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POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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RISK MANAGEMENT

1. POLICY STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

Catholic Early Learning and Care is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its employees, children and families at their services. Under the WHS Act they have a duty to ensure health and safety to 'manage risks' by eliminating health and safety risks so far as is reasonably practicable, and if it is not reasonably practicable to do so, to minimise those risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

Risk management is the action taken to minimise the chance of a person sustaining an injury or serious injury from a "hazard". In an endeavour to minimise the exposure to a risk, a "Risk Assessment" is carried out and appropriate action taken in regard to controlling that hazard. In order to discharge an employer's obligations under the WH&S Act, an employer must:

- Follow the prescribed way of preventing or minimising an exposure to a risk.
- Ensure the prohibitions against exposures to a risk has not been contravened.
- Adopt and adhere to the code of practice in managing exposures to risk to provide protection against those risks; and
- Undertake a risk assessment of the situation if there is no prescribed way to prevent or minimise exposure to a risk.

Risk management is an ongoing process and should be undertaken at various times, including:

- When a change occurs.
- After an incident and/or near misses; or
- At regularly scheduled times appropriate to your service. For example: Prior to excursions, prior to starting shift.

To ensure the best health and safety outcomes from the risk management process, consult with the Work Health and Safety Manager.

2. APPLICATION

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

3. PROCEDURE

When is the risk management process required?

The risk management process should be conducted when:

- Opening / taking over a new service
- Changing work practices, procedures or the work environment
- Purchasing new or used equipment or using new substances

- Planning to improve productivity or reduce costs
- New information about workplace risks becomes available
- Responding to workplace incidents (even if they have caused no injury)
- Responding to concerns raised by workers, or others at the workplace
- Required by the Regulations for specific hazards

What is the risk management process?

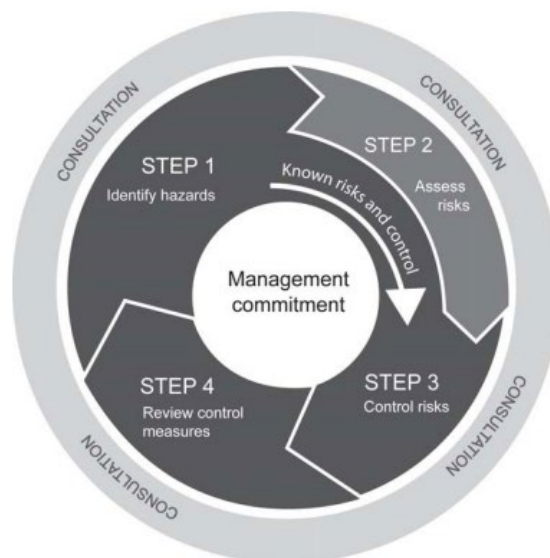


Figure 1: The risk management process

STEP 1. IDENTIFY THE HAZARD

The first step in the work health and safety **risk management process is to identify work hazards**, which entails listing all things at the work that have the potential to cause harm.

There are many ways to identify hazards, such as:

- Talk to the workers
- Workplace inspections
- Legislation (e.g. heights, chemicals, equipment)
- Hazard reports
- Annual Safety Audit
- Incidents (accidents and near misses)
- Daily checklists

How to look for hazards:

In order to assist with the task of looking for hazards, it is recommended that the work be divided into logical work groupings, such as:

- Tasks (moving equipment, loading the bus, data processing);
- Locations (offices, playgrounds, excursion locations, warehouse);
- Roles (assistants, office workers, cleaners, cooks); and
- Functions or production processes (administration, cooking, washing, cleaning, *receiving, forming, finishing*).

When staff become aware of hazards they are required to document it in the Hazard and Repair Notification.

STEP 2. ASSESS THE RISK

Step Two involves assessing the risk associated with the hazards identified in Step One. The desired outcome of this step is to develop a prioritised list of risks for further action.

A risk assessment involves considering what could happen if someone is exposed to a hazard and the likelihood of it happening. A risk assessment can help you determine:

- How severe a risk is
- Whether any existing control measures are effective
- What action you should take to control the risk
- How urgently the action needs to be taken

Risk assessments can be formal using the templates provided or they can be an informal discussion with workers.

A risk assessment needs to be completed when:

- There is uncertainty about how a hazard may result in injury or illness
- The work activity involves a number of different hazards and there is a lack of understanding about how the hazards may interact with each other to produce new or greater risks
- Changes at the workplace occur that may impact on the effectiveness of control measures.

A risk assessment is not necessary in the following situations:

- Legislation requires some hazards or risks to be controlled in a specific way

A code of practice or other guidance sets out a way of controlling a hazard or risk that is applicable to your situation and you choose to use the recommended controls

- There are well-known and effective controls that are in use for a particular industry that set circumstances in our workplace

Work out how severe the harm (consequence) could be.

Likelihood Rating	Risk Criteria
Almost Certain	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is expected to occur in most circumstances• Could occur within days / weeks
Likely	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will probably occur in most circumstances• Could occur within weeks / months
Possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May occur but distinct possibility it won't• Could occur within months / years
Unlikely	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May occur but not anticipated in most circumstances• Could occur within years
Rare	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Would occur only in exceptional circumstances

To estimate the severity of harm that could result from each hazard, consider the following questions:

- What type of harm could occur?
- How severe is the harm?

- What factors could influence the severity of harm that occurs?
- How many people are exposed to the hazard and how many could be harmed in and outside the workplace?
- Could one failure lead to other failures?

Consequence Rating	People	Reputation	Service outputs	Legal & compliance
Catastrophic	Fatality and / or severe irreversible disability to one or more people	National media coverage	Total cessation or one or more services	Major litigation or investigation by regulatory body
Major	Extensive injury or impairment to one or more persons	State media coverage	Disruption of multiple services	Major breach of regulation with punitive fine or significant litigation
Moderate	Significant medical treatment and / or hospitalisation required. Notifiable incident to WHSQ.	Local media coverage	Total cessation of one service for a few months / multiple services for several weeks	Breach of regulation with investigation by authority and possible moderate fine
Minor	Minor medical treatment required.	Negative community network communication	Some service disruption in one area	Breach of regulations, minor fine or legal costs or minor litigation
	Nil injury / first aid only.	No media coverage. No negative community network communication.	Minimal disruption	Minor legal issues or breach of regulations

Work out the likelihood of harm occurring

- The likelihood that someone will be harmed can be estimated by considering the following:
- How often is the task done? Does this make the harm more or less likely?
- How often are people near the hazard? How close do people get to it?
- Has it ever happened before, either in your workplace or somewhere else? How often?

Determine the risk using the matrix

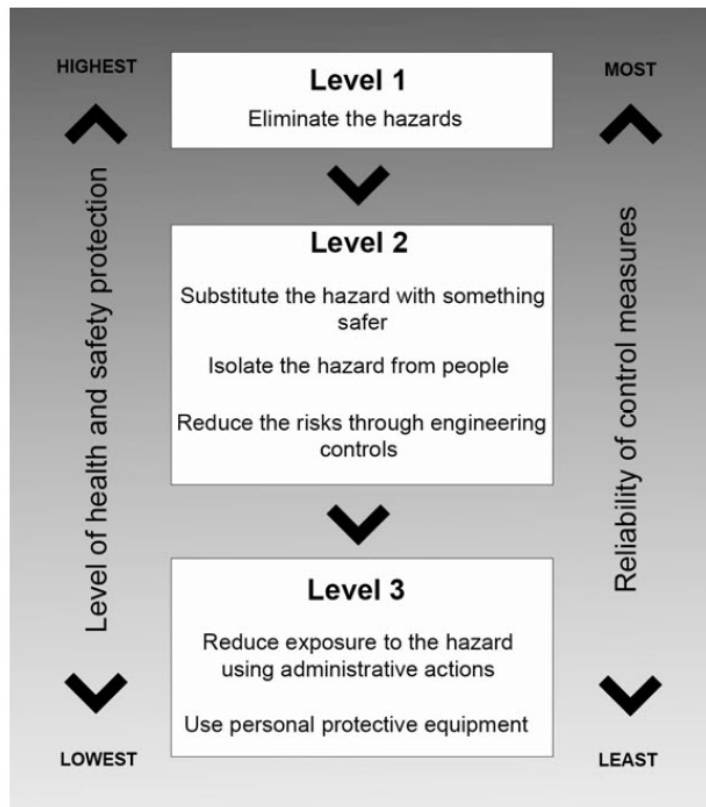
STEP 3. CONTROL THE RISK

Likelihood Rating	Almost Certain	Medium	High	Very High	Very High	Very High
	Likely	Medium	High	High	Very High	Very High
	Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Very High
	Unlikely	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
		Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
		Consequence Rating				

The most important step in managing risks involves eliminating them so far as is reasonably practicable, or if that is not possible, minimising the risks so far as is reasonably practicable. To decide on controls, workers must be consulted.

Hierarchy of control

When deciding on control measures the Nominated Supervisor is required to work through this hierarchy of control.



Information about suitable controls for many common hazards and risks can be obtained from:

- Codes of practice and guidance material
- Manufacturers and suppliers of plant, substances, equipment
- Industry associations and unions

The control measures selected should:

- Adequately control exposure to the risk;
- Not create another hazard; and
- Allow workers to do their work without undue discomfort or distress.

The control measures that are put into operation may require changes to the way work is carried out and may need to be supported with:

- Work procedures**
Develop work procedures in relation to the new control measures to make sure they are effective. Management, supervision and worker responsibilities may need to be clearly defined in the work procedures.
- Communication**
Workers and any other persons should be informed about the control measures to be implemented. It is important to clearly communicate the reasons for the changes.
- Providing training and instruction**
Training and instruction should be provided for the workers, supervisors and any other persons in relation to the new control measures.

d) **Supervision**

Adequate supervision should be provided to verify that the new control measures are being used correctly.

e) **Maintenance**

Maintenance relating to control measures is an important part of the implementation process. Work procedures should set out maintenance requirements to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of the new control measures.

STEP 4. REVIEW CONTROLS

The final step in the process is to monitor and review the effectiveness of measures. To complete this step, it is useful to ask questions to determine whether:

- Chosen control measures have been implemented, as planned
 - Are chosen control measures in place?
 - Are these measures being used?
 - Are these measures being used correctly?
- Chosen control measures are working
 - Have the changes made to control exposure to the assessed risks resulted in what was intended?
 - Has exposure to the assessed risks been eliminated or adequately reduced?
- There are any new problems
 - Have implemented control measures resulted in the introduction of any new problems?
 - Have implemented control measures resulted in the worsening of any existing problems?

Record Keeping

It is necessary to record the work health and safety risk management process to demonstrate compliance with the WH&S Act. The records should show that the process has been conducted properly and should include information about the hazard/s and associated risks at the workplace.

Prescribed forms are located in the Appendix, which includes:

- Work Health and Safety Checklists – a list of all the items that may create a hazard.
- Annual Safety Audits – Annual safety checklist completed annually by the Diocese Health and Safety Advisor
- Hazard Register – used to record particulars of the hazard and any actions to be taken to eliminate or control the hazard

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON SPECIFIC RISKS

Managing Hazardous Plants

There are many plants that are poisonous or capable of causing highly allergic reaction. Our aim is to minimise the risk to children in relation to hazardous plants.

The Nominated Supervisor of the service will ensure that any vegetation in the children's play area is identified and maintained to ensure that it does not present a hazard to the children.

To minimise the risk, the service will:

- Remove all poisonous plants from areas accessible to children
- Make available to all workers' f the latest information on poisonous plants (see attachments
- Supervise children at all times around plants
- Teach children not to eat anything straight from a bush or plant

Symptoms of poisoning:

- Vomiting
- Stomach cramps
- Burning to the mouth
- Irregular heartbeat
- Convulsions

First Aid:

- Ring Poison Information Line **13 11 26**
- Call 000 if child is having difficulty breathing, is unconscious or fitting.

Keep the Poison Information phone number 13 11 26 near the phone.

For information pertaining to poisonous plants, visit the [Queensland Poisons Information Centre](#) website. The role of the website/Centre is to provide the public and health professionals of Queensland with prompt, up-to-date and appropriate information, and advice to assist in the management of poisonings and suspected poisonings.

Hazard and Repair

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that the service adopts safety and health as a core value and actively cares for the play and work environment ensuring all workers visitors and children are encouraged to realise that incidents are worth reporting and feel comfortable in correcting unsafe practice. A **safety culture** will be made prevalent throughout the service by ensuring everyone feels comfortable in correcting unsafe practice across all levels of staff and management. To maintain a Safety Culture, it is imperative that **the environment in which people work is blame free and celebrates success whether big or small.**

Maintaining a safe play and work environment requires all staff, visitors and children to identify hazards and items in need of attention and repair. Staff will complete A report outlining a hazardous issue . This form is given to the Nominated Supervisor who then manages the hazard/repair by adding it to the Hazard and Repair Register (Visitors to the service are also made aware of this process).

Maintaining a Safety Culture

Maintaining a **safety culture** must be driven by the Nominated Supervisor. A work/play space is made up of people and the environment; therefore, the nominated supervisor may need to change the attitude of the people as well as the environment and systems within the environment. To gather as much information and data as possible the Nominated Supervisor will ensure that regular meetings take place giving staff the opportunity to discuss items such as:

- ALL Risk Assessments to be reviewed Annually and updated accordingly
- Accident/incident rates of staff and children
- Absenteeism rates
- Numbers of reported hazards
- The existence (or lack of) work health and safety structures and programs
- Budget allocations to safety and health initiatives
- Attitudes of staff towards safety and health
- The setup of the environment, pace of work, lines of communication
- Reporting processes
- Communication and feedback system
- Discuss the importance of risk in children's play (Benefit versus Risk)
- Discuss risk management pedagogy – how do we teach children to become their own risk assessors
- Discuss with staff the benefits of an activity in association to the risks involved. When the benefits outweigh the risks.
- These meetings will be recorded, and items revisited.

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

- Work Health & Safety Act 2011
- Work Health & Safety Regulation 2011 - Regulation 101,102
- Australian Standards
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- The National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care 2018

7. APPROVAL



Vicki Bell
Executive Director
Catholic Early Learning and Care

Date: 19/11/2021