- Engage in partnerships with community networks.

As a health promoting service we will promote safe environments for children, educators, staff and families through learning, policies, creating a safe and healthy physical and social environment and developing community links and partnerships.

2. APPLICATION

This procedure applies to all Catholic Early Learning and Care Services in the Diocese of Cairns.

3. PROCEDURE

The Executive Director will:

- Develop, implement and maintain policies and procedures to protect children being educated and cared for by the service from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury.
- Ensure that children being educated and cared for by the service are provided with an environment that is free from the use of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol.
- Ensure that all new employees of CELC undertake compulsory online child protection training within the first month of commencing work through the nominated online training portal.
- Ensure child protection training is provided annually to all CELC employees.

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure policies are designed to protect children being educated and cared for by the service, from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury.
- Ensure policies are reviewed and implemented and that all staff are aware of these policies and procedures.
- Ensure the environment is safe, secure and free from hazards for children.

- Monitor and manage repairs and maintenance to equipment and environments in a timely manner and follow up with maintenance staff
- Draw up rosters to ensure that adequate numbers of educators are on duty to meet ratio and qualification requirements and to ensure adequate supervision of children at all times

Educators will:

- Ensure that children are adequately supervised at all times
- Organise rooms and environments to minimise risks to children
- Monitor and minimise hazards and safety risks in the environment
- Implement our policies and procedures
- Take every reasonable precaution to protect children being educated and cared for by the service from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury
- Notify management of necessary repairs and maintenance required to equipment and environments in a timely manner

Healthy policies:

- Educators, staff, families and children are active participants in the development and implementation of the whole service safe environment policy.
- Educators, staff and families are provided with information about policy requirements.
- If child safety issues are identified the service is required to follow the relevant procedure.

Healthy physical environment:

- The service environment is inclusive and safe.
- The diversity and interests of the children, families and staff are reflected in the welcoming physical environment.
- Outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, play equipment and resources are safe and enable access and active participation for every child.
- The physical environment enables appropriate supervision of children and visitors to the service.
- CELC adopts a preventative approach to managing risk by regularly inspecting the physical environment and reviewing processes.

Healthy social environment:

- The service provides a safe, inclusive and empowering social environment, through:
 - A culture of respect, fairness and equality
 - A sense of belonging and connectedness being created through inclusive and participatory practices
 - Children, families, educators and staff contributing to a positive service environment.
 - Respectful and supportive relationships being fostered between children, educators, staff and families
 - Strategies promoting positive and responsible behaviour, and preventing and responding to bullying, discrimination and harassment
- As role models, educators, staff and families are encouraged and supported to demonstrate behaviours that promote safety

Learning and skills:

- Social and emotional learning is embedded in the service program and practice through:
 - Spontaneous and planned learning opportunities supporting the development of self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision making, self-management and relationship skills.
 - Learning activities which actively engage, challenge and support children to recognise and appropriately responds to hazardous situations
 - Active play activities designed to ensure the safe participation of all children.
 - Educators are supported to access resources, tools and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote safe environments and behaviours.

Engaging children, educators, staff and families:

- Families, children, educators, and staff are key partners in developing and supporting safety initiatives.
- Information, ideas, and practical strategies are provided to families, educators and staff on a regular basis to promote and support safety in the service and at home.
- Educators and staff engage children and families in developing and implementing safety initiatives.
- Families and children from culturally diverse backgrounds are engaged to ensure cultural values and expectations about children's safety are respected.

Community partnerships:

- The service engages local health professionals, services and other organisations to increase educator and staff capacity to deliver safety initiatives and promote safe environments.
- The service has established links with local health professionals, services and other organisations including emergency services and child safety agencies to support safety initiatives.
- The service has information available about child safety, safe active travel and emergency services.

4. BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against a person who is found to have breached the requirements contained within this document. Action taken will depend on the nature and circumstance of each breach and could include: an official warning and note on the individual's personnel file; a formal written and/or verbal apology; counselling; demotion; transfer; or suspension or dismissal for very serious matters.

5. ENQUIRIES

Catholic Early Learning and Care Executive Director - admin@cclc.catholic.org.au

6. SEE ALSO

Policy & Procedure

- Child Protection
- Risk Management
- Incident Management
- Infection Control
- Supervision of Children

Legislation

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 - Regulation 168 2 (h)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- The National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care 2018

7. APPROVAL



Vicki Bell
Executive Director
Catholic Early Learning and Care

Date: 19/11/2021