

## CEEC HS POL INCIDENT AND INVESTIGATION POLICY

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Related policy documents	Archbishop WHS Policy Statement Archdiocese Of Brisbane Health And Safety Policy Archdiocese Of Brisbane WHS Incident Management And Investigation Procedure Archdiocese Of Brisbane WHS Reporting Requirements Procedure CEEC HS PRO WHS Notifiable Incident Procedure CEEC GOV POL Governance And Service Management
Related legislation	Work Health And Safety Act 2011 Work Health And Safety Regulations 2011 Work Health And Safety - Codes Of Practice Education And Care Services National Law (QLD) Act 2011 Education And Care Services National Regulations 2011 Education And Care Services National Amendment Regulations 2017 Guide To The National Quality Framework

### PURPOSE

Catholic Early EdCare (CEEC), a Directorate of Centacare operating through the Corporation of Trustees of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane (AOB) is committed to achieving and maintaining the highest practical standards of workplace health and safety for its workers, visitors and children in the care of Catholic Early EdCare.

This policy has been developed to outline the commitment of Catholic Early EdCare to report incidents, investigate incidents (as required) and implement as far as reasonably practical all recommendations and corrective actions. This policy will ensure Catholic Early EdCare fulfils the requirement of Division 2 of the Education and Care National Regulations (Regulations 85-87), and Division 3 of the Education and Care National Regulations (Regulations 174-176).

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all workers as defined in the WHS Act.

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 It is the policy of Catholic Early EdCare –
- That all incidents involving a child in the care of Catholic Early EdCare or on a Catholic Early EdCare premises that result in injury, illness or trauma are reported to the Approved Provider
  - That all incidents involving a child in the care of Catholic Early EdCare or on a Catholic Early EdCare premises that fall under Regulation 12 and/or Regulation 175 of the Education and Care Regulations are reported to the Approved Provider
  - That all incidents involving an adult on a Catholic Early EdCare premises that result in injury, illness or trauma are reported to the Approved Provider
  - To encourage the reporting of a 'near miss' event and/or hazards in the workplace
  - That the Guardian online reporting system is utilised by Catholic Early EdCare when reporting incidents to the Approved Provider
  - To provide a timely and appropriate response to any incident involving a worker, visitor and/or a child in the care of Catholic Early EdCare
  - To investigate incidents where required
  - To implement recommendations/corrective actions where appropriate following investigation
  - To adhere to all legislative external reporting obligations
  - That all incidents qualifying as a notifiable incident (as defined in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011) will result in the implementation of CEEC HS PRO Notifiable WHS Incident procedure
  - To respond to incidents involving the death of a child in care in accordance with CEEC HS PRO Death of a Child in Care procedure
- 1.2 As an Approved Provider, Catholic Early EdCare will report to Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) –
- Incidents involving a child in the care of Catholic Early EdCare that is classed as a serious incident within 24 hours
  - Any incident where the Approved Provider reasonably believes the physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred, or is occurring, while a child is being educated and cared for at an education and care service within 7 days
  - An allegation that sexual or physical abuse of a child has occurred, or is occurring, while a child is being educated or cared for at an education and care service within 7 days
  - Formal complaints and WHS concerns relating to the health, safety and wellbeing of children in the care of Catholic Early EdCare within 24 hours of the complaint
- 1.3 CEEC HS PRO Incident and Investigation Procedure provides further guidance in the implementation of this policy.

- 1.4 Incident and investigation related documentation should not be shared externally without the permission of the Catholic Early EdCare Senior Manager.

## 2. WHAT IS TRAUMA?

2.1 Childhood Trauma is defined by The National Institute of Mental Health (USA) as “The experience of an event by a child that is emotionally painful or distressful, which often results in lasting mental and physical effects” (Blue Knot Foundation, 2020)

2.2 Trauma and traumatic events can take many forms in the lives of children and infants. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network, provides the following categories for defining trauma and traumatic events in children and adolescents:

- Bullying: deliberate and unsolicited action that occurs with the intent of inflicting social, emotional, physical, and/or psychological harm to someone who often is perceived as being less powerful.
- Community Violence: Community violence is exposure to intentional acts of interpersonal violence committed in public areas by individuals who are not intimately related to the victim.
- Complex Trauma: Complex trauma describes both children’s exposure to multiple traumatic events—often of an invasive, interpersonal nature—and the wide-ranging, long-term effects of this exposure.
- Disasters: Natural disasters include hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, wildfires, tsunamis, and floods, as well as extreme weather events such as blizzards, droughts, extreme heat, and wind storms.
- Early Childhood Trauma: Early childhood trauma generally refers to the traumatic experiences that occur to children aged 0-6.
- Intimate Partner Violence: Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), also referred to as domestic violence, occurs when an individual purposely causes harm or threatens the risk of harm to any past or current partner or spouse.
- Medical Trauma: Pediatric medical traumatic stress refers to a set of psychological and physiological responses of children and their families to single or multiple medical events.
- Physical Abuse: Physical abuse occurs when a parent or caregiver commits an act that results in physical injury to a child or adolescent.
- Refugee Trauma: Many refugees, especially children, have experienced trauma related to war or persecution that may affect their mental and physical health long after the events have occurred.
- Sexual Abuse: Child sexual abuse is any interaction between a child and an adult (or another child) in which the child is used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or an observer.

- Terrorism and Violence: Families and children may be profoundly affected by mass violence, acts of terrorism, or community trauma in the form of shootings, bombings, or other types of attacks.
- Traumatic Grief: While many children adjust well after a death, other children have ongoing difficulties that interfere with everyday life and make it difficult to recall positive memories of their loved ones.

2.3 Catholic Early EdCare are committed to supporting children and families in our care who are experiencing trauma and the effects of traumatic events. Supports are provided through:

- The provision of child safe environments
- Developing and supporting positive relationships with children and caregivers, between staff and the children's peers
- Providing links to community supports for both the child and caregivers

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

McLean, S. (2016). *The effect of trauma on the brain development of children: Evidence-based principles for supporting the recovery of children in care* (CFCA Practitioner Resource). Melbourne: Child Family Community Australia information exchange, Australian Institute of Family Studies.

Blue Knot Foundation, 2020

<https://www.blueknot.org.au/Resources/Information/Understanding-abuse-and-trauma/What-is-childhood-trauma>

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2020

<https://www.nctsn.org/what-is-child-trauma/trauma-types>

Australian Institute of Family Studies, Child Family Community Australia, 2020

<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/effect-trauma-brain-development-children>

## COMPLIANCE

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with under Centacare's misconduct provisions, as stated in the Employment Guidelines Code of Conduct.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Centacare will place this policy on the Archdiocesan Intranet (AI). Directors and managers are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate communication of policies and supporting documents to staff has occurred. All staff are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy. Contact the Policy Sponsor for further interpretation of this policy.

## DEFINITIONS

Worker	Under the WHS legislation a worker is a person who carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking. This includes work as an employee, contractor or subcontractor, an employee of a contractor or subcontractor, an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking, an apprentice, student or volunteer.
Responsible Person	A Responsible Person is - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Approved Provider, or</li> <li>▪ A person with management or control, or</li> <li>▪ A Nominated Supervisor, or</li> <li>▪ A Person in Day to Day Charge of a Service (PIDTDC)</li> </ul>
Nominated Supervisor	Workers who have consented to the nomination by the Approved Provider to take on the responsibility and obligations under the National Law and National Regulations to manage a Kindergarten, Long day care, Outside school hours care Service.
Person in Day to Day charge (PIDTDC)	The PIDTDC is placed in day-to-day charge by the Approved Provider or a Nominated Supervisor of the education and care service; and the person consents to the placement in writing.
Approved Provider	Approved Provider is a person who holds a provider approval. A provider approval authorises a person to apply for one or more service approvals and is valid in all jurisdictions.

### 3. RECORD KEEPING

- 3.1 Catholic Early EdCare will maintain all records as required by AOB and Centacare policies and procedures relating to record keeping. The Guardian online cloud system will retain incident reports and associated records.
- 3.2 All Catholic Early EdCare Services are required to maintain all child incident report records in their Service folder on the L:\ drive and a copy should be placed on the child's enrolment record/file.
- 3.3 All Catholic Early EdCare Services will adhere to Division 3 – Information and Record Keeping Requirements, Education and Care Services National Regulations; specifically Subdivision 4 – Confidentiality and Storage of Records (181, 182, 183, 184).
- 3.4 Catholic Early EdCare will ensure all privacy provisions are implemented in relation to record keeping in accordance with the Archdiocese of Brisbane (AOB) privacy statement and AOB privacy policy available on the AI portal this extends to storing records in a secure and confidential manner.
- 3.5 Service records will be maintained (stored and preserved) in conditions suitable to the length of time they need to be kept and made available for use. This applies regardless of the format of the records or the media they are stored on.
- 3.6 Catholic Early EdCare will coordinate the removal, archiving and disposal of records as required.