

CYCLONE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Tropical cyclones and severe storms can produce hail, flooding rains, lightning and winds up to 280km/h. Experiencing a cyclone can be frightening and traumatic causing injury and loss of life and cause major structural damage to buildings and whole communities.

The storm season in Australia is usually from November -April and requires all services providing education and care to children to be aware of their responsibility to ensure the safety and security of children, educators, staff and families by being prepared for cyclones, minimizing risks and implementing explicit management strategies.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
97	Emergency and evacuation procedure
98	Telephone and other communication equipment
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures

RELATED POLICIES

Lockdown Policy Acceptance and Refusal Authorisation Policy Arrival and Departure Policy Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Policy Family Communication Policy	Flood Management Policy Emergency Evacuation Policy Supervision Policy Health and Safety Retention of Records Policy
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RELATED CALVARY CHRISTIAN COLLEGE POLICIES (can be accessed via my.calvary.qld.edu.au/Work Health & Safety)

<p>Emergency Situation Response Guidelines Evacuation and Lockdown Procedures Critical Incident Management Team and Response Procedures</p>	<p>Emergency Situation Management Emergency Situation (Traumatic Events) Emergency Situation Response Emergency Situation Emergency Contact Details</p>
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DEFINITION

A cyclone is a low-pressure system that forms over warm tropical waters. They are formed by a system of winds rotating inwards to an area of low barometric pressure, in a clockwise circulation in the southern hemisphere. They are characterised by wind gusts up to 280 km/h and can cause flooding and storm surges.

PURPOSE

We recognise that our Service is positioned in a geographical location where cyclones may occur. We have a responsibility to take precautions in order to decrease the risk of damage to the Service and to ensure the safety of the children, educators and families at all times.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Cyclones are part of life for people in various parts of Australia during the months of November to April. They have the potential to threaten lives and cause large-scale destruction with the possibility of communication being disrupted.

This policy reminds Educators of the procedure to follow in preparing for a cyclone, what to do when a cyclone watch has been announced and/or when a cyclone strikes.

Management has a legal responsibility to provide all their employees with a safe workplace and ensure all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in case of an emergency. As the Childcare Centre is part of a School community all emergency procedures are handled by the **Calvary Christian College Critical Management Response Team** (the Nominated Supervisor is part of this team and will direct instructions to Educators and families from the discussions of this team's meetings)

To ensure compliance with National Regulations, our Service will ensure that:

- emergency evacuation plans are displayed in prominent positions near each exit and in the indoor and outdoor learning environments
- clear procedures are in place for when a cyclone warning occurs to ensure the safety of educators, children and families
- emergency evacuation rehearsals (drills) will be practiced every three months, including identifying a designated assembly point and place of refuge in case of cyclones
- each drill is documented
- emergency telephone numbers will be clearly displayed in prominent positions within the Service
- a risk assessment to identify risks associated with the impact of cyclones to the Service is completed annually
- emergency contact details of all children are updated regularly
- strategies to implement emergency plans during cyclone season are discussed and documented at relevant staff meetings (cyclone season) and included in the Quality Improvement Plan
- counselling services are provided to employees and their family members affected by a cyclone

EDUCATORS WILL

- become familiar with the evacuation plan, including knowing the nearest safe high ground and access route
- Prepare the Emergency Evacuation Kit containing
 1. Water containers with clean drinking water, dried or canned food and can opener (if required)
 2. First aid kit and manual, and waterproof bags
 3. Emergency contact register for children
 4. Mobile phone and charger
 5. Any special equipment for babies and young children (bottles, nappies, milk formula)
 6. Whistle
- ensure all portable outdoor furniture and related items are stored within the building (in collaboration with **Calvary Christian College Critical Management Response Team**)
- not ignore warning signs
- provide resources and strategies to families for children affected by natural disasters

PRIOR TO CYCLONE SEASON

- Ensure the building structure meets cyclone required standards
- Check current insurance, making sure the Service is covered for storm surge, flooding and cyclone damage, including clean-up and debris removal.
- Ensure maintenance is upheld, including trimming branches over the Service, and clearing gutters.

WHEN A CYCLONE WATCH IS ISSUED

A cyclone watch is normally issued when there are indicators that winds above gale force are anticipated in the area within 24-48 hours. The **Calvary Christian College Critical Management Response Team** will meet to plan.

The following actions may be warranted:

- Remain calm
- Listen to the radio/TV for further information and warnings given by Emergency Services
- Check to ensure any loose materials at the Service is tied down (or filled with water)
- Ensure the first aid kit is well stocked and current
- Remain indoors
- Notify families about the cyclone watch issued
- Keep the children busy with games and activities
- Ensure attendance information is accurate
- Identify children with medical management action plans- ensure all details and emergency contact details are current

CYCLONE WARNING OF EVACUATION

A cyclone warning is normally issued when there are indicators that winds above gale force are anticipated in the area within 24 hours.

Based on predicted wind speeds and storm surge heights, evacuation of the Service may be required. Emergency Services will provide advice on local radio/TV regarding safe routes and when to proceed with the evacuation.

The Nominated supervisor will meet with the **Calvary Christian College Critical Management Response Team** who will

- listen for all Emergency Services announcements regarding Service closure & evacuation

- Check radio, television and online for emergency information

In collaboration with the Approved Provider (College Principal) and the **Calvary Christian College Critical Management Response Team** the Nominated Supervisor will direct notification to families to come immediately and collect their children

- Contact emergency contact person if required
- Lock all doors, turn off power, and water
- Gather the Evacuation and Emergency Pack
- Remain indoors
- Move any furniture and equipment away from the windows (if directed by the **Calvary Christian College Critical Management Response Team**)

WHEN A CYCLONE STRIKES (unlikely due to notifications issued by authorities well in advance and all personal will have evacuated)

- Stay calm
- Act immediately by following directions issued by emergency services
- Listen to battery operated radio for updates
- Go immediately to the designated shelter area identified within the Service, away from windows. This should be the strongest part of the building.
- Ensure doors are locked
- Educators are to protect themselves and children with mattresses, rugs, helmets, blankets under strong tables or benches or hold onto solid fixtures
- Be careful of the calm 'eye'. The wind can decline, yet the cyclone may not be over, fierce winds will rapidly recommence from another direction.
- Comfort children
- Any maintenance or building management will be overseen by the **Calvary Christian College Critical Management Response Team** and College maintenance team eg. disconnecting electrical appliances

AFTER THE CYCLONE

- Do not go outside until you have been advised it is safe
- Do not use electrical appliances if they are wet
- Listen to the radio/TV for official warnings and advice
- Where possible and when it is safe, take photos of any damage for insurance purposes
- Contact the College Maintenance team to fix any broken structures, including windows etc.

The **Approved Provider** will **advise when it is safe to return to the Centre** and the Nominated supervisor will:

- Keep families informed of Service closure/operation
- Remind families about the dangers of floodwaters caused by cyclones
 - don't ignore road closures due to floodwaters
 - don't let children play in or around floodwaters
- Report serious incident to regulatory authority

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
Australian Government – Bureau of Meteorology - <http://www.bom.gov.au/cyclone/>
Beyou www.beyou.edu.au

Government of Western Australia. Department of Fire & Emergency Services. Cyclones

<https://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/safetyinformation/cyclone/Pages/default.aspx>

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2020).

Queensland Government Natural disaster resources <https://education.qld.gov.au/initiativesstrategies/Documents/children-natural-disaster-strategies.doc>

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	DECEMBER 2021	NEXT REVIEW DATE	DECEMBER 2022
DECEMBER 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New policy and procedure drafted to assist Services located in Cyclone prone regions • Introduction reworded • emergency evacuation information added • related policies added • additional resources included 		