



Policy

Directive No:

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Work Health and Safety

Purpose

This policy documents Catholic Education - Diocese of Cairns' commitment, intentions and principles in relation to its overall work health and safety performance.

This policy applies to all schools/colleges and work sites that have workers of Catholic Education Services (CES) Cairns, the Person Conduction a Business or Undertaking (PCBU). It applies to all persons engaged by CES and includes CES employees, contractors, sub-contractors, work experience persons, volunteers, students and visitors.

Policy

Catholic Education - Diocese of Cairns is committed to providing for the work health and safety of all workers engaged by CES in any capacity, including all students, visitors and members of our school communities.

Providing a safe workplace is one of our key corporate objectives and resources will be allocated to ensure compliance with the Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act and Regulation and all relevant Codes of Practice and/or Standards.

The policy will be given effect through the Work Health and Safety Policy Statement (Attachment A) which shall be communicated during worker and visitor inductions, displayed in the reception/foyer and staff notice boards throughout CES/Schools/Colleges and the CES website. The Policy Statement will be endorsed and signed by the Executive Director.

Rationale

Catholic Education in the Diocese of Cairns understands and honours the significance of protecting the health and wellbeing of all who are involved in the Catholic community. There is a distinct alignment between work health and safety principles and our Catholic values.

In addition to our legal and regulatory obligations, an "ethic of care" for self and for each other's safety and wellbeing underpins the goals of work health and safety in our organisation. Pope John Paul II wrote that he: "attributed to the 'public authority' the 'strict duty' of providing properly for the welfare of the workers, because a failure to do so violates justice".

A best practice Work Health and Safety culture contributes to safe, vibrant and respectful school communities and displays the values of care, compassion and respect.

Consequences

Implementation of this policy requires Catholic Education - Diocese of Cairns to:

- establish key measurable objectives and targets to reduce work related injuries and illnesses.
- provide for a means to effectively monitor results and report on performance.
- ensure compliance with all relevant WHS Legislation.
- establish levels of authority, responsibility and accountability for the management of WHS within CES, via attachments in job position descriptions, WHS committee constitutions and WHS documentation.
- provide a structured WHS training program, including induction of all employees and the opportunity to recognise development opportunities and emphasise authority, responsibility and accountability during employee performance reviews.

- undertake regular monitoring and reviews that include internal and external audits, workplace inspections and observations, inspection, testing and monitoring, and system reviews.
- promote the importance of conducting risk assessments, identifying hazards, assessing risks, implementing effective control measures and monitoring and reviewing their effectiveness.
- ensure effective channels of communications exist between officers and staff for effective consultation receiving and disseminating information regarding safety, changes in legislation or new safe work procedures.
- commit to a process of quality control through desktop audits to ensure WHS objectives and targets are being met.
- review this policy every five years or sooner in response to changes in legislation and regulatory frameworks, or in response to identified opportunities for improvement.

The WHS Manager will ensure this policy is maintained and updated.

Reflection

Qld Work Health and Safety Act (2011)

Qld Work Health and Safety Regulation (2011)

AS/NZS4801 – Occupational health and safety management systems (OHSMS) – Specification with guidance for use

Definitions

All staff should be aware of the following key definitions:

Due Diligence:

The obligation placed upon CES’s Officers by the WHS Act 2011 to ensure that CES complies with its WHS duties. Officers must take reasonable steps to:

- Acquire and update WHS knowledge.
- Gain understanding of hazards and risks.
- Provide appropriate resources to control risk.
- Provide appropriate process for reporting incidents and hazards; and taking corrective actions.
- Ensure processes implemented for complying with legal requirements.
- Verify provisions and use of resources in c-e above.

Officer

A person who makes, or participates in making decisions that affect the whole or a substantial part of the business. They have the capacity to affect significantly the financial standing of CES/Schools/Colleges and must take reasonable steps to apply due diligence.

PCBU

Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking is new terminology replacing the old “Employer” terminology.

Reasonably Practicable

CES has a duty under the WHS Act 2011 to eliminate or minimise risks to health and safety, so far as reasonably practicable, taking in to account:

- Likelihood of the hazard or risk concerned occurring.
- Consequence (degree of harm that might result from the hazard).
- Knowledge of hazards and risk controls.
- Availability and suitability of risk controls.
- Costs associated with risk controls including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

Workers

Workers are those who undertake activities in CES’s work places and may be employees, contractors, sub-contractors, work experience persons and volunteers.

See also *(Related Policies and Guidelines)*

A wide variety of WHS material is available on the Work Health and Safety site on the CES Staff Portal. Further advice may be obtained from the CES WHS Manager.

Work Health and Safety Policy Statement

The Diocese of Cairns has, as one of its Policy objectives, the establishment and maintenance of the highest possible standards of Work Health and Safety management throughout its operations.

The achievement of this objective requires a system for the protection of people (staff, students, families, visitors, contractors), property, plant and equipment from incidents which can affect health, result in injury or cause damage or other losses.

Catholic Education in the Diocese of Cairns regards the health and safety of people as of paramount importance and will address, with the highest priority, any event or circumstance which has the potential to injure people.

Catholic Education in the Diocese of Cairns will, as far as is reasonably practicable, take steps to:

- Prevent injury and illness in the workplace;
- Consult with staff on health and safety issues;
- Achieve continuous improvement through the monitoring and review of measurable targets and objectives and the ongoing improvement of our work health and safety management systems;
- Comply with relevant health and safety legislation; and
- Allocate adequate resources to maintain a safe and healthy workplace.

Catholic Education in the Diocese of Cairns will meet its commitment to health and safety by:

- Managing risks in the workplace;
- Providing safe systems of work and work equipment;
- Providing the necessary training and instruction for workers to perform tasks safely;
- Providing the necessary and appropriate supervision to facilitate safe work;
- Reporting, recording and investigating accidents and incidents;
- Consulting with workers when developing and amending policies and procedures;
- Communicating this policy to staff and school communities; and
- Regularly reviewing health and safety practices to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.

Catholic Education staff in the Diocese of Cairns are required to:

- Look after their own health and safety and the health and safety of others;
- Report hazards and incidents;
- Participate in training;
- Consult and cooperate with Catholic Education on health and safety matters; and
- Adhere to safe working practices, instructions and rules.

A good health and safety record is indicative of good management.

Executive Director
Catholic Education Services