

## SECTION 2: ADMINISTRATION AND ENROLMENT

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## 2.0 ADMINISTRATION AND ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

### 2.1 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

- 2.1.1** “The effective management of education and care services requires the constant review of a changing environment to enable continuous improvement. Managing for quality requires a wide range of skills and a thorough understanding of the education and care system, including standards and effective practice.”<sup>1</sup>

To provide a quality service, the CELC community will engage in an ongoing development and review of policies and procedures. The CELC Director will ensure that staff, parents/carers and visitors are given the opportunity to contribute to the development and review of policies.

In consultation with Catholic Education Office, the CELC Director will work collaboratively to ensure the development of policies are in line with the National Law, the Education and Care Services National Regulations, National Quality Standards, and the Early Years Learning Framework.

Any other policies and procedures that are developed and deemed necessary by the CELC Director and their staff in order to meet the needs of children, staff and families are to be reviewed and approved by the Catholic Education Office Diocese of Parramatta management.

Policies will be reviewed at least on an annual basis or if any of the following occurs:

- An issue or problem arises that is not addressed in a current policy.
- A policy is not meeting the current need.
- Daily operations of the CELC are unclear to staff, parents/carers or management.
- Staff, parents/carers or CELC staff are unclear of what to do in a certain situation.
- There have been changes due to external influences.

All policies will reflect the philosophy of the CELC and are to be available to families for viewing.

CELC Directors will ensure that any new staff members and families entering the service are aware of the policy folder and any specific policies relevant to them.

Staff, parents/carers and any other relevant persons will be encouraged to have input into the development, review or changes to policies.

Any policy or procedural changes that may have a significant impact on a family's capacity to attend the CELC will be made available to all enrolled families at least 14 days prior to implementation, in particular, policy changes related to fees or fee collection or education and care provided.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Australian Children Education and Care Quality Authority (2011) Guide to the National Quality Standard p171

<sup>2</sup> Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) (NSW), Clause 172, p.92

**Policy Links:**

- Section 1** Catholic Early Learning Centre (CELC)
- Section 2** Administration and Enrolment
- Section 3** Curriculum – Programming
- Section 5** Health and Safety
- Section 6** Staffing
- Section 7** Governance and Stewardship

<b>REVIEW DATE:</b>	
<b>DATE</b>	<b>WHO WAS INVOLVED</b>
September 2013; November 2014; February 2015; February 2016, November 2016, April 2017	Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta: CEDP, CELC Directors, CELC staff; parents/carers
<b>NEXT REVIEW DATE:</b> enter next review date	April 2018

## 2.2 CONFIDENTIALITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND RETENTION OF RECORDS

### 2.2.1 Aim:

“Effective administration, records management systems and documented policies and procedures contribute to a service environment where the primary focus can be on delivering quality education and care for children and establishing productive partnerships with families.”<sup>3</sup>

### 2.2.2 Procedures:

Policies and processes are necessary for the effective administration and management of the service, including compliance with legal requirements. To ensure effective record management, CELC Directors will ensure that:

- Individual files are to be maintained for each child, and kept on the CELC’s premises for the duration of the child’s enrolment at the CELC.
- Children’s files are strictly confidential and are only accessible to permanently employed CELC staff.
- Records are maintained and up to date for all programs that are provided, including the structure of the day and children’s developmental records. Copies of developmental records can be issued to parents/carers up to 6 months after the child ceases to attend the CELC.
- An authorised officer of the Department of Education may view the programming information upon request.
- An authorised officer of the Catholic Education Office, Parramatta may view the files at any time.
- Confidentiality shall be maintained by all persons.
- All accidents, minor and major are recorded on an Incident, Injury, trauma and illness record. Parents/Carers will be informed of the Incident, injury trauma and illness record and will be asked to sign the form to acknowledge the incident.
- Parents/Carers will receive a copy of the form and the other copy will be filed in the child’s file or in an accident register. Any accident that is deemed serious must be reported in accordance with the Incident, Injury and Illness policy.
- Records in relation to children including accident, illness or trauma are to be maintained and kept at the CELC for 2 years and thereafter for 24 years at the Catholic Education Office Diocese of Parramatta.
- Records in relation to death of a child whilst attending or resulting from attendance at the CELC are to be maintained and kept at the CELC for 2 years and thereafter for 5 years after the death at the Catholic Education Office Diocese of Parramatta.
- Parents/Carers are able to view their child’s learning portfolio on request.
- Custody records will be provided by parents/carers. Staff will have access to this information and the details will remain confidential. A copy will be retained on the child’s file.
- Staff records will be kept and retained at the CELC (either in paper or electronic form) for a period of three (3) years after the staff member ceases employment.
- All attendance records will be kept in the CELC (either in paper or electronic form) and retained for three (3) years after the record was made.

<sup>3</sup> Guide to the National Quality Standards. Quality Area 7.3 p182

- All records will be maintained confidentially and will only be accessible to relevant parties. Archived records will be maintained in a safe secure environment that is only accessible to designated Catholic Education Office Parramatta officers and relevant government authorities, if required.

**References:**

Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) (NSW), Clause 177, pp. 94; Clause 181, pp. 96; clause 183, pp. 97  
Guide to the National Quality Standards. Quality Area 7.3, p182

**Policy Links:**

- Section 2** Administration and Enrolment  
**Section 3** Curriculum and Programming  
**Section 5** Health and Safety  
**Section 6** Staffing  
**Section 7** Governance and Stewardship

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## **2.3 ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE POLICY**

### **2.3.1 Aim**

The Catholic Early Learning Centre has a legal obligation to ensure the security and safety of enrolled children. It is the responsibility of educators and families to ensure the safe arrival and collection of children at the CELC service and to complete the required records and documentation.

The aim of this policy is to set guidelines for restricting access to the children in care to only authorised parties. It provides a clear procedure for arrival and departure, and ensures the safety and well-being of children whilst in the care of the Catholic Early Learning Centre.

### **2.3.2 Arriving**

- Parents/Carers are asked to take children to greet a staff member.
- Children must be signed in each day by the authorised parent/carer.
- Sign in/sign out sheets must be completed accurately. This record is a legal requirement and vitally important particularly in the case of an emergency.
- Parents/Carers are asked to communicate any important information to staff.

### **2.3.3 Departing**

- Children must be signed out each day by the authorised parent/carer.
- Information on your child's day including reflections will be available by reading or discussing with a CELC staff member.
- Parents/Carers are asked to encourage children to collect their belongings.
- The premises will be checked before all staff leave to ensure there are no children present.

### **2.3.4 Authorised Guardians**

- Authorised parents/carers will need to specify in writing who will be collecting their child each day or in the case of an emergency. If a nominated contact other than the child's parents/carers is to collect the child, the CELC staff MUST be notified by the parent/carer.
- A nominated contact who is collecting a child and is not known by the CELC staff will be required to show proof of identification (e.g. driver licence) before the child will be released from care.
- Authorised Persons 16 years and over are able to drop off and collect children from the CELC. The CELC will not allow any person under 16 years of age to drop off or collect a child. In accordance with the enrolment process, written consent and photographic proof of age is required.
- The CELC will not allow any person to take a child home who is unauthorised.
- Parents/Carers will be asked to update information regarding their child's details regularly. This information will be maintained and updated annually or as changes occur.

### 2.3.5 Procedures for Collection by a Person other than the Parent/Carer

Where the parent/carer has made other arrangements for the collection of their child from the CELC, the CELC should be notified in the following manner:

- The parent/carer or other responsible adult should advise in writing that another adult will be collecting their child. The full name, address and telephone number of that person will be included in the letter. The letter will also be signed and dated by parents/carers or guardian and must specify the applicable date.
- Where arrangements for the collection of a child change through the day, the authorised parent/carer should contact the CELC and provide written consent setting out relevant details of the person the collection of the child.

### 2.3.6 Procedures for Dealing with Un-authorised Persons

Where someone other than an authorised person arrives at the CELC to collect a child and the CELC has not been notified, regardless of who that person is, the following procedure will be followed:

- Staff will explain to the person the reason why the child cannot leave with them.
- Staff will make every effort to contact the parent/carer and confirm the arrangements.
- Where parents/carers are unable to be contacted, emergency contacts will be called.
- If none of the above is successful, two members will remain with the child at the CELC until a parent/carer can be contacted.
- Under the Children’s and Young Persons (Care and protection) NSW Act (1998), unauthorised persons will be asked to leave the premises.
- If the unauthorised person insists on taking the child, CELC staff will call the Police, Parent and implement Emergency Lock-down procedures.
- If legal documentation is in place prohibiting the person from collecting the child, such as Court Orders or AVOs, the Police will be called to assist in enforcing this court ordered restricted access.

**Policy Links:**

- Section 2** Administration and Enrolment
- Section 6** Staffing
- Section 7** Governance and Stewardship
- Section 8** Forms

**References:**

Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) (NSW) Clauses 99, pp62 ; Clause 168(2)(f), p. 90

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## 2.4 CHILD ACCESS POLICY

All matters relating to custody arrangements imposed by court orders will be kept on a child's enrolment file. The CELC will endeavour to protect the needs and interests of the child as determined by the court order. In the event that a non-custodial parent/carer acts in an offensive manner and beyond the CELC educator's control, and their ability to maintain safety, children may be released to a non-custodial parent/carer and appropriate procedures followed, as set out below.

Under the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, The Regulatory Authority, NSW Education and Care Directorate – Department of Education, may direct an approved provider and nominated supervisor to exclude a person whom the authority is satisfied is an inappropriate person from the education and care service premises while children are being educated and cared for.

Under the National Law (Clause 171, p83):

- (a) an inappropriate person is defined as a person who poses a risk to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child or children being educated at the premises and
- (b) it also includes a person whose state of mind or whose pattern of behaviour or common state of mind is such that it would be inappropriate for him or her to be on the education premises.

### 2.4.1 Procedures for Family Court Orders

If access to a child or children is restricted by Family Court Orders, the CELC will ensure that each child's enrolment form identifies and authorises the following:

- the person or persons with "parental responsibility" of an enrolled child.
- the person who has been authorised and has accepted the responsibility of being a child's "Authorised Nominee".
- the names of persons other than the parent/carer, authorised to collect a child from a CELC.
- the name of the "Authorised Nominee" that may approve a child accessing medical, hospital or ambulance treatment or any other emergency in the absence of the child's parent/carer.
- the name of any "prohibited person" named in a court order and/or parenting order.

A person will be deemed to be 'unauthorised' if they are not listed on the 'Parent Enrolment form' or have not been notified in writing to the CELC by the custodial parents/carers.

### 2.4.2 Responsibility of Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person

If a parent/carer informs an educator that they have a court/parenting order or parenting plan regarding the parental responsibility of their child, the CELC educator must immediately inform the Nominated Supervisor and/or the Responsible Person at the CELC.

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Arrange for a copy of the order to be kept at the CELC and inform all staff, so that they can act on the order. Explain to the responsible parent/carer that no action can be taken without a copy of the court order.

If a court order is pending, the person with parental responsibility enrolling the child will be advised if the prohibited parent/carer/person attempts to collect the child from care.

- Where a court order nominates a person as “prohibited” to access a child, the owner of the court order is required to provide photographic identification of the “prohibited” person where possible.
- If a person or persons have been “prohibited” to access a child, educators are to request that the person leave the premises. If the person refuses, educators are to contact Police immediately on 000.
- Educators are required to inform parents/carers that no guarantee can be given that educators will be able to physically prevent access to their child by a “prohibited person”, but that every reasonable effort will be made to make court orders effective.

If the order is contravened, the Director/Responsible Person will contact Police immediately on 000 and then notify the parent/carer with “parental responsibility” and Catholic Education Office Diocese of Parramatta management.

- Nominated Supervisors are to inform educators immediately of any court orders, parenting orders or parent/carer plans pertaining to a child in their care. Appropriate method of communication about all court orders, parenting orders and parenting plans are to be discussed at each educators’ meeting.
- Educators are to respect confidentiality of the family concerned and ensure no one, other than CELC educators, is aware of court orders pertaining to the child/ren in care.

#### **2.4.3 Procedures when there is no family court order in place**

- The enrolling parent/carer will be advised that without a court order the CELC is unable to deny access to the child. In the event that this occurs, the non-enrolling parent/carer will need to provide sufficient documentation/identification to the CELC staff to prove that he or she is a parent/carer of the child.
- In the instance where both parents/carers have enrolled the child and one parent/carer does not wish the other to collect the child, the CELC will request that the parents/carers resolve this issue amongst themselves. The CELC cannot deny access to a parent/carer without a court order.

#### **2.4.4 Procedures for excluding an inappropriate person from the education premises**

- In accordance with Clause 171 of the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, in the situation where a person arrives at the education premises and is forceful, violent or poses a safety risk to the children, the educators will request the person to leave the premises.
- If a child is removed from the CELC by an unauthorised person, the CELC Director is to contact the Police on 000 and the enrolling parent/carer.
- The CELC Director will also notify the Catholic Education Office Diocese of Parramatta management and the NSW Education and Care Directorate- Department of Education.

**Policy Links:**

- Section 2** Administration and Enrolment
- Section 5** Health and Safety - Emergency and Evacuation – Lock Down/Lock Out Policy
- Section 6** Staffing - Child Protection Procedures
- Section 7** Governance and Stewardship - Child Protection and Access of Other Parties
- Section 8** Forms

**References:**

Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) (NSW) Clauses 99, p.62  
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 Clause 171

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## 2.5 CHILD ENROLMENT POLICY

Enrolment procedures aim to establish the foundations of respectful and collaborative partnerships between families and the CELC.

### 2.5.1 Eligibility for enrolment

Children are eligible to commence education and care within the CELC when they are three years of age.

### 2.5.2 Selection process

To ensure that enrolments are offered equitably each enrolment is considered through an application process conducted by the Nominated Supervisor or delegated CELC educator.

Children from all families who are prepared to support the religious principles and ideals of the Catholic ethos will be considered eligible for enrolment. Where the number of children applying exceeds the number of places available, names will be placed on a waiting list.

The CELC selection process is determined by the Priority of Access Guidelines set by Family Assistance Law, and Early Childhood Education and Care Grants Program, under the NSW State Government Funding Agreements.

Priority shall be given to children as follows:

- Children who are at risk of significant harm;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children;
- Children in the year before starting full time school;
- Children from low income families (e.g. concession card holders that list the name of the enrolling child/ren);
- Children with a language background other than English (LBOTE);
- Children with disabilities.

Within these main categories priority should also be given to the following children:

- Siblings of children enrolled at CELC/Parish Catholic schools;
- Children within Catholic Parishes.

Enrolment in a Catholic Early Learning Centre does not guarantee enrolment in Kindergarten at a Catholic Primary School. Families are required to go through a separate orientation and enrolment process with their chosen Catholic Primary School.

Once a place is offered to the child at the CELC, the parent/carer is encouraged to visit the CELC for an enrolment appointment/orientation. To complete the enrolment process, the parent/carer will be asked to pay a non-fundable enrolment fee of \$40 per child. Parents will be asked to:

- Complete an enrolment form that includes all information required under relevant regulatory and legislative frameworks. The enrolment form also includes a number of authorisations and health information about the child.<sup>4</sup>
- This helps CELC staff to have background information to provide the best

<sup>4</sup> Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) (NSW), Clauses 160, 161, 162, pp. 86-87

education and care for each child.

- Provide printed child's Immunisation History Statement.
- Provide a copy of the Birth Certificate and cite original.
- Provide a copy of any Court Orders or Restraining Orders concerning custody of the child, if applicable.
- Provide a copy of the child's medical plan along with a completed and signed long term medication form, if relevant. In addition, complete a risk minimisation plan in consultation with the nominated supervisor of the CELC, if applicable.

Parents/Carers will also receive information including:

- The CELC parent handbook with reference to related policies and procedures prior to their child beginning at the CELC.
- Advice on availability of attendance days being offered in accordance with the needs of the child, family and community.
- Parents/Carers will be requested to complete an 'Application for Re-Enrolment' in preparation of continued enrolment for the following year. At this time, relevant changes and requested days of attendance will be accommodated subject to availability.
- Procedures for orientation. (Parents are responsible for the supervision of their own child and any siblings during orientation).

### **2.5.3 Information for Parents/Carers in Relation to Fees**

- Fees will be charged at a daily rate and are reviewed annually to ensure the scheduled rate covers the needs of the CELC.
- A non-refundable enrolment fee of \$40 per child is payable on initial enrolment (this will not be charged annually).
- All fees need to be paid in terms of the Fee Policy.
- The security bond is payable before the child commences and in any event within two weeks of the offer of enrolment at the CELC.
- Full fees will be charged from the commencement day offered by the CELC regardless of attendance.
- Note that fees are payable when a child is absent from the CELC for any reason and parents/carers should contact the CELC to make staff aware of their child's absence.
- If you are leaving or are requesting to change your days, two (2) weeks' notice/request in writing is required. The child's last 2 weeks in the CELC will be covered by the advance payment of fees.
- Any bank charges related to dishonouring of payments will be an additional fee charged to the family.
- At the end of the CELC term, parents/carers will be provided with a statement of usage. Parents/Carers can present this statement to the Family Assistance Office in order to claim the child care benefit for registered care providers.
- Please note account balances must be \$0.00 in order to claim your child care benefit for the term.

## 2.5.4 Information to Parents/Carers Regarding Late Collection Fees

- It is a condition of enrolment that children only attend the CELC between the published CELC operating hours. The hours of operation are licensed by the NSW Department of Education and it is a legal requirement that children only attend the CELC during the licensed hours.
- If a child is still at the CELC after closing time, the parent/carer will be phoned and asked to come and collect the child. The parent/carer is issued a warning notice that the child has been collected after closing time. The next occasion the child is collected late, the parent/carer will be charged a 'Late Collection Fee' in terms of the Fee Policy. We understand that at times there are reasons why a parent/carer may be late e.g. traffic, crisis. This policy has been developed to safeguard children, families and staff. Under the licensing conditions it is illegal to care for a child outside of the approved hours of operation except under extenuating circumstances.

### Policy Links:

**Section 2** Administration and Enrolment

**Section 6** Staffing

**Section 8** Forms

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## 2.6 FEE POLICY

The aim of this policy is to provide high quality education and care for children within vibrant environments that support quality educational programs for children in our Catholic Early Learning Centres (CELCS). To do this, the CELC must remain financially viable, whilst keeping fees at an affordable level for families. This policy will regulate setting of fees, security bonds, payment of fees, fees in arrears, changing attendance, child care benefits, absences and non-chargeable days.

### 2.6.1 Fee Type

#### 2.6.1.1 Daily Fees

Fees are determined and approved by the Catholic Education Office Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP). Fee setting criteria considers socio economic factors, external grants and government subsidies.

CELCS (preschools) are registered for Family Assistance purposes and are required to provide parents/carers with a receipt of fees paid, for claiming Family Assistance.

The current approved schedule of fees is in accordance with the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta determined "Schedule of Fees".

Payments can be made by: BPay, Postbillpay or EFTPOS. Cash and cheques are not accepted as payment methods.

#### 2.6.1.2 Miscellaneous Fees

Miscellaneous fees are not eligible for child care benefit and are not based on hours. Each CELC may raise miscellaneous charges relevant to their CELC, with approval from CEDP Finance.

Management of miscellaneous fees are to be in accordance with the provisions of the CELC Fee Policy.

#### 2.6.1.3 Late collection fee and cancellation of service

The late collection fee and cancellation of service (child's enrolment will be cancelled) is to enforce the licensed hours of the CELC so that staff safety and the care of children is not put at risk. Families are required to be off the premises by the close of the service.

CELCS	From closing time up to 15 minutes	For each additional 15 minutes (or part thereof)
First Instance	\$10	\$15
Second Instance	\$15	\$20
Third Instance: Cancellation of Service	\$15	\$20

#### 2.6.1.4 Late collection warning letters

The Director of each CELC may exercise reasonable discretion and consider a parent's/carers' circumstances on the particular occasion when deciding upon the late collection fee.

At the Directors discretion, charges will be raised against the parent's/carer's account with formal letters issued at the same time advising that the service provided to the family is at risk of being cancelled.

In the third instance a formal letter will be issued to the parents/carers cancelling the service for that family.

#### **2.6.1.5 Fees in arrears**

All payments of fees received by the CELC after the due date shown on the invoice are deemed late payments. Continued fees in arrears may result in termination of the service to the family and cancellation of the child's place at the CELC.

Families in genuine need who cannot meet payments by the due date may apply in writing to request a payment arrangement and setting out their reasons.

Fees that are in arrears by week 8 of term will be referred to The Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta School Fee Liaison Unit for recovery. Families that have unpaid fees and are no longer attending CELC will also be referred to the School Fee Liaison Unit where recovery action will commence.

Following assessment of outstanding debt from the School Fee Liaison Unit families of children who are enrolled in Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta schools and have not paid CELC fees in arrears will have their debt transferred to their respective schools' fee account.

#### **2.6.1.6 CCB statement - Duplicate Statement / Duplicate Receipt**

The CELC will charge a fee of \$15 for reprinting a Child Care Benefit statement or receipt (up to a maximum of three statements per \$15 fee).

### **2.6.2 Review of Fees**

Fee will be reviewed and approved by CEDP in line with the annual budget review and approval process by 31 August each year for the subsequent year.

### **2.6.3 Security Bond**

A security bond, equivalent to 2 weeks' full fees, is payable in advance for each child who attends a CELC. The security bond is payable within two weeks of the offer of enrolment, but before the child commences at the CELC. The bond will be held for the duration of the child's enrolment.

In the event that any fees are not paid when due, the security bond may be retained by the CELC and placed towards unpaid fees. Any remaining unpaid amount at the time of termination of the child's enrolment or withdrawal of the child from the CELC will be a debt due and payable immediately to the CELC.

Subject to all other fees being paid up-to-date, the security bond is to be credited against the final invoice at the time the child's enrolment is terminating.



## **2.6.4 Invoices and Fee Payments**

Fee invoices will be issued at or before the beginning of each school term showing the fees and miscellaneous charges that are due for payment for that term.

All CELC Fees are to be paid in full by the end of Week 4 of the respective school term.

The CELC Director may approve an arrangement for families in genuine need to pay their fees progressively in advance on either a weekly or fortnightly basis. Applications must be in writing setting out the reasons for the request. The family may be required to provide evidence of genuine need. If approval is given for this method of payment, all fees are to be paid 2 weeks in advance and must be paid in full before the end of week 8 of that term. If the payment arrangement is not respected, the service to the family and the child's place at the CELC may be terminated.

## **2.6.5 Payment Options - Child Care Benefit (CCB)**

Parents/Carers may claim the Child Care Benefit by presenting their CCB Statement to the authorised government bodies (e.g. Medicare, Family Assistance Office or Centrelink).

CCB statement will be issued by the CELCs at the end of every term. It is the family's responsibility to securely retain statements and to lodge CCB claims on time.

## **2.6.6 Reducing or Cancelling Attendance**

A request for changes to attendance must be submitted in writing to the Director two (2) weeks prior to:

- (a) the requested implementation date (first day of change) for changed days that the child attends; or
- (b) the effective date to cancel the child's place at the CELC.

Failure to request and get approval for change arrangements will result in the payment of the full fees for the relevant period.

## **2.6.7 Absences and Non Chargeable Days**

### **2.6.7.1 Absences**

Normal fees are payable for all absences.

### **2.6.7.2 Non-Chargeable Days**

The only non-chargeable days are officially gazetted Public Holidays in New South Wales, NSW School holidays and CELC Staff Development Days.

### **Policy Links**

**Section 2** Administration and Enrolment  
**Section 8** CELC Forms

<b>REVIEW DATE:</b>	
<b>DATE</b>	<b>WHO WAS INVOLVED</b>
September 2013; November 2014; February 2015; February 2016, November 2016, April 2017	Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta: CEDP, CELC Directors, CELC staff; parents/carers
<b>NEXT REVIEW DATE:</b> enter next review date	April 2018

## 2.7 CHILD AND FAMILY ORIENTATION POLICY

“In partnership with families, early childhood educators ensure that children have an active role in preparing for transitions. They assist children to understand the traditions, routines and practices of the settings to which they are moving and to feel comfortable with the process of change.” Early Years Learning Framework, p16.

CELC practices aim to encourage families to participate in an orientation program prior to commencing their scheduled days. We believe that the orientation process develops a sense of belonging to the community and establishes a meaningful connection between home and the CELC learning environment.

It is essential that a parent/carer remain with the child during the orientation period and establish their own sense of belonging within the Catholic early learning environment.

### 2.7.1 The following is available to all families enrolling children

- A tour of the CELC’s internal and external learning environments.
- The CELC parent handbook with reference to related policies and procedures prior to their child beginning at the CELC.
- Family introduction to all CELC educators and staff.
- Families and children are encouraged to participate in an orientation process.
- For the child’s orientation we ask that you call the CELC to discuss orientation arrangements.
- The CELC welcomes any comments or suggestions the parents/carers may have.

### 2.7.2 What your child needs to bring when they begin

Refer to the CELC Parent Handbook for information.

### 2.7.3 What do families need to know about their child attending the CELC?

- All clothes and belongings should be labelled.
- We suggest that children wear comfortable play clothes as children may be engaging in messy play.
- Suitable footwear must be worn. Thongs are not considered safe and are unsuitable and therefore cannot be worn to CELC.
- Parents/Carers will need to check the communication folders/pockets daily for CELC newsletters, fee receipts, and important notices.
- Signs and notice boards are placed around the CELC for parents’/carers’ information. Parents and Carers are encouraged to take a few moments to stop and read them as they contain important information.
- Toys are not to be brought to CELC from home as they may break or could be lost.

### 2.7.4 Your Child’s first day

- Children react differently to new situations especially when they don’t understand why they are being left at CELC. Parents/Carers are encouraged to be patient with their child as some children adjust readily and others take some time.
- Our CELC educators will provide parents/carers with practical strategies and effective techniques to assist families with transitioning to the CELC environment. These techniques and strategies will be discussed with parents/carers on the child’s first day.

### 2.7.5 Parents/Carers Responsibilities on the First Day of Attendance

- Never slip away from the child; always let them know you are leaving and when you will return.
- Once you have said good-bye, we encourage parents/carers to go quickly and cheerfully, your smile will reassure the child. Should you become upset, please talk with the CELC educators and/or phone the CELC during the day to see how your child is going.
- Ask your child in the afternoon what they have done; remember that your reassurance will help with your next day's departure. The parent/carer can ring at any time and ask for feedback from educators regarding the child's adjustment to the CELC learning environment.
- We recommend that parents/carers try to pick up their children early in the first few days, until the child is familiar and comfortable at the CELC.

If you have any questions about leaving your child or if you are having trouble of any kind, please speak to a CELC staff member.

#### Policy Links

**Section 3** Curriculum - Programming

#### References:

October 2009 Sourced; Children's Services Regulation 2004, QIAS.

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## **2.8 COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES**

### **2.8.1 Aim**

Our CELC aims to engage with families about Catholic values and traditions, early childhood curriculum and foundational learning. We aim to provide an enriching inclusive environment that encourages active exploration and recognises diversity, including culture and ability. We respect our families' and children's beliefs, values and philosophies. (Refer to CEDP CELC philosophy statement).

In respecting our families' beliefs, values and philosophies, CELC educators create an environment that encourages active participation in learning programs creating a sense of belonging to the CELC community. Families are encouraged to communicate their aspiration, desires and educational goals for their preschool age child, and these are reflected in the learning community.

### **2.8.2 Opportunities for Family Involvement**

Families will have the opportunity to:

- Contribute to the CELC's programs by offering information about their child's interests and strengths.
- Be involved and share interests in the daily program.
- Assist in developing their child's environments by helping to prepare the activities.
- Gain further knowledge about their child's development, care and education through participation in the program.
- Read and learn about the importance of social interaction and play through newsletters, information brochures/handouts.
- Comment on activities and routines of the CELC informally through discussion with staff or formally through written suggestions.
- Donate items such as materials for art and craft, paper for the children's drawings and plant life.
- Help in the repair or maintenance of educational equipment e.g. covering books.
- Share their family culture with us by letting us know of any celebrations they enjoy, special recipes/foods, translating notices etc.
- Join the staff and children on open days, incursions or excursions.
- Have an input to the CELC's policies, procedures, aims, goals. Parents/Carer feedback can be provided to the CELC Director.

### **2.8.3 Reciprocal Exchanges of Information and Communication**

CELC educators will encourage reciprocal exchanges of information and communication by:

- Being respectful to all stakeholders.
- Providing a variety of communication tools for families. Communication structures may include: comment sheets which can be placed in the CELC's suggestion box, booklets, making an appointment to speak to the Director or a CELC educator.
- Greeting families each morning and inviting them to provide any relevant information educators may need to know about their child.

- Communicating with the parents/carers on a daily basis, both verbally and through digital documentation.
- Endeavouring to let the parent/carer know how their child has been that day and what they did.
- Contacting parents during the day if an educator has particular concern they would like to discuss.
- Discussing parent/carer concerns or queries with the nominated supervisor.
- Maintaining professional boundaries with families.

**Policy Links**

**Section 3** Curriculum – Programming

**References:**

Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, (2009) p.13  
Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority (2011) Quality Area 6 Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities.

<b>REVIEW DATE:</b>	
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## 2.9 COMPLAINTS OR GRIEVANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

### 2.9.1 Introduction

The CELC has a procedure for dealing with complaints and grievances in a professional manner. All issues raised by complainants remain confidential and are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner. The effective and efficient handling of complaints and grievances confirms to families the commitment to providing high quality early learning programs to preschool age children through the prompt and thorough investigation process employed.<sup>5</sup>

The CELC is committed to creating harmonious partnerships with children, families and educators where individual and cultural differences are valued and respected. This is in accordance with the Mission of the Catholic Education and is supported by our commitment to the early childhood Code of Ethics and the principles and practices of the National Curriculum Framework, *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* (2009).

### 2.9.2 Scope and Application

These guidelines apply to parents/guardians, visitors, volunteers and community members and to employees and contractors of the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta, except where issues are dealt in accordance with:

- Child Protection – Risk of Harm and Significant Harm and/or allegations;
- Relevant CEDP Discipline procedures for employees (for serious complaints involving allegations of misconduct/unsatisfactory performance by employees);
- Enterprise Agreements/Awards;
- Anti Bullying Policy for Students 2005;
- Criminal Jurisdiction.

The Catholic Education Office Complaint Handling Policy and Procedures is to be used in matters assessed as more serious in nature and involving an adult as one of the parties (e.g. a complaint by a teacher against another educator, or by a parent on behalf of their child against an educator).

Complaints relating to the areas of discrimination, harassment and bullying are dealt with according to Complaint Handling Procedures and Guidelines with reference to the Countering Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy (2012). This information is available from Section 6 of the CELC Policy and Procedure Manual and for CELC Staff from OSCAR.

### 2.9.3 Definitions

**Complaint:** (In relation to this policy) a complaint is defined as an issue of a minor nature that can be resolved promptly or within 24 hours, and does not require a detailed investigation. Complaints include an expression of displeasure, such as poor service, and any verbal or written complaint directly related to the service (including general and notifiable complaints).

The person making a complaint is referred to as **'the complainant'**. The person about whom the complaint is made is **'the respondent'**. The **'parties'** refer to both complainant and respondent. The person handling the complaint is the **'complaint handler'**, and is usually the Director. Persons who directly witness an alleged incident are referred to as **'witnesses'**.

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<sup>5</sup> Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2011) Guide to the National Standards, Quality area 7: Leadership and Service Management.

**General complaint:** A general complaint may address any aspect of the service e.g. a lost clothing item or the service's fees. Services do not have to inform NSW Early Childhood Directorate, but the complaint must be dealt with as soon as is practicable to avoid escalation of the matter.

**Grievance:** A grievance is a formal statement of complaint that cannot be addressed immediately and involves matters of a more serious nature e.g. the service is in breach of a policy or the service did not meet the care expectations of a family.

**Notifiable complaint:** A notifiable complaint alleges a breach of the Act or Regulation, or alleges that the health, safety or wellbeing of a child at the service may have been compromised. Any complaint of this nature must be reported by the Approved Provider or the Nominated Supervisor, to the NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate, Department of Education within 24 hours of the complaint being made (Section 174(2)(b), Regulation 176(2)(b)). If the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or Authorised Representative of the Catholic Education Office is unsure whether the matter is a notifiable complaint, it is good practice to contact NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate, Department of Education for confirmation. Written reports to Department of Education must include:

- details of the event or incident;
- the name of the person who initially made the complaint;
- if appropriate, the name of the child concerned and the condition of the child, including a medical or incident report (where relevant);
- contact details of the investigator officer;
- any other relevant information.

Written notification of complaints must be submitted using the appropriate forms, which can be found on the ACECQA website: [www.cecqa.gov.au](http://www.cecqa.gov.au)

**Serious incident:** An incident resulting in the death of a child, or an injury, trauma or illness for which the attention of a registered medical practitioner, emergency services or hospital is sought or should have been sought. This also includes an incident in which a child appears to be missing, cannot be accounted for, is removed from the service in contravention of the Regulations or is mistakenly locked in/out of the service premises (Regulation 12).

A serious incident should be documented in a SI01 Notification of Serious Incident Form as well as an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Form (sample form available on the ACECQA website; SI01 Notification of Serious Incident can be completed electronically) as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident.

The Regulatory Authority (NSW DEC) must be notified within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring at the service (Regulation 176(2)(a)). Records are required to be retained for the periods specified in Regulation 183.

#### 2.9.4 Procedures

In most cases, dealing with complaints and grievances will be the responsibility of the Nominated Supervisor in consultation with the Delegates of the Approved Provider and the Catholic Education Office - Enterprise Services Director. All complaints and grievances, when lodged, need to be initially assessed to determine whether they are a general or a notifiable complaint (refer to Definitions).



When a complaint or grievance has been assessed as 'notifiable', a member of the Catholic Education Office Diocese of Parramatta management team, advise the Nominated Supervisor to notify NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate, Department of Education of the complaint or grievance. The Approved Provider or authorised representative will investigate the complaint or grievance and take any actions deemed necessary, in addition to responding to requests from and assisting with any investigation by NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate, Department of Education.

There may be occasions when the complainant reports the complaint or grievance directly to NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate, Department of Education. If the Department of Education then notifies the Approved Provider and/or the Nominated Supervisor about a complaint they have received, all key stakeholders will still have responsibility for investigating and dealing with the complaint or grievance as outlined in this policy, in addition to co-operating with any investigation.

#### **2.9.5 The Delegate of the Approved Provider, in conjunction with the Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:**

- being familiar with the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, service policies, and complaints and grievances policy and procedures;
- identifying, preventing and addressing potential concerns before they become formal complaints/grievances;
- ensuring that the name and telephone number of the Responsible Person to whom complaints and grievances may be addressed are displayed prominently at the main entrance of the service (Regulation 173(2)(b));
- ensuring that the address and telephone number of the NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate, Department of Education are displayed prominently at the main entrance of the service (Regulation 173(2)(e));
- advising parents/guardians and any other new members of the Catholic Early Learning Centre of the complaints and grievances policy and procedures upon enrolment;
- ensuring that this policy is available for inspection at the service at all times (Regulation 171);
- being aware of, and committed to, the principles of communicating and sharing information with service employees, members and volunteers;
- responding to all complaints and grievances in the most appropriate manner and at the earliest opportunity;
- treating all complainants fairly and equitably;
- providing a Complaint Form and ensuring that staff record complaints and grievances along with outcomes (See Section 6 Forms);
- complying with the CELC Privacy and Confidentiality Policy and maintaining confidentiality at all times (Regulations 181, 183);
- appoint an investigating officer, and when required consult with People and Culture to provide further information on the investigating process;
- referring notifiable complaints, grievances or complaints that are unable to be resolved appropriately and in a timely manner Catholic Education Office Diocese of Parramatta management. In the event that the issue is not resolved satisfactorily, complainants may also contact the NSW Department of Education on (02) 1800 619 113;
- The Approved Provider in association with the Nominated Supervisor must notify the NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate, Department of Education within 24 hours if parent/carer complaints allege "that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child or children was or is being

compromised while that child or children is or are being educated and cared for by the approved education and care service<sup>6</sup> or the National Law or Regulations were broken. Section 174(4) of the Act, Regulation 176(2)(b)) and is responsible for receiving recommendations from the Investigating Officer and/or People and Culture and taking appropriate action.

**2.9.6 The Nominated Supervisor, educators and other staff are responsible for:**

- responding to and resolving issues as they arise where practicable;
- maintaining professionalism and integrity at all times;
- discussing minor complaints directly with the party involved as a first step towards resolution (the parties are encouraged to discuss the matter professionally and openly work together to achieve a desired outcome);
- informing complainants of the service's Complaints and Grievances Policy;
- recording all complaints and grievances (see Section 6 Forms – Complaints Form);
- notifying the Catholic Education Office Diocese of Parramatta management of the complaint escalates and becomes a grievance (refer to Definitions), is a notifiable complaint (refer to Definitions) or is unable to be resolved appropriately in a timely manner;
- providing information as requested by the Approved Provider or Catholic Education Office Diocese of Parramatta management e.g. written reports relating to the grievance;
- complying with the service's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy and maintaining confidentiality at all times (Regulations 181, 183);
- working co-operatively with the Delegate of the Approved Provider and NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate, Department of Education in any investigations related to grievances about Catholic Early Learning Centre, its programs or staff;
- Accessing additional information regarding the Catholic Education Office Diocese of Parramatta, Complaint Handling Procedures and Guidelines 2012 available at Section 6 of the CELC Policy and Procedure Manual and available to CELC Staff on OSCAR.

**2.9.7 Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- raising a complaint directly with the person involved, in an attempt to resolve the matter without recourse to the complaints and grievances procedures;
- communicating (preferably in writing) any concerns relating to the management or operation of the service as soon as is practicable;
- raising any unresolved issues or serious concerns directly with the Nominated Supervisor;
- maintaining complete confidentiality at all times;
- co-operating with requests to meet with the Investigating Officer and/or provide relevant information when requested in relation to complaints and grievances.

*Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.*

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<sup>6</sup> Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2011) Guide to the National Standards, Quality area 7: Leadership and Service Management.

## **2.9.8 Investigating the Grievance and Gathering Relevant Information**

- meet with individual witnesses, and give right of reply to the person against whom the allegations are made in relation to any accusation or information relating to an alleged incident;
- offer the complainant the opportunity of meeting with the Enterprise Services Director and People and Culture to discuss the complaint and provide additional information where relevant;
- nominate an authorised representative of the Catholic Education Office Diocese of Parramatta to inform the complainant of the procedures for dealing with the grievance if the complainant does not take up the opportunity to attend a meeting;
- document the time, date and detail of meetings/discussions, and follow this up with a letter to the complainant outlining the information discussed;
- be available to meet with Department of Education staff, if required, and provide additional information as requested;
- review relevant information and documents;
- obtain any other relevant information or documentation that will assist in resolving the grievance;
- seek advice, where appropriate, from individuals and organisations that may be able to assist in resolving the grievance (any cost in seeking advice will require prior approval by the Delegate of the Approved Provider).

## **2.9.9 Following the Investigation**

Once the investigation of the grievance is complete, the Nominated Supervisor or authorised representative of the Catholic Education Office will:

- endeavour to resolve the grievance by mutual agreement of the parties involved;
- meet to discuss the information gathered and determine further action, including generating recommendations to be presented to Catholic Education Office Diocese of Parramatta management.
- ensure that any recommendations or actions are in accordance with relevant legislation and procedures including, but not limited to:
  - Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
  - Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
  - Catholic Early Learning Centre policy, procedures
- report outcomes that may include relevant information gained in investigations and consultations to the Enterprise Services Director and to the Delegate of Approved Provider and, where required, provide any recommendations for consideration by the them;
- inform the Catholic Education Office Diocese of Parramatta management on the involvement of potential involvement of the NSW Department of Education and the outcomes of any investigation. Enterprise Services Director and to the Delegate of Approved Provider will review the report and any recommendations and will be responsible for making decisions on the action to be taken (if any), including relevant review mechanisms;
- advise the complainant and other relevant parties of any decisions made by the Enterprise Services Director and to the Delegate of Approved Provider in relation to the grievance;

- follow up to ensure the parties involved are satisfied with the outcome and monitor progress on any actions taken by the Enterprise Services Director and to the Delegate of Approved Provider.

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## 2.10 ACCEPTANCE AND REFUSAL OF AUTHORISATION POLICY

Under the Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010) and Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011), children's services are required to obtain written authorisation from parents/guardians, and/or authorised nominees in some circumstances, to ensure that the health, safety, wellbeing and best interests of the child are met. These circumstances include:

1. authorisation for arrival and departure. (Regulation 158)
2. leaving the CELC service; (Regulation 99) and
3. administering medication when prescribed by a medical practitioner or in case of an emergency situation where the administering of medication may be required; (regulation 93)

This policy applies to all children who have been enrolled at the CELC by the legal parent/carer in accordance with the following Sections of the CELC's Core Policy and Procedure Handbook:

- a) CELC Enrolment Form (Administration of Paracetamol/Ibuprofen; Sunscreen, Emergency Evacuation; Excursions consent (Section 8);
- b) Arrival and Departure Policy (Section 2.3);
- c) Child Access Policy (Section 2.4);
- d) Administration of Medication Policy (Section 5.5);
- e) Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy (Section 5.6);
- f) Communicating with Health Professionals in an Emergency Policy (Section 5.7);
- g) Anaphylaxis Policy (Section 5.9);
- h) Asthma Policy (Section 5.11);
- i) Managing Children with Epilepsy (Section 5.12)
- j) Managing Children with Diabetes (Section 5.13)

### 2.10.1 Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation CELC Procedures

- Parents/Carers must be notified as part of the enrolment process that CELC responsibility for their child commences upon signing the attendance register.
- CELC staff are required to be aware of any custody arrangements or court orders that may impact on the collection of children.
- The CELC responsible to keep "Authorisation" records for each child enrolled at CELC. This includes excursion permission notes, attendance records, visitors register and medication authority.
- Ensure that all parents/guardians have completed the nominated contacts section of their child's enrolment form, and that form is signed and dated before the child is enrolled at the CELC.
- In an emergency if no authorised contact person is available emergency services will be contacted.

**2.10.2 Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Responsibilities of Parents/Carers**

- Understand and comply with the policies and procedures outlined in the CELC’s Core Policy and Procedure Handbook.
- Are required to sign all “Authorisation Documentation” as outlined in this policy, including nominated contacts on the CELC enrolment form, sign and date permission to attend excursions, signing and dating attendance register as the child arrives and departs the preschool.
- Must notify the CELC of any custody arrangements or court orders that impact on the collection of children.
- Must notify the CELC Director when someone different will be picking up his or her child.
- Providing written authorisation where children require medication to be administered by educators/staff.

**Policy Links**

- Section 3** Curriculum – Programming  
**Section 5** Health & Safety  
**Section 8** CELC Forms

**References**

*Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) (NSW), 168 (2) (m) p.90, 168 (2) (k), p. 90*  
*Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*  
*Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) (NSW) 168 (2) (m) p.190, 168 (2) (k), p. 111 Regulation 92 p.59, and Regulation 99 p.70*  
*Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 No 133*  
*National Quality Standards 4.3, 7.3.*

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