

CHILD AND YOUTH RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Acknowledgement

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Preamble

Catholic Education Northern Territory (CENT) is committed to high quality learning and teaching for around 5000 children and young people enrolled in our Early Learning Centres, schools and colleges.

Our community of 18 schools, includes 5 Aboriginal Catholic Community Schools, and 13 schools in urban centres across the Northern Territory.

In compliance with the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007*, the *Domestic and Family Violence Act 2017* and the *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*, CENT has developed a Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy (CYRMS) which references system wide policies and procedures which support the safety, protection and well-being of students. Each school has information that is contextualized and accessible for families in the area of support, programs and frameworks for student wellbeing. For further information regarding CENT's CYRMS please contact the Integrity Officer/Child Safety Coordinator at ceo.integrity@nt.catholic.edu.au

Purpose

The purpose of this Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy is to help identify potential risks of harm to children, young people and vulnerable adults and to implement strategies and procedures to minimise these risks.

It is intended to provide a uniform standard of best practice, ensuring that every possible effort is made to safeguard against harm or abuse to children or vulnerable adults.

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Statement of Commitment

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 1: COMMITTED LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

Catholic Education Northern Territory is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all students, including Aboriginal children, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with disabilities. CENT respects and values the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of every child and young person, based on our Christian belief that every person is made in the image of God and children and young people are entrusted to us by the love of God. Children and young people have a right to be safe and protected from abuse and neglect.

Making the school a place of safety and a nurturing community of care, is an essential part of CENT's ethos and underpins our commitment to the protection of students. CENT has zero tolerance of any form of child abuse and exploitation, and all safety concerns and allegations will be treated seriously and consistently through CENT processes. The Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy and Student Protection Processes and Guidelines reflect the procedures used to build a strong culture of safeguarding to support the safety, protection and wellbeing of students.

CENT strives to ensure a culture where all acknowledge an understanding that student protection is the responsibility of everyone. Important in developing this culture is the education of students about personal safety strategies and a focus by CENT schools on the safety and wellbeing of students being at the centre of every preventative and protective action they take. Staff and volunteers must undertake annual training to ensure they understand the legal, policy and pastoral responsibilities they have in providing a safe environment that identifies risks and takes action to eliminate or reduce such risks.

CENT is committed to providing opportunities for children and families to have their say on ways to build and maintain safe school communities. Schools have nominated Safeguarding Contact Persons who are accessible by all staff, students, parents and carers.

CENT's Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy has been developed in compliance with our obligations under the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 and Domestic and Family Violence Act 2017* to protect children and young people.

Codes of Conduct

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 1: COMMITTED LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

CENT has developed codes of conduct for employees, students, volunteers (including parents) and other personnel. These codes of conduct set out CENT's requirements in relation to the conduct of employees, students, volunteers and other personnel and contain specific information on interacting with students.

The Catholic Education Northern Territory Code of Conduct sets out the standard of behaviour required by CENT for employees. The Safeguarding Code of Conduct sets out the responsibilities and behaviour which the CENT requires of all volunteers when working with or in contact with children and young people.

Employees are also bound to comply with the Working with Children and Criminal History Checks Policy, CENT's 'Sharers of the Vision' document and other relevant professional standards (for example, the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and the Australian Professional Standards for Principals that describe effective, contemporary practice for teachers and principals). The Northern

Territory Teacher Registration Board also has documents that outline the responsibilities and provide guidelines for teachers:

- Code of Ethics for Northern Territory Teachers
- Protective Practices for teachers in their interactions with children and young people
- Managing Professional Boundaries: Guidelines for Teachers

CENT Sharers of the Vision

CENT 'Sharers of the Vision' document sets out the standard of behaviour required by CENT in the performance of their employees' duties. All CENT employees must comply with the document including employees employed on a temporary, casual, fixed term or continuing basis.

The document states that CENT employees must act appropriately and professionally at all times in their interactions with staff, parents, carers and students and observe appropriate boundaries, behaviour and contact with students. In addition, the document covers the employee's duties in relation to providing safe and healthy workplaces in accordance with legislative requirements and duty of care obligations to students.

Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Policy

CENT's Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Policy for schools reflects the shared values and expectations to student wellbeing support and maintaining a supportive Catholic school environment.

CENT requires all CENT schools to develop and implement a whole-school approach to student wellbeing and positive behaviour, based on best practice and sound evidence

Safeguarding Code of Conduct

CENT's Safeguarding Code of Conduct provides direction about the behaviour, relationship and responsibilities expected of all personnel and stipulates actions that may be taken if the code is not observed. It clearly describes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, including interacting with children through technology.

CENT requires all CENT schools to ensure that volunteers comply with the Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

Recruitment, selection, training and management

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 5: ROBUST HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 7: ONGOING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Recruitment and selection

CENT's recruitment and selection processes aim to recruit and select employees who are appropriately qualified and suitable for working with children and young people.

CENT schools are involved in staff recruitment, selection, training and management of employees in partnership with personnel from the CENT office.

Principals and employees in CENT schools must comply with CENT's policies and procedures in relation to recruitment, selection, training and managing of employees.

When advertising new positions in schools, CENT's advertising template states that "This position involves working with children. The appointment of a successful applicant will be subject to satisfactory employment screening for child related employment in accordance with legislation".

CENT adheres to the requirements of the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007*, the *Disability Discrimination Act*, the *Disability Standards for Education*; the *Education Act (NT)*, the *Teacher Registration (Northern Territory) Act* and the *Education and Care Services (National Uniform Legislation) Act*.

All non-teaching employees working in CENT schools are required to comply with CENT's Working with Children & Criminal History Checks Policy. CENT requires all non-teaching employees, volunteers and trainee students who work with students and who require an Ochre card under the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007*, to obtain an Ochre Card and keep it current. All teachers are required to produce evidence of current teacher registration with the Teacher Registration Board (TRB) before they commence work in CENT schools.

Training and Management of Employees

CENT requires all office and school based employees to complete induction training. Office Managers and Principals are required by CENT to ensure that all new employees are provided with induction training on the office or school's processes, procedures, values and expectations of CENT. This will include the standard of behaviour required of employees in their interactions with students, to support CENT schools to provide an environment that is safe and supportive for students. CENT also conducts induction training for all new CENT Principals. This training provides details on the Code of Conduct and CENT's key strategic documents and includes meeting key people in CENT who support Principals.

All employees who work in CENT schools will complete online or face-to-face Mandatory Reporting Training, as per NT Department of Education requirements and online Safeguarding training every year. This training covers CENT's requirements under the *Mandatory Reporting Policy* in relation to reporting by staff of beliefs or disclosures of:

- sexual abuse/likely sexual abuse of students;
- harm or risk of harm to students caused by physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect; and
- inappropriate behaviour of staff to students.

New school-based employees must complete this training within two weeks of commencing work for CENT. Every year, refresher training for employees is co-ordinated by the Principal at CENT schools.

CENT co-ordinates professional learning opportunities for CENT employees to enable CENT employees to enhance their professional or personal knowledge and skills, including those that relate to the safety and wellbeing of students. Professional learning is offered from time to time on bullying, behaviour management of students, students who are at risk of harm and students with inclusion needs.

Where there is a complaint or allegation in relation to an employee of inappropriate behaviour, unsatisfactory performance or misconduct, CENT takes all appropriate management action, which may include requiring employees to undertake additional training, mentoring employees, explaining CENT's expectations and requirements to the employee, or dismissal. CENT has developed the Student Protection Processes and the Investigating Complaints Procedure to enable Principals/Managers to have a clear and consistent process for handling complaints and allegations of misconduct.

CENT provides employee assistance through the Access Program which will give free and confidential counselling to employees who require support.

Other CENT Support for Student Wellbeing

CENT recognises that students learn best in school environments in which they feel safe, both physically and emotionally. CENT has developed a number of policies, processes and uses a number of resources to support the pastoral care and wellbeing of students. These are readily accessible to CENT employees on CENT's Intranet and informal training is provided within schools, from time to time, at staff meetings and 'in service' days, so that employees are aware of these policies.

These policies and processes include:

- Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Policy
- Crisis Management Policy
- Students with Inclusion Needs: Inclusion Support Services Guide
- First Aid Procedure
- Made in the Image of God program
- School Wide Positive Relationship Framework
- Social Media, Email and Computer Use Policy

CENT has a Network of Wellbeing staff who support CENT schools in the pastoral care and wellbeing of students and develops strategies, policies and procedures for schools and students. Every CENT school employs a School Counsellor to work with students, parents and staff and provide pastoral care, personal safety strategies, support for marginalised students and support for students who may be at risk of being harmed.

Policies and procedures for handling disclosures or beliefs of harm

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 2: CHILDREN ARE SAFE, INFORMED AND PARTICIPATE

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 3: PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES, CARERS AND COMMUNITIES

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 6: EFFECTIVE COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT

Mandatory Reporting Processes

CENT's Mandatory Reporting policies and procedures and the Student Protection Processes provide a process for all staff who work in CENT schools to recognise, respond and report beliefs or disclosures of:

- sexual abuse/likely sexual abuse of students;
- harm or risk of harm to students caused by physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect; and
- inappropriate behaviour of staff to students.

The Mandatory Reporting policies and procedures have been developed in accordance with the requirements of the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007*, the *Disability Discrimination Act*, the *Disability Standards for Education*; the *Education Act (NT)*, the *Teacher Registration (Northern Territory) Act* and the *Education and Care Services (National Uniform Legislation) Act* and developed in collaboration with CENT and other Catholic employing authorities. The CENT processes were approved by Catholic Education Council (CEC) in Jan 2016.

The CENT's Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Policy and Mandatory Reporting Policy are also underpinned by the Catholic Diocese of Darwin *Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Prevention and*

Protection Policy and complements the *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards* and the *National Response Protocol* and the *Integrity in the Service of the Church* document.

Reports are to be made to the Northern Territory Police Service in relation to allegations or reasonable beliefs of sexual abuse/likely sexual abuse of a student outside of the family and to Territory Families, Housing and Communities for harm/risk of harm to a student caused by sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse or neglect by a family member. If a report is made in relation to inappropriate behaviour of a staff member towards a student, that report will be handled by CENT. Any report regarding inappropriate behaviour of the principal is to be addressed to Principal Consultants and to the Director of Catholic Education if of a serious nature. All employees must complete training on CENT's Mandatory Reporting every year, which addresses both signs of harm and management of risk. CENT requires Principals at CENT schools to sign off that this mandatory training has been completed by all staff.

The CENT's Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Policy and Mandatory Reporting Policy and Procedures are readily available for employees, parents, students and carers and CENT requires that all CENT schools upload the link to the Student Protection Processes to their school website.

The CENT Reporting Student Harm Documentation form enables staff to document any student protection concerns, including allegations or beliefs of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse of a student, harm or risk of harm to a student or inappropriate behaviour of a staff member towards a student. Notification to the Police or Territory Families is also recorded on the form.

CENT has a complaints procedure to enable parents or students to make a complaint that a CENT school has not complied with the Student Protection Processes. Parents or students may make a complaint via the Record of Complaint about Non-Compliance with CENT's Student Protection Processes.

Safeguarding Contact Persons

All CENT schools must nominate the Principal and at least one other staff member as Safeguarding Contact Persons. The role of the Safeguarding Contact Person is to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and to be the first point of contact for students, families and staff regarding safeguarding concerns. CENT requires all CENT schools to make staff, students, volunteers and parents aware of the identity of the Safeguarding Contact Persons, through school newsletters, posters in the school and parent information nights.

CENT recommends in larger schools that Principals consider nominating additional School Safeguarding Contact Persons. Information about the School Safeguarding Contact Persons and requirements for their appointment is detailed within the Student Protection Processes.

Managing breaches of the risk management strategy

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 1: COMMITTED LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 6: EFFECTIVE COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 8: SAFE PHYSICAL AND ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS

CENT takes any breach of its *Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy* seriously. Breaches may be dealt with as follows:

- if the alleged breach relates to the actions of an employee, volunteer or consultant CENT will manage this, as appropriate, in accordance with the CENT Investigating Complaints Procedure, the Safeguarding Code of Conduct and the Student Protection Processes;

- if the breach relates to a complaint made via the Record of Complaint about Non-Compliance with CENT's Student Protection Processes, that complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the CENT's Student Protection Processes;
- if the breach relates to the action of a contractor or sub-contractor, CENT will take appropriate action under CENT's contract with the contractor.

Risk Management for managing high risk activities and special events

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 1: COMMITTED LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 7: ONGOING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 8: SAFE PHYSICAL AND ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS

Risk Management Tools

CENT requires all CENT schools to consider all activities in terms of their inherent level of risk. When undertaking a medium or high-risk activity or special event, CENT schools are responsible for identifying potential risks and considering the safety and wellbeing of students and the risk of harm to students.

CENT requires CENT schools to have effective risk management and mitigation of risk for all medium or higher risk activities undertaken within the school and all activities undertaken outside of the school.

The Integrity Officer/ Child Protection Officer and Work Health Manager at CENT provides support to CENT schools, if requested, to help schools carry out risk assessments and develop and implement a risk management plan. In addition, a dedicated Workplace Health (WHS) and Safeguarding Contact Persons are employed at every CENT school. (The WHS' role is to co-ordinate risk assessments at CENT schools and support the Principal in carrying out the health and safety responsibilities under legislation.) CENT provides training and updates to the WHS and Safeguarding Contact Persons.

To ensure the safety of all students and those working or visiting Catholic Education facilities, contractors and sub-contractors are required to receive a WHS induction to site by an authorised person prior to the commencement of work. In accordance with WHS legislation and the CENT Contractor Management Procedure, a copy of all inductions are to be documented and signed by the relevant persons and stored for recording purposes.

Risk Management for Excursions and Fetes

Principals are responsible for approving all excursions and activities. CENT have developed policies, procedures and processes to assist Principals in identifying, assessing and managing risks associated with excursions. Principals are required by CENT to complete the Risk Assessments prior to each excursion. This form specifies that in carrying out a risk assessment, student protection risks must be assessed and managed.

All CENT Schools need to have developed a Risk Assessment to assist the Principal in managing the health and safety risks of conducting a fete. The Principal must sign off on the Risk Assessment and measures put in place to mitigate the risks prior to a fete taking place. This includes information on the hygienic handling of food, as required.

Other Strategies to Minimise Risks of Harm

CENT takes seriously its commitment in relation to the safety and protection of students and has developed policies and procedures to manage risks of harm to students, for example:

- Supervision - CENT schools must manage the supervision of students appropriately to ensure that there is adequate supervision of students.
- Emergency - CENT schools must ensure that employees are briefed to appropriately handle emergency situations and critical incidents in accordance with CENT's Crisis Management Procedure.
- Fire/Lockdown - CENT schools must ensure that all employees and volunteers are made aware of fire evacuation and lockdown procedures at the school.
- Visitors/Outsiders - CENT schools must have procedures in place for the management of visitors and other outsiders, including relevant signage and directions together with a visitor sign in register and procedures for signing in and out of the school.
- Media/Communications strategies – CENT schools must obtain the permission of parents for the use of student photographs and names in any materials issued to the public in printed or electronic form. Identifying information of students is not used in promotional material without the specific permission of the parents and the students concerned. Specific informed consent must be obtained by CENT schools for any publication of names and photos in media outside the local school.
- All CENT employees and students are required to observe the CENT's ICT-Acceptable Use Policy, the Digital Communication, Staff Conduct and Student Safety Policy and NTSchools Acceptable Computer and Internet Usage Agreement.

Compliance with SAFE NT and the Working With Children Clearance (Ochre Card)

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 5: ROBUST HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Ochre Card Requirements and Employee Register

CENT's Working with Children & Criminal History Checks Policy details CENT's requirements in accordance with the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* to ensure that the required personnel hold an Ochre Card. CENT requires CENT schools and Principals to comply with the requirements of the Ochre Card Screening Procedure.

CENT requires all employees, volunteers and trainee students who work with children under 18 years of age to obtain and hold a valid Ochre Card (unless exempt), including:

- all school based CENT employees
- volunteers (who are not parents of enrolled children);
- preservice teachers undertaking practical teaching sessions as part of compulsory academic course requirements;
- self-employed people, paid employees and volunteers whose usual duties include, or are likely to include, the teaching, coaching or tutoring of a child, individually on a commercial basis;

- students who undertake formal traineeships as part of their studies which involve work in child related employment, including conducting sport and recreation activities directed at children; and
- school board members

All CENT schools register of Ochre Card information for all paid employees, is to be maintained by CENT schools and must ensure that details of any Ochre Card renewals, applications and changes in status are held by the school.

All teachers employed by CENT must be registered with the TRB. Principals are required by CENT to see the original certificates of registration and qualifications before employment commences. New non-teaching employees must have an Ochre Card prior to commencing work.

CENT schools must maintain a register of Ochre Card information for all volunteers, unless exempt. Volunteers who require an Ochre Card under the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* must obtain their Ochre Card before commencing work.

Procedures for reviewing the Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy

To ensure that CENT's Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy remains current and effective, this strategy will be monitored and reviewed regularly. In the event that CENT identifies concerns, particularly following an incident, CENT's Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy will be reviewed.

Following the review, CENT schools will be advised of any changes to CENT's policies and procedures as a result of the review and where appropriate, training will be provided.

Communication and Support

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 1: COMMITTED LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 5: ROBUST HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 7: ONGOING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Student Protection Training

All CENT school based staff must complete the mandatory training. Principals are required to ensure records are kept and that every staff member has completed the course.

CENT schools are required by CENT to have the Student Protection Processes readily accessible to parents, students and staff and that parents, students and staff are made aware of the processes and the process for reporting behaviour of a staff member that a student considers to be inappropriate. Principals are also required to ensure that Child Protection information is displayed prominently in areas of the school, including areas frequented by students.

Access to CENT's Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy

CENT's Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy is uploaded on CENT's public website. CENT requires CENT schools to have a link to CENT's Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy on their website.