



**Government
of South Australia**

Department of Education
and Children's Services

EARLY CHILDHOOD FACILITIES (birth to age 8)

DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES



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PREFACE

Early Childhood Facilities

The Early Childhood Facilities (birth to age 8) Design Standards and Guidelines inform the planning and design of new early childhood facilities and the redevelopment of existing facilities. The guidelines support the delivery of integrated education, care, health and family programs / services for children from birth to age eight and are inclusive of Children's Centres for *early childhood development and parenting, preschools, child parent centres, school based preschools and rural integrated services*.

The guidelines reflect the state government's commitment to a holistic approach to service provision for young children and families and draw on the expertise of early childhood practitioners and policy makers across government.

These guidelines inform the design of high quality facilities that enable the effective delivery of connected, continuous programs and services into the early years of school.

Any reference to 'parents' in this document refers also to carers and legal guardians.

This document provides schedules of accommodation applicable to early childhood facilities of various sizes and types and general descriptions of basic provisions and room information, including suggested layouts that have proved successful.

In some areas the requirements are prescriptive as indicated by the word "shall" where it is important to comply with specific details for safety, security, compliance with licensing regulations, adherence to National Quality Standards to enable a site to achieve a high quality rating, maintenance or performance reasons.

Facilities are all required to comply with the Building Code of Australia and relevant Australian Standards, and in some instances to higher standards where specifically identified in this document for particular agency requirements.

Other agency policy, standards and guidelines documents are referenced in this document where more detailed information is provided on particular aspects of facilities requirements.

The Learning Environment in Prior to School Settings

Prior to school settings are inclusive of children in early learning and care programs and their families. These settings may include preschool, long day care, occasional care, integrated services and children's centres. In some sites provision is made for the integration of a range of health services, community support services and other programs including children with disabilities. Children attending programs provided in these settings can be 3 months up to six years of age.

The Learning Environment and planned curriculum is guided by The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, *Belonging, Being and Becoming*. The vision encapsulated in the Framework is that *'All children experience learning that is engaging and build success for life.'*

Young children's learning is dynamic, complex and holistic. It is crucial that the physical, social, emotional, personal, spiritual, creative, cognitive and linguistic aspects of learning are all intricately interwoven and interrelated. Each child needs spaces where they can feel safe, secure and supported as well as developing a sense of belonging to a group and engaging in positive relationships with both their peers and educators.

The learning environment needs to cater for different learning styles and capabilities. Welcoming spaces that reflect and enhance the lives of children and families participating in the centre are crucial.

Implications for planners:

- Learning environments must be responsive and enabling to the needs of children as well as to the intention of the educators
- Environments that support children to explore using all their senses and develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, persistence and imagination are important
- Indoor and outdoor spaces must be flexible and responsive to the interests and rights of individual children and this includes access to quiet spaces for thinking and wondering and more active spaces for sharing, laughing, building, climbing, digging, gardening, creating, dancing and being active
- There needs to be opportunity for children to make choices and develop autonomy and independence, being encouraged and supported to make more complex decisions and follow through on their interests and ideas
- The indoor and outdoor learning environment must provide a range of spaces and opportunities for active exploration through play and the investigation of meaningful ideas including investigation with a range of technological resources and being able to problem solve, inquire, experiment, hypothesise, research and investigate
- Children need a range of spaces to be able to fully engage in all forms of The Arts
- Educators need quiet and private spaces to meet, discuss, reflect and plan for children's learning.

Recent research from Reggio Emilia regarding environments lists the following aspects as being important in the development of learning environments for children.

They are:

- **Aesthetics:** a place that has beauty and light and reflects the lives and interests of the people who occupy the space
- **Active learning:** supported by a stimulating environment that offers choices and a range of open-ended materials
- **Collaboration:** supporting children to develop skills for working with others in group situations
- **Bringing the outdoors in:** attention on the importance of the natural world in children's lives and learning
- **Flexibility:** fosters flexibility of space, time and materials within the environment
- **Relationship:** the importance of the relationship of materials to other materials, of people and groups using the centre and the connections between children's experiences and theory
- **Reciprocity:** the environment is not static but responsive to the needs of children and their interests

Each setting will be unique as it reflects the personalities of the children, educators and families who are part of the learning environment. All who use the space need to feel a sense of ownership and identity with their environment.



1. GENERAL PLANNING

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Education and Care Brief and a Facilities Brief will inform the detailed site and building functions and physical requirements for each specific project as follows:

- An Education and Care Brief describes the activities and programs to be provided on site and any outreach programs from the early childhood facility
- A Facilities Brief describes the nature of the facilities required for the activities and programs to be delivered effectively and the numbers of children to be accommodated in-line with this document.

1.2 FACILITIES MODULES

Early Childhood Facilities may include the provision of care, education, health and family services for children from birth to age 8 and their families, through a range of programs.

These facilities are detailed in this document as a series of modules with the accommodation schedules and planning and design requirements for each one separately described. The accommodation schedules for each module are specifically listed as separate areas to provide an understanding of the particular needs of the module. Where several modules are to be included in the one facility then some sharing of spaces will be negotiated and described in the project Facilities Brief document.

Each Program's accommodation requirements are described under the following headings.

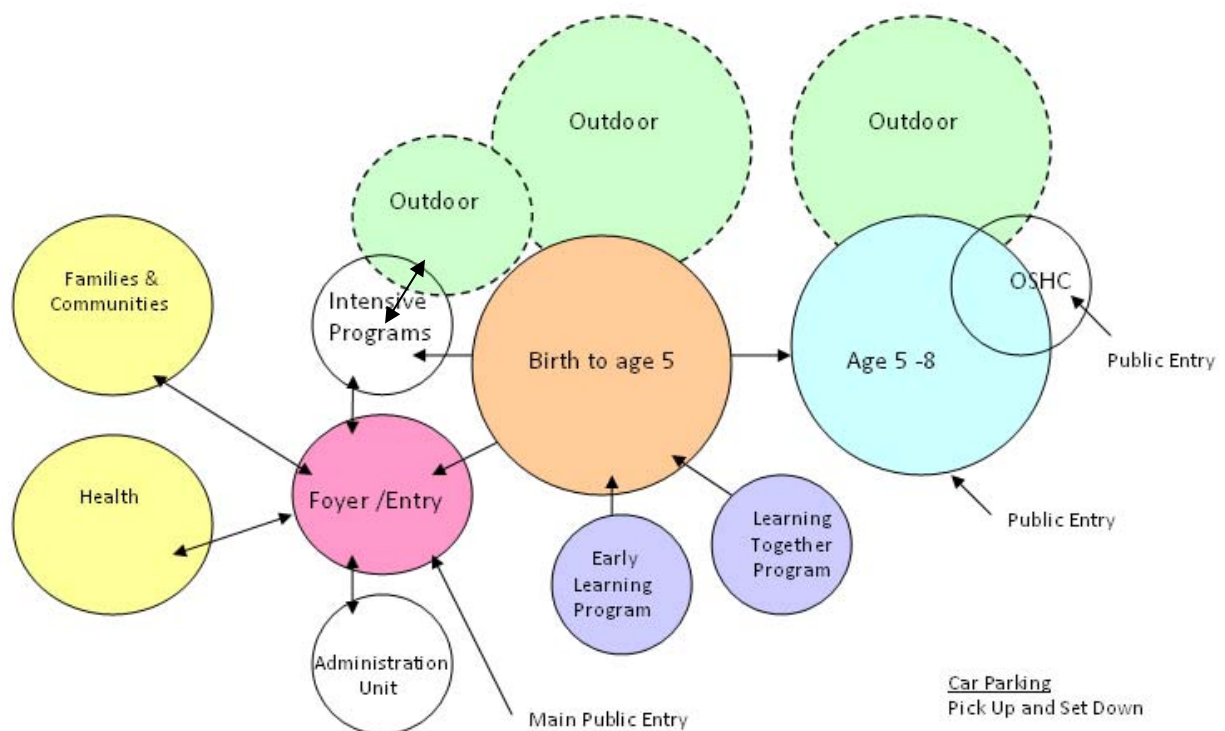
- **Children birth to age 5 Education and Care**
Programs for children from birth to age 5 years include pre-school education for eligible children, and occasional care or long day care (the latter for up to 12 hours per day).
- **Intensive Programs for Children with Additional Needs**
Specialised programs for eligible children who require a high level of support due to global developmental delay or disability.
- **Children age 5 to age 8 Education and Care**
School education programs for children from 5 to 8 years of age. Care programs may include before and after school hours care and vacation care for primary school children.
- **Family and Community**
Programs are provided for parents and families. This includes programs for parents with their children and also programs for parents.
- **Health**
Programs are provided for children, families and expectant parents. These programs may include clinical services (assessment and therapy), parent support and education and community-based health promotion programs.

- **Administration Unit**

Facilities for general office and administration functions over and above the requirements for the administration of the site programs (eg administrative function of Family Day Care). The services mix and accommodation requirements may change over time and the facilities shall be designed considering how such changes may be able to be undertake.

1.3 FUNCTIONING RELATIONSHIPS

The following diagram and notes describe the functional relationships between the modules of accommodation:



The site planning and building design of each project should consider the ability to add future modules, considering possible future site access points, the relationships between modules and circulation through the planned facility.

1.3.1 Zones

Individual spaces may be able to be combined to form zones or groups of spaces with a similar purpose. The relationship of functional zones is considered important to ensure that the facilities operate efficiently and effectively while promoting an atmosphere of friendliness and community involvement.

A facility can be subdivided into key functional zones

- Main entry / reception area
- Community space
- Service provision and activity areas
- Staff and administration areas
- External activity areas.

While the list of accommodation for each program identifies separate facility requirements, some sharing of common facilities should occur where a range of programs are provided. For example a common foyer, shared toilets etc where this is appropriate. Requirements for shared areas need to be defined in the Facilities Brief for each project.

The preference is for access to all services to be through the main entry / reception area.

Relationships External

Where possible, facilities should be situated in a location with a pleasant outlook and maximum environmental benefits. They should engender community ownership and provide a recognisable community focus for child and parent activities.

1.3.2.1 Location

Ideally, an Early Childhood Facility shall be located close to public transport, other community services and the general 'flow' of community.

1.3.2.2 Car Parking

Provide short term parking for parents to take children into the centre for at least 25% of the enrolment capacity but this can vary depending on local council requirements. Generally these parking spaces will not be provided on a DECD site.

The following parking spaces shall be provided for staff:

One parking space to be provided for each FTE (full time equivalent) staff member

One Accessible parking space to be provided

An additional 10% of the total for visitor parking.

The above commitment only applies to new sites and may not apply to existing sites or redevelopments if site area restrictions exist. This means DECD does not buy additional land for car parking purposes.

Design consideration must ensure that children and parents do not have direct access from the building into the carpark.

1.3.2.3

Internal

The internal plan of the Early Childhood Facility shall allow users to easily move between service and activity areas, have a strong sense of connectivity and enable efficient movement and supervision.

The layout of the physical space in the centre, 'Piazza', encourages interactions, communication and the building of relationships. The arrangement of structures, objects and activities encourages choices, problem solving and discoveries in the process of learning.

In reference to a 'Piazza' design, this space functions as largely open space that can be used by children at different times of the day. Everyone moving through the centre passes through the space, and therefore it is a hive of activity.

Optimum internal relationships include:

- Reception / administration areas shall have a clear view of the main entry / waiting areas and be visible from adjacent staff areas. There should be easy access to stationery and client records (if located on site). The reception area shall provide a controlling access between waiting and service areas.
- Conference and meeting rooms should be accessible from the main entry / waiting area as well as from the staff area.
- Learning and/or breakout spaces should be adjacent to the main entry / waiting area so they can be accessed after hours with the rest of the Facility safely secure.
- Staff areas shall be designed so they allow staff to move easily between the main entry / reception and service areas. Staff offices and amenities should be separate from service areas and community space for confidentiality and a quiet work area.
- Traffic corridors should provide for movement between the adult precinct and between child activity areas without having to pass through child activity areas for reasons of child safety and program quality.
- The main learning areas for child activities and learning programs should be centrally located and visually connected to incorporate a physical layout which encourages interaction, communication and whereby a strong sense of belonging is fostered.

- The design of the building shall link the inside and outside learning areas through visual connection, creating a studio or 'atelier' environment where 'osmosis' between enclosed and open spaces can occur. Children should be able to move freely between the indoor and outdoor learning areas and designed in such a way that supervision of both areas is maximised. Ensure the building design supports the cross age interaction and learning between the birth and preschool components of the centre is critical.
- In reference to ICT, the technology should allow learners to use it wherever and whenever learning occurs, including outdoors. This requires ICT to be dispersed and readily available rather than centralised in specialist rooms. The nature of spaces and equipment should facilitate collaborative and social learning.
- Learning areas (indoor and outdoor) shall be well separated from and not directly accessible by adults attending the facility for other programs.
- Toilets for children, staff and the public need to be available and accessible from each of the functional modules of accommodation used by those groups.
- The Building planning shall consider the potential to share toilets and other areas between compatible functional modules wherever possible, provided access is not through another program area. This reduces the provision of under-utilized special purpose rooms.

1.4 PLANNING AND DESIGN

The planning and design of the Early Childhood Facility shall provide an aesthetically pleasing physical environment for children from birth to age 8 that supports learning, development and well being, their families and staff.

1.4.1 Site

The positioning of facilities on new sites and within existing sites shall consider the following site planning issues

- The site must be physically and psychologically safe.
- Off-street access for vehicles shall be provided for safe drop off and pick up of children, including taxi access and wheelchair access spaces.
- Direct access to car parking areas shall be provided for children and families and for the safety of staff who work after hours.
- The ability for a future covered drop-off area to be provided if children with additional needs are enrolled.
- The relationship of new facilities with any existing facilities.
- Play and outdoor learning area locations and their relationships to each other and to existing site facilities.
- Access points for children, parents and community members considering safety and duty of care requirements.
- Additional accommodation modules for programs and facilities to meet future requirements.

1.4.2 Buildings

The planning and design of new Early Childhood Facilities buildings shall provide a family friendly environment, support for an integrated approach to program provisions and a high quality facility, considering the specific needs of infants, toddlers and young children, including the following:

- The facilities shall meet all requirements for access for those with disabilities (including the design of the outdoor learning area).
- A recognisable, community focus for child, parent and family activity.
- Separate, shared and flexible spaces for children, families and service providers including being able to meet the needs of changes to services for the community.
- A welcoming entrance, with clear signage and which provides a safe location and access for parents to deliver and collect children.
- Family friendly designs where children and their families can feel comfortable, safe and secure.
- An inviting natural environment that is culturally appropriate and will encourage the community to utilise available facilities for a variety of purposes.
- A physical environment which supports integration of health, education and care and family services.
- Birth to age 5 module and the age 5 to age 8 module located in close proximity to each other to facilitate continuity of learning.
- Facilities that meet the minimum requirements of all relevant legislation and standards.
- A physical environment that maximises acoustic properties to support early childhood learning (including children with hearing disabilities)
- Adult toilets that are accessible from an adult precinct without having to pass through child areas.
- Circulation spaces that are clearly distinct from functional spaces.
- Separate access to the adult precinct from access to child activity areas. (Access to adult areas should not require passage through child activity areas.)

1.4.3 Swimming Pools

Swimming pools are prohibited on any childhood premises.

2. CHILDREN'S BIRTH TO AGE 5 EDUCATION AND CARE MODULE

2.1 ACCOMMODATION

The tables below indicate the functional area allocations in square metres for birth to age 5 education and care programs for various enrolment capacities. They do not necessarily require separate rooms but need to be able to be configured flexibly to meet program needs. Refer to Planning and Design Requirements for information about functional relationships and refer to the Facilities Brief for information about specific project requirements.

The total Activity and Withdrawal areas shall be a minimum of 3.25m² per child of unencumbered space (usable floor area which is directly accessible for children's use. This area excludes circulation/passageways, fixed joinery toilets, kitchen, administration space etc.).

Activity areas shall contain physically and acoustically separate spaces within the facility for infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers.

Refer to Area Data Sheets for detailed requirements for each room and functional area.

- Sleep room size(s) will be advised for each project and will be determined by the number of children under 2 years of age.



2.2 Functional Area Allocations for Birth to age 5 – PRESCHOOLS AND KINDERGARTENS (can include integrated Occasional Care)

	Indicative M ² Based on DECD Standards of 3.25M ² per place															
NUMBER OF PLACES	20		30		40		50		60		70		80		100	
INTERNAL SPACES (activity and withdrawal spaces to be unencumbered)																
Main Activity Space	40		60		70		90		100		110		110		150	
Small Activity Space					35		38		55		65		80		105	
Withdrawal	25		38		25		35		40		53		35 x 2		35x 2	
Teacher Prep / Staff	10		12		14		16		18		20		22		25	
Foyer/Entry	10		18		24		27		30		32		35		35	
Office (Not included if shared space with Health/Families & Communities).	10		10		10		10		10		10		10		20	
Kitchen	12		12		14		16		18		20		20		20	
PLUS 10% CIRCULATION TO THE FIGURES ABOVE																
Storage	10		10		16		20		24		28		32		40	
Children's Toilets – Minimum of two pans with a ratio of 1 in 15 (See BCA). Fixed change bench with sink type bath and separate adult hand washing basin.	10	2WC	15	2WC	20	3WC	20	4WC	20	4WC	26	5WC	26	6WC	30	7WC
Access / Staff Toilet - To include shower with sluice drain and space to accommodate a hydraulic change bench with power.	14		14		14		14		14		14		14		14	
If not providing Long Day Care - laundry provision to consist of plumbing to wall for wash trough and washing machine and power for dryer in an area inaccessible to children e.g. behind larger sized cubicle																
Cleaner's Room (can be cupboard)	2		2		2		2		2		2		2		2	
EXTERNAL SPACES																
Verandah (space beneath forms part of outdoor learning space)	20		30		40		50		60		70		80		100	
Shed	20		20		30		35		40		45		50		60	
Sandpit - solid cover and support poles receded under roof to reduce the risk for climbing – Inline with DECD standards. Other: See <i>Vision and Values</i> document for further information on outdoor learning requirements. Local input is required																
OUTDOOR LEARNING SPACE - Maximum per place 9.3m ² Minimum 7m ² of unencumbered accessible space per place. DECD recommends the maximum space of 9.3M ² is allocated. In extenuating circumstances ie land restrictions should the 7m2 allocation apply. Additional outdoor space, in excess of the maximum allowance, can be provided however the additional landscaping / fencing etc will need to be funded by the site.																
Outdoor Learning Space – Maximum (9.3m2)	186		279		372		465		558		651		744		930	
Outdoor Learning Space - Minimum (7m2)	140		210		280		350		420		490		560		700	

2.3 Functional Area Allocations for Birth to age 5 – LONG DAY CARE

	Indicative M ² Based on DECD Standards of 3.25M ² per place														
NUMBER OF PLACES	20		30		40		50		60		70		80		100
INTERNAL SPACES (activity and withdrawal spaces to be unencumbered)															
Main Activity Space	40		60		70		90		100		110		110		150
Small Activity Space					35		38		55		65		80		105
Withdrawal	25		38		25		35		40		53		35 x 2		35x 2
Teacher Prep / Staff	10		12		14		16		18		20		22		25
Foyer/Entry	10		18		24		27		30		32		35		35
Office	10		10		10		10		10		10		10		20
Kitchen	12		12		14		16		18		20		20		20
Staff /Meeting Room	8		10		12		14		16		19		22		25
Sleep Room (for children under 2)	14		20		24		26		28		30		32		36
PLUS 10% CIRCULATION TO THE FIGURES ABOVE															
Storage	10		10		16		20		24		28		32		40
Laundry – Wash trough, joinery. Space and power for washing machine and clothes dryer. (whitegoods not provided)	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Children's Toilets – Minimum of two pans with a ratio of 1 in 15 (See BCA). Fixed change bench with sink type bath and separate adult hand washing basin.	10	2WC	15	2WC	20	3WC	20	4WC	20	4WC	26	5WC	26	6WC	30 7WC
Access / Staff Toilet - To include shower with sluice drain and space to accommodate a hydraulic change bench with power.	14		14		14		14		14		14		14		14
Cleaner's Room (can be cupboard)	2		2		2		2		2		2		2		2
EXTERNAL SPACES															
Verandah	20		30		40		50		60		70		80		100
Shed	20		20		30		35		40		45		50		60
Sandpit – Solid pitch cover and support poles recessed under roof to avoid climbing – Inline with DECD standards. Other: See Vision and Values document for further information on outdoor learning requirements. Local input is required.															
OUTDOOR LEARNING SPACE - Maximum per place 9.3m ² Minimum 7m ² of unencumbered accessible space per place. DECD recommends the maximum space of 9.3M ² is allocated. In extenuating circumstances ie land restrictions should the 7m ² allocation apply. Additional outdoor space, in excess of the maximum allowance, can be provided however the additional landscaping / fencing etc will need to be funded by the site.															
Outdoor Learning Space – Maximum (9.3m2)	186		279		372		465		558		651		744		930
Outdoor Learning Space - Minimum (7m2)	140		210		280		350		420		490		560		700

2.4 PLANNING AND DESIGN

Refer to sections *1.3 Functional Relationships* and *1.4 Planning and Design for general requirements*.

All relevant early childhood facilities shall comply with the National Quality Standards.

2.4.1 Site

- The site area shall be large enough to provide the briefed building areas, outdoor learning areas, a service yard and sufficient car parking for staff disabled parking. Consideration is to be given to allow for future expansion to include other modules of accommodation.
- The outdoor learning areas are preferably located on the northern side of the building to take advantage of available sunshine, but with appropriate shading to provide sun protection.
- Maximum per place 9.3m² Minimum 7m² of unencumbered accessible space per place. DECD recommends the maximum space of 9.3M2 is allocated. In extenuating circumstances ie land restrictions should the 7m2 allocation apply. Additional outdoor space, in excess of the maximum allowance, can be provided however the additional landscaping / fencing etc will need to be funded by the site. Where a range of programs are being delivered that require specific outdoor space, separate spaces for each program are required. A separate outdoor learning area shall be provided for children under 2 years of age. This area shall, whilst separate, will be designed to be integrated with adjoining areas through gates. The design of the area shall reflect the developmental, social and emotional needs of this age group. Refer to Data Sheets for detailed information about outdoor learning areas and equipment

2.4.2 Building

- Functional indoor spaces shall be provided to cater for occasional or long day care and education programs as required by the Facilities Brief.
- The areas for each room listed in the following accommodation schedule are the benchmark sizes, with some flexibility to be considered in each Facilities Brief to combine and trade-off between rooms as appropriate to particular projects.

2.4.3 An environment that supports children's development and learning

- Support for children's learning through play in both indoor and outdoor areas. The design of physical facilities shall allow for the free flow of children between the indoor and outdoor learning environments, providing stimulation, interest, variety, change and challenge. Learning environments that assist children to be curious, solve problems, observe, gain environmental understandings, be creative, develop their physical abilities and interact socially are desirable. The environment and materials in these areas is to reflect the natural environment.

- Areas for individual pursuits as well as interaction in larger social groups, reflecting children's needs for a sense of privacy.
- A dedicated room for children's sleep and rest which shall be physically and acoustically separated from activity areas, but with internal windows for effective supervision.
- The provision of natural light and ventilation shall be maximised.
- Windows are to be positioned in such a way to maximise adult supervision between all areas (indoor and outdoor) as well as maximising the view to all children's areas.
- Easy access to children's toilets from indoor and outdoor learning areas.

2.4.4 Flexible child activity spaces

- All learning spaces are to be designed to be multidisciplinary open spaces which can be configured a number of ways.
- Access to the outdoor learning area from the main activity area which shall be through fully opening double doors with extensive glazing for indoor / outdoor viewing and line-of-vision for supervision.
- Outdoor learning areas shall be designed to incorporate the principles outlined in the Early Childhood Learning Environments Vision and Values statement.

2.4.5 Duty of Care

- A welcoming entrance / waiting area / reception / foyer, which provides a safe location for parents to deliver and collect children.
- Effective visual supervision of all children's areas from any location. Supervision of all children at all times is essential and is to be achieved while still giving children the opportunity to "feel" secluded.
- Separation of child activity areas from the entry for security reasons and program integrity.
- Physical barriers to separate (and ensure the safety of) non-mobile children (generally up to 2 years of age) from mobile children in indoor and outdoor learning areas. Any barriers used shall be fixed in such a way that they are not moveable by children or able to fall over.
- Flexible spaces to cater for changing use patterns and needs during the day, week and year, changing age group numbers, program requirements and different local needs over time, including the capacity to subdivide areas for small group activities.
- Flexibility to create small activity areas or open up to a large activity area, as required. (Flexibility can be achieved by the shape and articulation of spaces, partitions, screens and furniture.)
- Smaller spaces that provide flexibility for withdrawal activities and sleep requirements.
- Free flow between activity areas, including the transition between indoors and outdoors. Minimise traffic corridors through child activity areas and ensure that pathways are clear and unobstructed.

2.4.6 Staff work areas/adult areas that facilitate efficient centre operation

- The office located adjacent to the entry / foyer and administration support.
- Office windows that allow a view of the main entrance doors and the main activity area but also provide a degree of privacy through the use of areas of obscured glass or provision for blinds.
- Adult toilet adjacent to the office / entry in the adult precinct.
- Areas where staff and parents can hold confidential discussions away from children's activity areas.
- Location of the child program kitchen adjacent to the main child activity area with ready access from the adult precinct. The location and orientation is to facilitate supervision of the activity areas. The location shall provide a hub for the centre and is ideally located where the kitchen and cook can be part of the program, particularly for the over 3 year olds.



3. INCLUSIVE PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS MODULE

Where a centre runs an approved IPP (Inclusive Preschool Program) the schedule of accommodation includes the following additional accommodation.

3.1 ACCOMMODATION

▪ Withdrawal	45m ²
▪ Staff Preparation / Store	10m ²
▪ Toilet/change – Students	15m ²

3.2 PLANNING AND DESIGN

In addition to the general requirements for all children (Refer 2.3 *Planning and Design for Children Birth to age 5 Education and Care*), facilities for **children with additional needs** shall include:

- A covered drop-off area (for one vehicle) provided at the main entrance to the facility where children with additional needs are enrolled.
- Suspension hooks under external covered area fixed to structural members and away from the main traffic flows. Refer Area Data Sheet for Outdoor Learning Area for more information about requirements.
- External and internal storage for large items of equipment.
- Withdrawal room that is acoustically treated to reduce sound transmission in and out.
- Withdrawal room close to toilets and with direct access to a secure outdoor learning area.
- Cupboards with locks or child-proof catches
- Power outlets with covers at 1500mm or inside lockable cupboards.
- Toilet including a shower (with shower head on a hose) and adequate space for staff assistance with toileting and showering.
- Toilet will have room for a toilet chair, hydraulic change table (no fixed nappy change bench) and nappy/waste disposal facility.
- Lever taps on all hand basins.
- Walls painted in calming colours such as green or blue.
- Windows sills narrow enough to prevent children climbing them.
- Paper towel dispensers and not electric hand driers for hand drying.
- Lights with dimming capability.

4. EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM MODULE

Early Learning Programs are implemented by fieldworkers and are a home visiting service. The program's accommodation requirements are largely for resource storage, resource maintenance and administration space. The Early Learning Program Module will be provided where it is a briefed requirement. Learning Together Program and Early Learning Program can share office space and storeroom when both are co-located.

4.1 ACCOMMODATION

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| ▪ Staff preparation & store | 55m ² |
| ▪ Office space | 12m ² |

4.2 PLANNING AND DESIGN

- Shelving and storage space for books, toys including some large equipment and art and craft materials.
- Access to facilities to wash toys and other resources.
- Bench space for drying of books and toys.
- Access to space and appropriate furniture for resource development and maintenance.
- Located near dedicated parking for loading/unloading resources.
- Ramp access for trolleys.



5. LEARNING TOGETHER PROGRAM MODULE

Learning Together Programs offer activity based family literacy and learning programs for parents and children. The Learning Together Program Module will be provided where it is a briefed requirement. Learning Together Program and Early Learning Program can share office space and storeroom when both are co-located.

5.1 ACCOMMODATION

▪ Flexible Activity /Withdrawal Space	50m ²
▪ Storeroom	10m ²
▪ Office space	12m ²

5.2 PLANNING AND DESIGN

- Safe and convenient access to toilets for adults and children.
- Safe and convenient access to nappy changing facilities.
- Shelving and storage space for books and toys including some large equipment.
- Kitchenette in activity space for food preparation including sink, hand basin, refrigerator, stove and microwave, to current standards.
- Pram parking space.
- Confidential access to a telephone.
- Convenient access to a bank of computers for parent use.
- Access to confidential meeting space.
- Close and safe access to parking area.
- Flexible space with opportunity to expand activity/withdrawal space to a single large space.
- Direct access to safe fenced outdoor area with adequate storage.

6. CHILDREN'S AGE 5 TO 8 EDUCATION AND CARE MODULE

6.1 ACCOMMODATION

This table indicates the space areas in square metres for age 5 to age 8 education programs for various enrolment capacities and is based on the standards for junior primary school accommodation. The areas comply with the standard allocation of 3.14m² per student for the areas listed here and within the total building area allocation of 6.13m² per student.

Enrolments	120	150	180	210
Learning Commons (m ²)	224	280	336	392
Withdrawal (m ²)	28	35	42	49
Staff Preparation (m ²)	20	25	30	35
Store (m ²)	24	30	36	42
Practical Activity (m ²)	56	70	84	98
Toilets – Students (m ²)	24	30	36	42
TOTAL (m²)	376	470	564	658

6.2 PLANNING AND DESIGN

Refer also to DECD Facilities Design Standards and Guidelines document for schools.

External learning and play areas for children to be readily accessible from internal learning areas.

7. OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE MODULE

7.1 ACCOMMODATION

- Facilities are designed or adapted to ensure access and participation by every child in the service and to allow flexible use, and free flow between indoor and outdoor environments, providing stimulation, interest, variety, change and challenge enabling them to be curious, solve problems, observe, gain environmental understandings, be creative, develop their physical abilities and interact socially. The environment and materials in these areas is to reflect the natural environment.
- Areas for individual pursuits as well as interaction in larger social groups, reflecting children's needs for a sense of privacy.
- Facilities are designed or adapted to ensure access and participation by every child in the service including adaptive equipment to support the inclusion of children with additional needs.
- A minimum of 3.25m² of unencumbered indoor floor space to be provided for each child.
- Safe shelving and storage areas from which children can access equipment independently.
- Convenient access to kitchen and food preparation areas and staff amenities which comply with food safety standards and the relevant South Australian and local government requirements.
- Convenient access to toilets, hand washing and drying facilities from the indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Space to be allocated for administrative functions, private conversations and parent consultation
- Physical spaces being made available for children to engage in rest and quiet experiences.
- A minimum of 12m² of outdoor usable play space per child.
- Effective visual supervision of all children's areas from any location. Supervision of all children at all times is essential and is to be achieved while still giving children the opportunity to "feel" secluded.

7.2 PLANNING AND DESIGN

- Close and safe access from parking area and with good external area lighting.
- Dedicated storage provisions that are inaccessible to children, including secure storage for hazardous substances, first aid equipment, medication and children's records.
- Convenient access to toilets, hand washing and drying facilities from the indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Convenient access to kitchen facilities for food preparation. The kitchen facilities shall include a sink, hand basin, refrigerator, stove (or microwave) to current food safety standards and relevant South Australian and local government requirements.
- Location of facilities on the site that support safe and convenient drop off/ pick up of children.
- Access to a telephone, power and data outlets.
- Access to an art sink (with trade waste) in the activity area.
- Heating, cooling and ventilation shall be provided in accordance with DECD Policy and Standards requirements.
- Bag hooks or pigeonhole units shall be provided in accordance with DECD Policy and Standards requirements.

Out of School Hours Care Facility



8. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY MODULE

8.1 ACCOMMODATION

OFFICE AREAS	Area m ²	Comments
DFC workstations	12.6	Phone, computer terminals in shared area. Confidential storage
Interview rooms (2)	25.2	6 chairs, 2 desks, 2 doors per room
Multi-purpose room / crèche	25.2	6 chairs. Staff planning, training classes for parents
Supervised access room	25.2	With a/v facilities. Attached to external play area
Observation room	6.3	Linked to a/v facilities
Outdoor area	12.6	Attached to access room, for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander families
TOTAL	107.1	Plus circulation allowance

8.2 PLANNING AND DESIGN

Shared facilities with other programs shall include:

- Public areas including counter and reception services, waiting space and a single point of contact for services.
- Staff facilities including toilets, staff/meeting room.
- Access to group rooms.
- Shared client facilities including toilets and kitchen.
- Stable nappy changing facilities for client usage (separate to children's care area)
- Kitchens/kitchenettes provided in community areas to be designed so that children do not have free access to appliances, hot water, utensils etc. Recommended layout is to provide a bench that creates an enclosed kitchen area, secured by a child proof gate.
- Parking facilities for FTE staff plus 1 disabled and 1 visitor.
- After hours access for a range of programs and services.
- Outdoor lighting

Specific family and community requirements shall include:

- A play area for children.
- Separate play areas for babies and children.
- Separate bench tops for bottle preparation.
- Storage area for prams.

9. HEALTH MODULE

9.1 ACCOMMODATION

To determine service accommodation needs it is intended to maximise the use of spaces by all staff and allows for changes in space usage as service delivery models change over time. For example some staff may provide a range of services in a group setting while others provide a one to one consultation. In addition spaces also need to be appropriate for community activity and parental participation.

Estimation of interview, consultation and other group room requirements (this could be applied to health specific requirements or for all services involved in the Centre):

- Determine the number and range of services to be delivered from the Centre.
- Determine the mix of services to be delivered by staff in the Centre and out of the Centre.
- Determine the projected number of in-Centre appointments including visiting services. Incorporate changes to service delivery patterns (eg increase in group approaches).
- Estimate scheduled length of in-Centre sessions.
- Indicate room utilisation by plotting weekly or monthly appointment numbers and times by accommodation type required, i.e. generic facilities such as interview, consult, group rooms, or spaces for specific functions such as physiotherapy.
- Aim for an 80% occupancy of specific spaces booked.
- Implement a booking system for rooms.
- Ensure that under-utilised spaces can be used by other groups.
- Large group rooms should be planned for to allow for their use after hours without impacting on the security of the rest of the facility staff would undertake client therapy and consultations in a booked client consultation room. Personal offices would not be used for this purpose.
- All other staff (regardless of role/status) are assigned a workstation as part of an open office arrangement. This may include work space for visiting staff.

Indicative Space Requirements

Room Type	Number of People	Approximate Size
Small interview room	6 adults	12m ²
Meeting Room (small)	8 adults	12m ²
Meeting Room (medium)	16 adults	20m ²
Meeting Room (large)	20 adults	30m ²
Office – shared space	4 staff	20m ²
Consult room	3 adults	12m ²
Hand-washing bay		1m ²
Staff Room		12m ²
Staff Toilet		6m ²
Sub-waiting area	6	10m ²
Waiting Area / circulation		15m ²
TOTAL		150m²

Note: Figures shown are approximations and examples only (taken from NSW Health Facility Guidelines).

Details of room requirements will vary according to specific circumstances and uses. For example a large meeting room may also need to be designed to be suitable for a therapeutic play group (2 allied health staff, 7 children and 7 parents involved in play activities), and thus need close access to hand-washing facilities and suitable finishes. Similarly a small meeting room may be used as a staff meeting space as well as a family counselling space and thus should be designed with dual purposes in mind. Consider providing flexibility to open up meeting rooms to one large space.

Specific guidelines for community based child and family health services are not available and thus a combination of existing adult guidelines and 'field knowledge' will be required in determining specific briefs. In addition depending in local service circumstances the number and type of rooms required will vary:

- Workstations shall be 5.5 square meters for staff that spend much of their time working at their desk, and 4.4 square meters for all other staff.
- Where possible, shared workstations shall be provided for part-time or job share staff.
- Shared work base facilities shall be provided for visiting staff and students.

9.2 PLANNING AND DESIGN

Shared facilities with other programs shall include:

- Public areas including counter and reception services, waiting space and a single point of contact for services.
- Staff facilities including toilets, staff/meeting room.
- Access to group rooms.
- Shared client facilities including toilets and kitchen.
- Parking facilities for FTE staff plus 1 disabled and 1 visitor.
- After hours access for a range of programs and services.

Specific family and community requirements shall include:

- Group spaces shall be appropriate for supported play, therapeutic activities, and community activity groups. This space should be appropriate for adults and children and group play (including gross motor activities) activities with parental and therapist involvement. This space may also be used for practical parental education sessions and activity based groups.
- Group spaces may also be used for counselling or meeting with families or small groups of parents, support group activities and parent education groups.
- Client privacy and confidentiality are important considerations to be addressed in relation to counselling and clinic rooms.
- A discrete duress alarm system may be required at reception points and client areas, where a staff member may be alone with a client.

DECD Children's Centre – Consulting Room



10. ADMINISTRATION UNIT MODULE

10.1 ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is for general administrative support for system-wide programs which may be located on a number of sites:

- Office(s)
- Interview Room
- Store
- Toilets

10.2 PLANNING AND DESIGN

- Staff shall have access to toilets and other staff amenities either in this module or conveniently accessible in adjoining modules.
- Consider ability to share staff amenity areas with other site functions.

11. GENERAL BUILDING AND SITE PROVISIONS

11.1 BUILDING

The following describe the important general building, fixtures and services provisions to be considered in the design and detailing of the Early Childhood Facilities. Refer to the Area Data Sheets for more detailed specific requirements.

Materials shall be selected for their durability, ease of maintenance, safety and reduced environmental impact including the minimising of chemical emissions.

11.1.1 Ceilings

Ceilings in all occupied areas shall have acoustic properties in accordance with Australian Standards.

11.1.2 Walls

Wall surfaces shall be smooth finish, painted low sheen acrylic (and easily cleanable).

External wall surfaces shall be smooth, and if brickwork, to have flush mortar joints to restrict ability for special needs students to climb.

Wall colours shall generally be in neutral tones to provide a background to fixtures and furniture, and in calming colours to avoid problems for children with high sensory issues. Consider colours that reflect current best practice understanding of their effects on young children.

11.1.3 Floor finishes

Specific requirements are indicated in the Area Data Sheets.

Floor materials shall be a balance between having some patterning and not too light in colour, (easy cleaning and will reduce marks being shown) and in calming colours and patterns for children with high sensory issues. The floor finishes shall enhance the acoustic properties of each area.

The site generally chooses the colour. Light colours are not recommended by DECD as this creates cleaning implications in the future.

11.1.4 Doors

Doors must meet disability access standards.

Viewing panels shall be provided in doors where child access is required, from 800mm to 1800mm above floor level, for vision and supervision. Stable-type doors shall not be used.

Fully glazed doors shall only be used where there is a requirement for full height vision from inside to outside and shall have a mid-rail between 900 and 1000mm above floor level.

Children's toilet cubicle doors shall have free hinges (not spring loaded) and no indicator bolts or locks and be a maximum of 1200mm high above floor level for children 0-5 years of age.

All areas that are accessible to children shall have a child height return lever handles installed at 750mm above floor level.

All doors in children's areas shall all have finger entrapment covers.

Child access doors to the outside must not have door closers but be installed so that they are securable in open position i.e. flush against adjacent wall. Restraining mechanisms shall be above child eye height to avoid injury.

Access to outside from kitchen areas shall have securable screen doors.

11.1.5 Windows

Windows shall be provided to all occupied areas to maximise natural light and minimise the need to use artificial lighting.

Fully glazed windows shall have a transom at a height between 900 and 1000mm. Full height windows shall only be provided where there is a desirable indoor-outdoor relationship such as Activity and Withdrawal rooms.

Window sills for adult observation shall be at 1200mm above floor level.

Windows shall have sliding or hinged opening sashes to provide natural ventilation to at least Building Code of Australia requirements for openable area to all occupied areas. Sashes that open on to accessible areas shall be above head height (1900mm). Sliding opening sashes can be provided at a lower height for ventilation.

Windows that are publicly accessible (outside the fenced play areas) shall have the ability to lock opening sashes in various opening positions, and shall not be glazed below 1000mm from the floor.

External windows to toilets shall have obscured glass. Windows shall be externally shaded from summer sun penetration including skylights and high level glazing. Ensure no source of glare in occupied spaces. Removable insect screens are required on all external opening window sashes. Windows shall be provided in internal and external walls to ensure maximum effective adult supervision of all child areas. One-way glass or film shall be used in particular areas where adult supervision is required and where the avoidance of distraction from specific programs is desirable. All window glazing shall be with safety glass. Windows in consulting rooms, group rooms and treatment areas shall be placed to preserve privacy for occupants. Curtains / blinds are not included in the building provision.

11.1.6 Natural light

Natural lighting contributes to a sense of wellbeing. It assists orientation of building users, is important to the development of children and improves service outcomes. The use of natural light shall be maximised throughout the Centre. (Access to natural light and preferably a pleasant outlook will minimise stress and discomfort for all occupants.)

Children's areas shall have a minimum window area of 10% of the room floor area as per BCA requirements.

- Schedule of Natural Light to be completed by architect.



11.2 FIXTURES, FITTINGS, FURNITURE

11.2.1 Joinery

The preference is to minimise the fixed joinery and to provide flexibility with loose furniture.

Fixed joinery shall have large radius rounded corners.

Refer to Area data Sheets for specific requirements.

11.2.2 Benches

Benches for child use shall be 600mm high for children 0-4 years of age and 720mm high for children 5-8 years of age. At least one bench shall be of a height to allow for wheelchair access.

Child height benches are not to be fixed to the kitchen area bench.

Bench tops shall be laminate with bull-nosed front edges.

Plumbing wastes shall be concealed in cupboards.

11.2.3 Sinks

Art sinks shall be stainless steel 302 grade.

The tops of sinks for child use shall be at 600mm above floor level. They shall be full depth with tile skirt and front lip. Where taps are provided for child use at least one shall be with a lever handle.

Sinks for adult use for materials clean up may be inset type and shall not be in or adjoining food preparation areas. They shall be at 900mm above floor level and shall have storage cupboard adjacent.

Drinking provisions shall be from cups and taps. Bubbler drinking outlets may be provided in a suitable position under a verandah.

11.2.4 Cupboards

Cupboards are to have hard wearing low maintenance laminate surfaces.

Lockable cupboards shall be provided in Laundry, Kitchen and all staff and administration areas. Locks preferred to be internal finger catches to ensure only adult access.

Cupboards in staff only areas shall have key locks.

11.2.5 Bag storage

Bag storage shall preferably be provided by pigeon hole joinery units, 300mm wide x 300mm high and structure to be no more than 1000mm high or alternatively bag hooks with covering shelf, in or closely located to the activity area. Hooks are an alternative and shall have protective timber coverings. Bag hooks are not to be provided for under 3 year olds. The bag storage area is not to be located in the children's toilet area.

11.2.6 Display boards

Display boards shall be provided in all Activity Areas, Entrance Foyer and Staff Room, at a variety of different heights. Avoid locating display boards above sinks and heaters. Display boards shall be covered in Velcro suitable material to avoid the use of pins.

11.3 SERVICES

11.3.1 Acoustics

All spaces shall have acoustic conditions that appropriately support the required teaching and learning activities, that comply with the requirements of Australian Standard AS/NZS 2107:2000 "Acoustics – Recommended design sound levels and reverberation times for building interiors", and that comply with the requirements of the DECD Acoustic Performance Standards for Learning Areas.

For Early Childhood Facilities (children from birth- age 5) the reverberant acoustic conditions should be optimal, as children are involved in listening and language skill development during this stage of their life and need the best acoustic conditions possible.

Planning layouts, materials, finishes and insulation shall be selected to ensure that the maximum design sound levels and recommended reverberation times are met for the various spaces.

Install backbone wiring to enable Sound Field systems to be installed in teaching and learning areas.

11.3.2 Water supply

Backflow prevention devices shall be provided on the water supply to the washing unit in the Nappy Change room.

11.3.3 Hot Water

Thermostats of storage hot water systems shall be set at a minimum of 60°C to inhibit the growth of Legionella bacteria.

Hot water set at 45°C (maximum) by a thermostatic mixing valve shall be provided to the kitchen sink, kitchen hand basin, staff and access toilet hand basin, nappy change hand basin and bath taps, shower rose, staff materials clean-up trough and bottle preparation sink (if provided).

A boiling water unit for tea/coffee shall be provided in the Staff Room.

Consideration should be given to the use of instantaneous gas hot water heating for nappy change facilities given the infrequent use in most preschool centres.

11.3.4 Heating, cooling and ventilation

Air conditioning (ventilation, heating and cooling) shall be in accordance with DECD Facilities Design Standards and Guidelines document; however the option to provide evaporative cooling and flued gas heating shall be considered in the Activity Areas, where it is desirable to leave outside doors open for indoor-outdoor relationships.

Any appliance which has exposed surfaces that exceed 45°C must be guarded/ encased / enclosed so as to prevent access by children.

Ceiling fans are not recommended unless as per DECD Standards for ceiling fans they are at 2.4 metres above floor level. Equipment controls must be inaccessible to children. Particular care needs to be taken to position any equipment controls in a sleep room so that the controls are not accessible to children in a cot.

Natural ventilation shall be provided through permanent openings, windows, doors or other devices, including opening sashes in the windows.

Exhaust ventilation shall be provided to toilet, nappy change and kitchen areas.

Reverse cycle air-conditioning is the preferred system to be provided in the Director's/Multi-use office.

11.3.5 Waste drainage

A "Trade Waste Arrester" is required where food is prepared. It is not required where art sinks are provided, and only water-based are to be used.

11.3.6 Electrical power

Provide double power outlets at a number of locations throughout the areas; the number and location to be decided in consultation with DECD and the user representative.

All power outlets shall be safety shuttered and RCD protected. Power outlets accessible to children shall be mounted 1200mm above floor level, except for those in the sleep room where they shall be mounted at skirting level.

Surge protection shall be provided on blue outlets for computer and facsimile machines throughout the building.

External power outlets shall be in lockable weatherproof enclosures at a height of 1500mm.

Install backbone wiring for a sound field system to be installed in teaching and learning areas.

Refer to project Facilities Brief for any requirements for sub-metering for different agencies or building functions.

11.3.7 Lighting

Light switches to be mounted at between 900mm and 1100mm AFL under disability code. (light switches are not an electrical hazard as they have isolators).

- Current generation tubular fluorescent lamps shall be the standard provision.
- Particular attention is drawn to the requirements for accessibility and ease of replacement of lamps.
- Security lighting to current standards including lighting to car park areas and access to them.

11.3.8 Security

Door and window design shall consider the need for adequate security against unlawful entry.

If the project Facilities Brief requires, provide a silent monitored security alarm system combining smoke and movement detectors. Security system shall be zoned to enable separate functional areas to be alarmed as necessary. Where this is not required, the use of Securitel® telephone service is not warranted and the security dialler should be connected to the fax line.

If the facility is co-located with a school which has a current generation alarm system then the new facility shall be connected into it.

Secure storage is required for movable electrical equipment.

Contact DECD Corporate Senior Advisor, Security (8226 1948) for further detail.

11.3.9 Television antenna and MATV system

A fixed antenna and distribution system is not required.

11.3.10 Communications

Provide a minimum of two exchange lines to cater for telephone and data requirements. Refer to project Facilities Brief for specific requirements to cater for range of agencies and functions to be accommodated in the building.

If the Centre is co-located with a DECD school, consider opportunities for sharing a telephone extension and any data network.

Computer points shall be provided in activity, learning and office areas in locations as described in the project Facilities Brief.

11.3.11 Fire Services

All fire equipment shall be positioned in accordance with the requirements of the Building Code of Australia.

Generally provisions include fire extinguishers and a fire blanket in the kitchen, external fire hydrant as necessary and fire detection integrated with the security detection system.

11.4 OTHER PROVISIONS

11.4.1 Access and Mobility

All entrance, exit and internal doors for adult entry shall be accessible for persons with disabilities. Ensure ramps, door widths and furniture (including reception counter) caters for wheelchair users. Consider the needs of children with impaired vision, hearing and movement and severe sensory issues. Provide one accessible toilet, for use also as staff / adult toilet.

One cubicle in the children's toilet shall be large enough for assisted access with space for helpers on both sides of the pan. Ensure access to door bells, security control panels, switches and controls. All external areas including the car park shall be accessible for persons with disabilities. Refer also to Planning and Design sections for specific Facilities Modules and Area Data Sheets for additional information.

11.4.2 Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare

Shelves to be no higher than 1800mm. Area above to be filled or sloped to prevent inappropriate use and cleaning issues. Where electrical appliances are to be used, shelves shall include an electrical cabling slot so that electrical cords can be fed through to power points thereby preventing any electrical appliances being dislodged from the shelf by pulling a cord.

11.4.3 Signage

Provide appropriate site signage, directional signs to entrances and door signs as required by the project brief.

Actual entrance/frontage sign for the site must be approved by the appropriate DECD authority.



12. AREA DATA SHEETS

Area data sheets provide detailed information for specific areas in addition to the general information provided in the planning and design requirements, and they are to be read in conjunction with each other.

12.1 ACTIVITY AREA

12.1.1 Function

To cater for wet and dry education and play activities in groups of varying sizes.

12.1.2 Planning

- This provides the major part of the indoor activity space. The other children's activity area is the withdrawal room.
- The design should enable flexible use of activity areas ie learning areas that can be changed frequently.
- The Activity Area size will be scheduled in the project Facilities Brief.
- The Activity Area is to open to the veranda and outdoor learning area.
- Line of site is paramount in any area of child activity and shall be available from any location.



12.1.3 Buildings

12.1.3.1 Ceilings

Acoustic ceiling.

12.1.3.2 Walls

Wall surfaces shall be smooth finish, painted low sheen (washable) acrylic. Wall colours shall generally be in neutral tones to provide a background to fixtures and furniture, and in calming colours to avoid problems for children with high sensory issues. Consider colours that reflect current best practice understanding of their effects on young children.

Ensure that sufficient wall space is available for display purposes.

12.1.3.3 Floor

Floor to all rooms shall be resilient sheet floor covering material with cushioned backing. Provide carpet square(s) to a total size of one-third of the Activity Area, loose laid on the floor. Carpet square shall be non-static, level loop pile, soil resistant, easily cleanable, and complying with the current BCA requirements for fire resistance and fire hazard properties. Edges shall be bound or overcast to prevent fraying. Medium strength colours with patterns (fleck or graphic) are preferred. (Light colours show marks and stains, and dark colours show dust). A non-slip backing is required to avoid the carpet square moving.

12.1.3.4 Doors

Provide fully glazed double doors to the veranda and outdoor learning area. Doors are to be capable of being held in the fully open position flush against the adjacent wall.

12.1.3.5 Windows

Windowsills can be at 100mm above floor level where overlooking veranda and outdoor area.

12.1.4 Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture

12.1.4.1 Benches

One bench containing a single minimum 40 litre laundry trough with integral drainer for adult use for cleaning water soluble art materials. Cupboards underneath. Bench top at 900mm above floor level.

12.1.4.2 Sinks

Stainless steel sink as above. Taps to wash trough to be mounted at a height to allow a bucket to be inserted into the trough.

12.1.4.3 Cupboards

One lockable cupboard 800mm wide by 2000mm high.

12.1.4.4 Display boards

Provide maximum area of display boards on available wall space, from 300mm to 2100mm above floor level.

12.1.5 Services

12.1.5.1 Heating, Cooling, Ventilation

Refer 11.3.4 under General Building and Site Provisions. If gas heating provided then effective guarding for gas heaters shall be fitted to prevent children's access to very hot surfaces (> 45°C) and controls. All equipment controls to be positioned to prevent free access by children ie a minimum 1500mm above floor level.

Note: Modern gas heating may already have child safety mechanisms in place that address the above issue. This should be checked with the manufacturers.

12.1.5.2 Water Supply

Hot and cold water shall be provided to the sink, with one tap a lever arm and one cold tap to be mounted at a height to allow a bucket to be inserted in the sink.

12.1.5.3 Electrical power

Provide double power outlets at a number of locations throughout each area. The number and locations to be decided by consultation with DECD and the user representative.

Note special mounting height requirements.

Provide data points.

12.2 WITHDRAWAL ROOM

12.2.1 Function

To cater for the quiet withdrawal of a small number of children and for use by visiting specialists working with individual children.

12.2.2 Planning

Withdrawal Room area will be as scheduled in the project Facilities Brief.

Planning should allow it to be used as a sleeping room for older children if required, but not for babies or toddlers.

Single door access from the Activity Area.

Convenient access to the children's toilet is required but not necessarily direct access.

12.2.3 Building

12.2.3.1 Ceilings

Acoustic ceiling.

12.2.3.2 Walls

Wall surfaces shall be smooth finish, painted low sheen (washable) acrylic. Wall colours shall generally be in neutral tones to provide a background to fixtures and furniture, and in calming colours to avoid problems for children with high sensory issues. Consider colours that reflect current best practice understanding of their effects on young children.

12.2.3.3 Floor

Resilient sheeting with cushioned backing. Can also be carpet depending on site requirement.

12.2.3.4 Doors

Single door with viewing panel (with one-way glass or film).

12.2.3.5 Windows

Windows to provide adult line of vision to Activity Space.

External windows to have a light transmitting area exclusive of framing, glazing bars or other obstructions of not less than 10% of the floor area of the room (as per BCA requirements).

12.2.4 Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture

12.2.4.1 Benches

No fixed joinery is required.

12.2.4.2 Display boards

Provide maximum area of display board on available wall space, from 300mm to 2100mm above floor level.

12.2.4.3 Communications

None required in this area.

12.2.5 Services

12.2.5.1 Heating, Cooling, Ventilation

Refer 11.3.4 under General Building and Site Provisions.

12.2.5.2 Electrical power

Provide double power outlets at a number of locations throughout the areas. The number and locations to be decided by consultation with DECD and the user representative.

12.3 SLEEP ROOM

12.3.1 Function

To provide sleeping accommodation for children who require a sleep during the day, generally those up to 2 years of age.

12.3.2 Planning

Refer to the DECD Children's Services Licensing and Standards Fact Sheet *Cot Room*.

Sleep Room area will be as scheduled in the project Facilities Brief. One piece of bedding shall be provided for each child under 2 years of age (with 2/3 being cots and the remaining mattresses/stretcher beds i.e. 15 under 2 places = 10 cots and 5 mattresses/stretcher beds). Rooms shall be designed to accommodate a maximum of six cots each.

The layout shall maximise the efficiency of provision of cots with a minimum of 700mm clear access between each. Cords from all blinds shall be inaccessible to children in cots.

Adequate supervision of children in the sleep room shall be facilitated by positioning of the cots and viewing provided into the room. Staff shall be able to directly observe all children from the viewing windows.

Single door access from the Main Activity Area and a viewing window in the wall between two adjoining sleep rooms is recommended for additional visual supervision by staff.

Convenient access to the children's toilet is required but not necessarily direct access.

12.3.3 Building

12.3.3.1 Ceilings

Acoustic ceiling.

12.3.3.2 Walls

Wall surfaces shall be smooth finish, painted low sheen (washable) acrylic. Wall colours shall generally be in neutral tones to provide a background to fixtures and furniture, and in calming colours to avoid problems for children with high sensory issues. Consider colours that reflect current best practice understanding of their effects on young children.

12.3.3.3 Floor

Resilient sheet with cushioned backing.

12.3.3.4 Doors

Half-glazed single door for adult supervision with ventilation panel.

12.3.3.5 Windows

External window to provide natural light and ventilation. Opening windows shall be securable against entry. Window sills shall be no lower than 1500mm. Internal window to provide observation from the Activity Area or other adjoining area. If there are adjoining sleep rooms, provide a window in common wall.

12.3.4 Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture

No fixtures.

12.3.5 Services

12.3.5.1 Heating, Cooling, Ventilation

Refer 11.3.4 under General Building and Site Provisions.

12.3.5.2 Electrical power

Provide double power outlets at a number of locations throughout the area. The number and locations to be decided by consultation with DECD and the user representative. Power outlets to be mounted at skirting level.

12.4 OFFICE

12.4.1 Function

For use as the Director's office.

12.4.2 Planning

To be located near the entrance for easy adult access. Consider an appropriate shape to enable it to be also used for small meetings.

12.4.3 Building

12.4.3.1 Ceilings

Acoustic ceiling.

12.4.3.2 Floor

Carpet.

12.4.3.3 Doors

Half-glazed single door, lockable.

12.4.3.4 Windows

External window and windows to provide visual access to Activity Area and other areas if possible, with one-way glass or film.

12.4.4 Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture

12.4.4.1 Benches/Cupboards

No fixed joinery; allow for loose office furniture.

12.4.4.2 Display boards

Provide one display board.

12.4.5 Services

12.4.5.1 Heating, Cooling, Ventilation

Refer 11.3.4 under General Building and Site Provisions.

12.4.5.2 Electrical power

Provide double power outlets at a number of locations throughout the area. The number and locations to be decided by consultation with DECD and the user representative.

Provide for administrative computer, printer, modem, facsimile machine, photocopier plus spare outlets.

12.4.5.3 Communications

Office telephone, facsimile and modem telephone lines.

12.5 FOYER / ENTRY / RECEPTION

12.5.1 Function

To provide a point of entry for parents and visitors including a reception counter and work station.

12.5.2 Planning

Area will be as scheduled in the project Facilities Brief.

A safe place where parents can collect notices, pay fees and where visitors can wait and be seen.

It is required that visitors to the Centre have restricted access to children in the Activity Areas and no direct vision of children. Conversely children are not to have unsupervised access directly to outside of the building.

The foyer is not to be used as a place to leave and collect children – this shall occur from the activity areas.



12.5.3 Building

12.5.3.1 Ceilings

Acoustic ceiling.

12.5.3.2 Floor

Resilient sheet.

12.5.3.3 Doors

External door to have adult access only to facilitate safe passage to and from the centre for adults and children. Wheelchair accessibility to be provided though the provision of an intercom. Note, children's safety is paramount.

12.5.3.4 Windows

Windows to adjoining spaces.

12.5.4 Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture

12.5.4.1 Reception desk

Reception desk with work station. Include space for visitor work book / sheets. Where child care function provided, include an allowance for fee paying and a secure letter box.

12.5.4.2 Display boards

Provide a display board for parent notices

12.5.5 Services

12.5.5.1 Heating, Cooling, Ventilation

To be provided indirectly.

12.5.5.2 Electrical power

Provide double power outlets at a number of locations throughout the area. The number and locations to be decided by consultation with DECD and the user representative.

12.5.5.3 Communications

Telephone and data connections may be required if a reception desk is requested in the brief.

12.6 KITCHEN

12.6.1 Function

The kitchen is used for food preparation and distribution as well as a curriculum resource for children. Kitchens shall be designed to prevent unsupervised access by children (ie child proof gate/s).

Ideally, kitchens shall be designed so as to overlook the children's activity area.



12.6.2 Planning

Area shall be as scheduled in the project Facilities Brief.

Include a walk-in pantry unit for storage of food and ingredients.

12.6.3 Building

12.6.3.1 Ceilings

Acoustic tile ceiling. Flush ceiling to pantry.

12.6.3.2 Walls

Wall surfaces shall be smooth finish, painted low sheen (washable) acrylic.

Splashback behind kitchen sink, bench and hand basin.

12.6.3.3 Floor

Resilient sheet.

12.6.3.4 Doors

Low level door (900mm to 1200mm high) required preventing child access, including a child-proof latch on the kitchen side.

Single flush panel door to pantry or joinery doors.

12.6.4 Fixtures, fittings, Furniture

12.6.4.1 Benches / Cupboards

Cupboards and workbench, 900mm above floor level. Maximise usable bench top area.

Overhead cupboards with infill panel from 2000mm up to ceiling level.

Bench tops to have low maintenance laminated surfaces.

Splashbacks shall be smooth, easily cleanable and a minimum of 500mm high.

12.6.4.2 Shelving

Melamine shelving in pantry.

12.6.4.3 Other Equipment

Provide space and power for refrigerator and microwave oven.

Provide space, power and plumbing for a dishwasher.

Size and nature of equipment shall be commensurate with the size and functions of the facility. Refer to the project Facilities Brief for details.

12.6.4.4 Stoves

For **Long Day Care** provide a five burner free standing 900mm stove.

For **Preschool** provide a free standing 600mm stove.

Can be gas or electric depending on availability of gas to site.

12.6.4.4 Sinks

Double bowl, double drain-board sink.

Separate hand basin for hand washing.

Note that a sink for washing of art materials is not permitted in the kitchen.

12.6.5 Services

12.6.5.1 Heating, Cooling, Ventilation

Part of Activity Area provision, unless a separate enclosed space in which separate provisions shall apply. Provide range hood exhaust above stove / cook-top.

12.6.5.2 Water supply

Cold water and hot water set at 45°C with a thermostatic mixing valve.

12.6.5.3 Electrical power

Provide double power outlets at a number of locations throughout the area. The number and locations to be decided by consultation with DECD and the user representative.

Provide a ceiling mounted heat detector.

12.6.5.4 Communications

Wall mounted telephone handset.

12.7 Bottle Preparation Area

12.7.1 Function

To provide facilities for the safe and hygienic preparation of bottles and food for young children in care.

12.7.2 Planning

Provided a Bottle Preparation Area in any activity area where children require bottle feeding. This shall be a separate area or a separate part of the Kitchen or in the activity area to enable visual supervision during preparation.

12.7.3 Building

12.7.3.1 Ceilings

Acoustic ceiling.

12.7.3.2 Walls

Wall surfaces shall be smooth finish, painted low sheen (washable) acrylic.

12.7.3.3 Floor

Resilient sheet.

	12.7.3.4	Doors	Single door if a separate room.
	12.7.3.5	Windows	As necessary to allow supervision of the Activity Area from the work bench.
12.7.4	Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture		
	12.7.4.1	Benches	Fixed joinery bench with sink. Adequate length to accommodate microwave oven. Cupboards underneath with child-proof locks. Space and electrical power for under bench refrigerator.
	12.7.4.2	Sink	Single sink with drainboard.
12.7.5	Services		
	12.7.5.1	Heating, Cooling, Ventilation	Part of Activity Area. If a separate room consideration must be made for adequate ventilation and exhausting of boiling products.
	12.7.5.2	Water supply	Cold and hot water set at 45 ⁰ C with a thermostatic mixing valve.
	12.7.5.3	Display boards	None
	12.7.5.4	Electrical power	Double power outlet adjacent to the work bench. Power for microwave oven. Power for under bench refrigerator to be above bench to prevent child access. Provide through-bench access for cable.
	12.7.5.5	Communications	One single door for adult supervision with ventilation panel.
	12.7.5.6	Windows	External window to provide natural light and ventilation. Opening windows shall be securable against entry. Window sills shall be no lower than 1500mm. Internal window to provide observation from the Activity Area or other adjoining area. If there are adjoining sleep rooms, provide a window in common wall.
12.7.6	Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture		
	No fixtures.		

12.7.7 Services

12.7.7.1 Heating, Cooling, Ventilation

Refer 11.3.4 under General Building and Site Provisions.

12.7.7.2 Electrical power

Provide double power outlets at a number of locations throughout the area. The number and locations to be decided by consultation with DECD and the user representative. Power outlets to be mounted at skirting level.

12.8 STAFF PREPARATION AREA

12.8.1 Function

For use by staff for preparation of educational and resource materials.

12.8.2 Planning

To be located away from entrance and activity areas.

12.8.3 Buildings

12.8.3.1 Ceilings

Acoustic ceiling.

12.8.3.2 Floor

Carpet.

12.8.3.3 Doors

Half-glazed single door.

Door hardware shall be at 1500mm above floor level with self closing self latching mechanism.

12.8.3.4 Windows

External window.

12.8.4 Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture

12.8.4.1 Benches/Cupboards

No fixed joinery; allow for loose office furniture.

12.8.4.2 Display boards

Provide one display board.

12.8.5 Services

12.8.5.1 Heating, Cooling, Ventilation

Refer 11.3.4 under General Building and Site Provisions.

12.8.5.2 Electrical power

Provide double power outlets at a number of locations throughout the area.

The number and locations to be decided by consultation with DECD and the user representative.

12.8.5.3 Communications

Provide data points for administrative computer, printer, modem, facsimile machine, photocopier plus spare outlets.

12.9 STAFF ROOM / MEETING ROOM

12.9.1 Function

For use by staff for recreation and for meetings.

12.9.2 Planning

To be located away from entrance.

12.9.3 Building

12.9.3.1 Ceilings

Acoustic ceiling.

12.9.3.2 Floor

Carpet.

12.9.3.3 Doors

Half-glazed single door, lockable. Door hardware shall be at 1500mm with self closing self latching mechanism.

12.9.3.4 Windows

External window and internal window.

12.9.4 Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture

12.9.4.1 Benches/Cupboards

Fixed joinery bench with sink. Adequate length to accommodate a microwave oven.

Space for refrigerator (can be under bench model where less than 10 staff or full size where 10 or more staff.

12.9.4.2 Sink

Single sink with drain board.

12.9.4.3 Display boards

Provide one display board.

12.9.5 Services

12.9.5.1 Heating, Cooling, Ventilation

Refer 11.3.4 under General Building and Site Provisions.

12.9.5.2 Water supply

Cold and hot water set at 45°C with a thermostatic mixing valve.

12.9.5.3 Electrical power

Provide double power outlets at a number of locations throughout the area. The number and locations to be decided by consultation with DECD and the user representative.

Provide for administrative computer, printer, modem, facsimile machine, photocopier plus spare outlets.

12.9.5.4 Communications

Provision for telephone, facsimile and modem telephone lines.

12.10 TOILETS - CHILDREN

12.10.1 Function

Children's toilets.

12.10.2 Planning

Junior sized toilet pans to be provided as per BCA requirements. Minimum of 2 pans and basins with a ratio of 1 in 15 (see BCA requirements). Toilet provisions will be scheduled in the project Facilities Brief.

A wheelchair access/staff toilet will be provided in each centre for use by children in wheelchairs as described in 12.11 Toilets – Staff.

Toilets shall be directly accessible from the Activity Area and the outdoor learning areas and be easily accessible for free access by children.

Cubicles are to be fitted with privacy doors, including the ambulant children's toilet.

One ambulant cubicle to be included in each bathroom space. See BCA for specification.

Provision of a fixed change bench with sink type bath and separate adult hand washing basin to Preschools and Long Day Care centres. The nappy change facilities shall be located in the children's toilet area and are designed and maintained in a way that prevents unsupervised access by children. Refer to DECD specifications and standard joinery drawing for details



12.10.3 Building

12.10.3.1 Floor

Ceramic floor tiles, non-slip and easily cleaned. PVC skirtings shall be provided to all walls.

12.10.3.2 Walls

Toilet walls must be impervious and easily cleanable. High gloss paint, two pack epoxy, ceramic tiles etc. should be considered for areas at risk up to 1200mm high.

Ceramic tiles around hand basins, hand driers, nappy change bath, laundry trough if installed.

12.10.3.3 Doors

Doors to the outside to be capable of being held in the fully open position flush against the wall. Door hardware height 750mm. Internal doors not to present a hazard when opened.

12.10.3.4 Partitions

Toilet partitions and doors shall not exceed 1200mm high with a minimum gap of 100mm underneath. Partition doors (privacy doors) shall be free swinging, inward opening (with buffer stop) and securable inside with reachable adult access.

12.10.3.4 Windows

High level windows to outside with one-way glass or film to prevent vision into room and which are openable for natural ventilation.

Low level windows to internal rooms to enable direct supervision particularly from Main Activity Area, with sills at 1200mm.

12.10.4 Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture

12.10.4.1 Fixtures

Toilet pans to be Fowler "Kinder" pan or equivalent with dual flush cistern and full flap seat.

Nappy change benches shall include access steps with securable gate, stainless steel sink-type bath with hand-held shower, and hand basin, as per standard drawing (DPTI G-39). Grab rails to be fitted adjacent to access steps to assist children to bench top. Shower to have back-flow prevention.

12.10.4.2 Heating, Cooling, Ventilation

Fume extraction, generally in excess of Building Code requirements as doors are constantly open to Activity Areas.

12.10.4.3 Hand basins

To be provided as per Building Code requirements ie ratio of 1 hand basin per 15 children or part thereof. The maximum basin rim height shall be 600mm above floor level, except in toilet areas for children under 2 years where the maximum basin rim height shall be 550mm. One hand basin to be provided with a lever tap to cater for children with low muscle tone. Cold water.

12.10.4.4 Hand Driers

Provide electric hand driers or paper towel dispensers as required by the project Facilities Brief. Hand drier to have fixed nozzle, one per two hand basins. Ensure the quietest operating units are selected. Mounting height of the outlet nozzle shall be 650mm above floor level.

12.10.4.5 Mirrors

Toilets shall have individual mirrors contained in a frame fixed to the wall above each hand basin. Mirrors 450mm x 450mm mounted with the lowest edge 750mm from floor level.

12.11 TOILETS - STAFF

12.11.1 Function

Staff and disability access toilet located separately from children's toilet area.

12.11.2 Planning

Minimum requirements are one combined staff and accessible toilet with shower and sluice drain and space to accommodate a hydraulic change bench with power.

In larger centres one additional staff toilet shall be provided as scheduled in the project Facilities Brief.

This is part of the adult precinct with no access by unaccompanied children.

Ensure toilet is not in close proximity to the kitchen.

12.11.3 Building

12.11.3.1 Floor

Ceramic floor tiles.

12.11.3.2 Walls

Toilet walls must be impervious and easily cleanable. High gloss paint, two pack epoxy, ceramic tiles etc. should be considered for areas at risk up to 1200mm high.

12.11.3.3 Doors

Single door.

Door furniture height to comply with Access requirements (even though this conflicts with the desire to restrict children's access).

12.11.3.4 Windows

High level windows when on an outside wall.

12.11.4 Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture

12.11.4.1 Joinery

Shelf at 1500mm height for storage.

12.11.4.2 Heating, Cooling, Ventilation

Fume extraction as per Building Code.

12.11.4.3 Hand Drier

Provide one electric hand drier with fixed nozzle. Ensure the quietest operating unit is selected.

Mounting height of the outlet nozzle shall be 1200mm above floor level.

Paper towel dispenser may be provided in addition if required and funded by the end users.

12.11.4.4 Mirrors

Toilets shall have individual mirrors contained in a frame fixed to the wall above each hand basin. Mirrors 600mm high by 450mm wide are an appropriate size.

12.12 STORE

12.12.1 Function

The storage of cots, mattresses, trolley, games, play equipment, rolls of paper, flat paper, plastic bins for materials for the operation of the Centre.

12.12.2 Planning

Actual area and numbers to be advised in the Project Brief.

Several smaller storerooms directly accessible to each activity area shall be provided rather than one larger one as the wall space for shelving is more efficiently utilised.

Adjustable shelving, to be suitable for storing flat paper sheets, and plastic boxes/tubs for ease of handling smaller items.

Space to be allocated for storage of bulky equipment such as mattresses, beanbags, hammocks and prams/pushers, particularly for children under 2 years.

Child Care Centres could request space for storage of cots in a store room adjacent to the Sleep Room.

Mattresses shall be stored in a separate bay for hygiene reasons.

12.12.3 Building

12.12.3.1 Ceilings

Flush panel ceiling.

12.12.3.2 Walls

Wall surfaces shall be smooth finish, painted low sheen (washable) acrylic.

12.12.3.3 Floor

Resilient sheet.

12.12.3.4 Doors

Single lockable door. Door hardware shall be at 1500mm with self closing self latching mechanism.

12.12.3.5 Windows

None required.

12.12.4 Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture

12.12.4.1 Shelving

Metal Dexion type shelving is suitable as a minimum but not to exceed 1800mm high without provision for safe access.

Fixed melamine shelving with sloping top is ideal.

Adjustable spacing is preferred but 400mm fixed spacing would be satisfactory.

Additional fixed compactus shelving could be provided.

12.12.4.2 Display boards

None required.

12.12.4.3 Heating, Cooling, Ventilation

None required.

12.12.4.4 Electrical power

Provide double outlet GPO's at a location to be decided by consultation with DECD and the user representative.

12.12.4.5 Communications

None required.

12.13 LAUNDRY

12.13.1 Function

Laundry function is for regular washing of selected items (not nappies).

12.13.2 Planning

Direct access to service yard and clothes line.

Location of laundry to be considered where it is shared with a number of users. (ie for sites providing Long Day Care).

For sites not providing Long Day Care, laundry provision to consist of plumbing to wall, power and an appliance space in an area that is inaccessible to children ie laundry room not required but cubicle or securable space to accommodate a washing machine & dryer with external venting required.

12.13.2 Building

12.13.2.1 Ceilings

Flush panel ceiling.

12.13.2.2 Walls

Wall surfaces shall be smooth finish, painted low sheen (washable) acrylic with ceramic wall tiles adjacent to wash trough and washing machine.

12.13.2.3 Floor

Resilient sheet, or ceramic tiles if part of a toilet area.

12.13.2.4 Doors

Glazed single doors for internal adult access.

Door to Service Yard.

Door hardware shall be at 1500mm with self closing self latching mechanism.

Doors to be key lockable.

12.13.3 Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture

12.13.3.1 Sinks

Provide single wash trough.

12.13.3.2 Cupboards

Cupboard doors to be lockable for storage of detergents and all hazardous materials.

12.13.4 Services

12.13.4.1 Heating, Cooling, Ventilation

Exhaust fan to remove condensation.

12.13.4.2 Electrical power

Provide double power outlet at a number of locations throughout the area at 1500mm above floor level. The number and locations to be decided by consultation with DECD and the user representative.

12.13.4.3 Communications

None required in this area

12.14 OUTDOOR LEARNING AREA

12.14.1 Function

To cater for outdoor learning in groups of varying sizes.

12.14.2 Planning

12.14.2.1 Outdoor Learning Environment

The outdoor learning areas shall provide a maximum 9.3m² (unless otherwise negotiated) of unencumbered accessible space per child. Where a range of programs are being delivered that require specific outdoor space, separate spaces for each program are required. A separate outdoor learning area shall be provided for children under 2 years of age. This area, while separate, will be designed to be able to provide integration between adjoining areas through double gate access. Internal fencing/double gates between outdoor learning areas to be no greater than 1 metre high (900mm recommended). The design of outdoor learning environments shall reflect the developmental, social and emotional needs of the user age group.

1. In new or relocated facilities the minimum provision will be:

A Master Plan developed by an early childhood landscape design professional for the outdoor learning area in line with:

The vision and core values stated in the departments “Early Childhood Outdoor Learning Environments – Vision and Values”, refer :

http://www.earlyyears.sa.edu.au/files/links/a4_value_vision_pamphlet_s.pdf

Section 1 of the Playground Manual – Office for Recreation and Sport, refer:<http://www.recsport.sa.gov.au/pdf/Revised%20Playgrounds%20Manual%20v2%2015%20November%20ORS%20version.pdf>

1.1 <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/licensed/pn5natenvironment.pdf>

1.2 Outdoor play guide for Victorian Children’s Services (archived due to new legislation but contains sound planning principles)
http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/107921/20100120-1116/www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/chilcare/dg/ecs_design_guide_april_2005v1.pdf

The master plan is to consider that every site and location is unique with different strengths and limitations. The following points shall be addressed in the master plan:

- Access in the environment – emergency vehicles, wheelchairs and maintenance
- Shade requirements – immediate and future planning
- Water hazards – well designed drainage to avoid any pooling of water
- Environmental hazards – no poisonous plants, need to plan for any toxic exposure
- Slope and gradient – how to incorporate into the design to enhance the area

- Flow of play – How might children travel through the area
- Supervision – Design in adult friendly seating and shade whilst maintaining line of sight for discreet supervision of children.
- Gross motor experiences
- Designing in natural elements – eg Wet/dry creek beds, plantings to create semi hidden spaces with a variety of textures, scents, colours that match the soil and climate and are robust, trees to climb or swing from.

Refer to Attachment 2 for more detailed information on design aspects.



2 The following aspects of the master plan will be constructed as part of the design brief/construction:

- Sand play area built to DECD standards with an adequate shade protection structure as detailed in the master plan and suitably located to avoid sand on the verandah and indoor area.
- All paths and paving
- Sub surface watering for the lawn and planting areas
- Mound or any gradient requirements detailed in master plan
- Roll out instant lawn (not synthetic)
- Planting of a suitable mixture of deciduous and evergreen (eg Mulberry and fruit trees) tree species which will provide shade over the outdoor environment in the later years
- Provision of water supply and drainage for water play area
- Appropriate drainage in the area to preclude any pooling of water
- Rainwater tank

- Provision of an adequately sized impact absorbing area for the delivery of gross motor activities.

Note :- consideration needs to be given to the type/height of equipment to be used and subsequent minimum fall zone areas required under the current Australian Standard.





12.14.2.2 Paving

Provide solid paths to entrance doorways, around perimeter of building, between shed, verandah and selected areas in Outdoor Learning Area (sanded area, water play area, grassed area) including a continuous path of travel and adequate clearance from obstructions for persons with disabilities. Paving is not to intrude on or go through the impact absorbing area.

Pavers with minimum bevel are preferred over flat or large bevel pavers as easier access is provided for small wheels and wheelchairs. Paths of varying textures in natural tones are preferred.

12.14.2.3 Veranda

Minimum area of 1m² per child with a minimum width of 2.4 metres, and opening directly to a usable paved or grassed area with no step. Preferably facing north to provide shelter from the weather.

An additional open/covered pergola is generally considered a Centre responsibility but can be included within any building scope of works if additional funds are provided by the Centre.

12.14.2.4 Suspension points

3 to 4 suspension points for Inclusive Preschool Program (IPP) shall be provided under the veranda to allow use by a range of swinging apparatus in all weather situations. To be located in an area that is not a thoroughfare. Points to be adequately spaced and located away from fixed elements for safety. An impact absorbing surface shall be provided under and around suspension points, such as a certified rubber impact absorbent material or certified impact absorbing mats.

12.14.2.5 Shade structure

Apart from a solid covered veranda other shade shall be provided over the sanded area.

The roof to provide adequate shade protection and be of a solid structure along with gutters and stormwater disposal. Preference for pitched roof. Support poles for the structure to be recessed under the roof structure to assist in minimising climbing, if possible commercial carport type structures are acceptable but attention must be taken to the placement of the upright supports to limit hazards for children entering or leaving the sanded area.

Note if a solid structure is to be designed and constructed it must be certified to meet the requirements of the Building Code of Australia.

Natural shade from mature deciduous trees is preferred but other shade structures may be required while trees grow. (Deciduous trees give the desired shade in summer and let the light and warmth through during the winter months.)

Structures using shade cloth are not recommended due to the high long-term maintenance costs, susceptibility to vandalism, and other risks.

Ensure the shade structure design allows for the shade to fall over most of the sanded area during operating hours. Computer generated sun plots at design stage are advisable. This should be conducted by the landscape design professional engaged to develop the master plan.

12.14.2.6 Water

Water is essential for play, learning and grounds maintenance.

Provide a minimum of two external taps for hoses in convenient positions around the site. One to be located for ease of washing down the undercover paving, and the other for use in garden maintenance. Ensure hoses are not required to be run over children's access pathways.

Additional taps should also be provided close to the sand pit to enable staff to create a creek flowing through a variety of shallow surfaces to drain into the sanded area. Such surfaces can consist of pebbles, stones, concrete etc. with some material fixed into the concrete base.

All external taps to have Consolidated Brass 20mm key-locked screw-nosed bib-taps fitted to 20mm copper standpipe. Alternatively provide a removable handle or place taps in a recessed enclosure.

Provision of a rain water tank plumbed to provide for flushing toilets or garden watering use. DECD rainwater policy excludes the use of rainwater for drinking.

12.14.2.7 Fencing

All perimeter fences and gates to outdoor learning areas shall prevent the egress of children. Fences are to be non-scalable and a standard height of 1200mm. Higher fences may be required if a site specific risk assessment has indicated high risk circumstances (ie. river, swimming pool or main road). Equipment, plantings or structures are not to be installed within 1m of the perimeter fence as this can reduce the effective height. The decision as to the type of fence to install should be based on the view provided from the perimeter fence area, the natural surroundings, the functionality of the fence surface and local considerations. Perimeter fences need not be limited to pool type fencing, provided they are non-scalable and a minimum 1200mm high e.g. fences next to car parks could be of solid type where viewing is not required eg colorbond etc. Perimeter fence types could vary for a particular site and be more aesthetically pleasing by using for displaying children's art work etc.

All single gates on perimeter fencing shall be fitted with a self-closing and child proof self-locking mechanisms.

Double gates shall be provided on perimeter fencing (with padlocks) to allow for the efficient delivery and access to sand and soft-fall areas.

Dividing internal fencing shall not exceed 1 metre high (900mm recommended) and include openable double gates to enable integration between adjoining play areas. (not required to be self closing self locking).

Any fencing type with spikes is not recommended on the perimeter or internal fencing.

Gaps under fences and gates, or to adjacent structures, shall be no greater than 100mm. Any filling used under a fence must be secured and unable to be removed. Any gaps between the vertical bars in fences/gates are to be no more than 100mm, in line with current Australian Standards.

Fences shall be protected from damage by vehicles.

12.15 CAR PARK

12.15.1 Function

Provide short term parking for parents to take children into the centre for at least 25% of the enrolment capacity but this can vary depending on local council requirements. Generally these parking spaces will not be provided on a DECD site.

Design consideration must ensure that children and parents do not have direct access from the building into the carpark,

12.15.2 Planning

The following parking spaces shall be provided for staff:

One parking space to be provided for each FTE (full time equivalent) staff member

one Accessible parking space to be provided

An additional 10% of the total for visitor parking.

The above commitment only applies to new sites and may not apply to existing sites or redevelopments if site area restrictions exist. This means DECD does not buy additional land for car parking purposes.

Provide short term parking for parents to take children into the Centre for at least 25% of enrolment capacity but this can vary depending on local requirements. Generally these parking spaces will not be provided on the DECD site.

Consider options for shared parking with other providers and negotiate street parking arrangements with the local government authority.

Footpaths shall be provided for safe passage from car park to building and outdoor area entrances.

12.16 SERVICE YARD

12.16.1 Function

To provide for the secure location of rubbish bins, recycling bins, clothes drying.

12.16.2 Planning

An area secure from child access with ready access from laundry and/or kitchen.

Gates and path access to the site frontage for easy bin collection.

Position 240 litre "Wheelie Bins" away from building walls and eaves to minimise risk of fire. Consider plates/chains/locks etc to fix bins to prevent inappropriate use.

Access for pick-up vehicles shall be allowed for.

12.16.3 Building

Outdoor space. No covering required.

12.16.3.1 Floor

Non slip paving.

12.16.4 Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture

12.16.4.1 Clothes Line

Minimum provision of retractable clothesline.

Larger clothesline may be required for child care functions managing their own laundry. Refer to the Project Brief.

12.17 SHED

12.17.1 Function

To provide for the storage of trestles, sand play equipment, carpentry equipment, easels, water play equipment, climbing ladders, bicycles, paddle pools, hoses, reels, walking boards, balance beams etc.

Secure location for irrigation timers.

12.17.2 Planning

For floor area see 'Space Entitlement Table' that forms part of this document. If applicable the facilities Brief will include allowances for equipment for children with additional needs.

Solid pathways from shed door to sanded area, water play area, grassed play and Main Activity Area to enable easy movement of equipment on trolleys.

Secure from child access.

12.17.3 Building

Commercially available 'Colour bond' steel shed is adequate.

Some clear polycarbonate roof sheet can be used to provide natural daylight. Mesh shall be provided under sheeting for security.

12.17.3.1 Floor

Concrete floor.

12.17.3.2 Doors

Double door access to Outdoor Learning Area. (Lift-up doors are not acceptable, but hinged and sliding doors are acceptable). Closing mechanisms shall be above child head height.

12.17.3.3 Windows

None required.

12.17.4 Fixtures, Fittings, Furniture

12.17.4.1 Shelves

Fixed shelving on two sides of the shed. Metal Dexion shelving or equivalent is acceptable.

Allow space for climbing ladders, walking boards to be placed on one wall.

12.17.5 Services

Electrical power and light.

Possible location for irrigation controller.



DESIGN CHECKLIST

The following legislative requirements, standards, guidelines and items are mandatory requirements in the design of a DECD Early Childhood Facility	Compliance Comments
• BCA Legislative Requirements for an Early Childhood Educational Setting (Class 9b)	
• Relevant Australian Standards	
• National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Aged Care	
• Children's Services (Child Care Centre)Regulations 1998 (or super seeded legislation)	
• <i>Early Childhood Outdoor Learning Environments Vision and Values</i>	
Stakeholder Consultation - Early Childhood Services are to be consulted during the concept design stage and final site plans prior to any building works being undertaken	
Items	
Door Hardware Height: Ensure that door hardware is fitted at 1500mm high on doors leading to areas that are not to be freely accessed by children ie staff toilets, staff rooms, offices, consultation rooms, cleaner's rooms and store rooms. If these doors lead from a children's care area then they shall be fitted with a self closing self latching mechanism.	
Door hardware into and out of children's toilets to be fitted at 750mm	
Door hardware leading from inside areas to outdoor learning space to be fitted at 750 mm high	
Door Safety Covers fitted to door jambs in areas used by children to prevent children's finger entrapment	
Doors – on cleaner's cupboards hardware at 1500mm with self closing, self latching mechanism	
Doors leading to outdoor learning space to be securable in their open position ie flush against the adjacent walls	
Doors leading to and from indoor/outdoor must be flush at ground level for disabled access and trip hazard free	
Entry / Exit doors to children's care areas from foyer / reception areas to have door hardware fitted at 1500mm high and be fitted with self-closing self-latching mechanisms	
Fencing/gates - Gaps between vertical bars of pool type fences/gates to be consistent along the entire length and no greater than 100mm.	
Fencing/gates - Gaps underneath or to adjacent structures not to exceed 100mm. Ensure filling underneath fencing is not easily removed so as to ensure a maximum 100mm gap is not exceeded. If necessary cement border or similar to be provided.	
Fencing/gates - Where required internal fencing/gates that separate children's play space must not exceed 1 metre in height – 900mm recommended.	
Fridges located in children's space to be fitted with safety straps to prevent free access by children and to be large enough to accommodate appropriate storage for the capacity of a facility	
Gates securing kitchens to have childproof mechanisms- no sprung hinges and no finger entrapments	
Glazing under 1 metre must be safety glass standard in all areas used by children	
Grab rails for children's use when climbing stairs to nappy change bench	

Hand Basins - Children's hand washing basins to meet BCA requirements ie rim height no greater than 600mm above floor level	
Hot Water: outlets to be tempered to a maximum 45°C where freely accessible to children - Recommended to be set at 40-42°C	
Kitchens / kitchenettes are designed in such a way that children do not have free access to stoves/ovens, appliances, hot water, dishwashers, utensils etc. An island bench with side gates is recommended.	
Natural Light Schedule to be provided by the architect verifying BCA requirements are met in relation to natural light	
Power points if not in use to be covered with safety plugs	
Privacy doors to be provided to cubicles in children's toilets, including ambulant toilet.	
Retainer walls - If retainer walls are required ensure they are not able to be climbed by children	
Shade - Provision of adequate shade in outdoor learning space either by effective plantings or suitable shade structure shall be provided in at least one other area as well as the sand area cover and positioned in such a way that maximises the shade provided in the afternoon.	
Shade / Sand Area - Shade cover to be of solid construction with support poles receded under roof structure to prevent climbing. To extend over the whole sand area	
Storage - Storage space required for children's personal belongings in the form of pigeon holes	
Stormwater Grates/Drains in outdoor learning environments – ensure diameter of grate holes are not in the 5 -25 mm range (finger entrapments)	
Trip Hazards - ensure varying indoor floor surfaces don't provide trip hazards	
Washing machines / dryers not to be located in children's toilet space or any space accessible to children	
Windows - Do all windows in children's space enable ventilation throughout the day or is suitable mechanical ventilation installed	
Windows – Observation windows to be provided to children's toilet area, sleep rooms / spaces and withdrawal space to allow effective supervision by staff.	
Zip Hydra taps not to be fitted in areas where children have access	

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Outdoor

Including natural elements into an outdoor play space does not have to look a particular way, there is no formula that has to be followed. The design will take into account the size and configuration of the space, the way in which the space is used at the children's service and the ages of the children who play in the space.

A "good playground" is not necessarily an expensive one, but one which is imaginative in its layout and where possible, one that has items which can be regularly changed (eg. loose parts, unstructured and natural play spaces).

Indoor

Natural environments do not have to be limited to outdoors. There are many ways in which the natural environment can enhance the children's indoor program. Pot plants and small tubs in which to grow plants are visually appealing in children's rooms. Parts of branches and small logs with the bark attached can be used in imaginative play in conjunction with other materials. Pine cones, seed pods, leaves, gumnuts and small stones can be used in different ways including opportunities for children to explore simple science and maths concepts such as classifying, counting and weighing. Sand and water trays inside provide additional interesting experiences for children's play.

Why natural play spaces?

'Children are connected to and contribute to their world'. This outcome requires educators to help children to develop an awareness of the impact of human activity on the environment and the interdependence of living things. Natural environments within children's services are the arena in which children learn these things.

Belonging, Being and Becoming, the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (2009) examines the practice of early childhood pedagogy and the role that good learning environments play in teaching. 'Play spaces in natural environments include plants, trees edible gardens, sand, rocks, mud, water and other elements from nature. These spaces invite open ended interactions, spontaneity, risk taking, exploration, discovery and connection with nature. They foster an appreciation of the natural environment, develop environmental awareness and provide a platform for ongoing environmental education'.



General design elements for consideration

Rocks

Creative placement of rocks and boulders around a play space can provide children and adults with easy to challenging “routes”. Rocks and boulders can be great for learning climbing skills or just good old fashioned fun. Children almost always gravitate toward rocks and boulders, they become the immediate favourite place for children of all ages to explore and interact.

In addition to defining areas such as a sand area or dry creek bed, rocks and boulders provide opportunities for challenging and fun play, and add to the natural materials used in play spaces. Children's balancing skills are tested when they make their way along a boulder border or use the boulders as stepping stones. The boulders can also be a good place to sit and rest, talk or watch. Cleverly arranged rocks and boulders are safe. Children have a healthy respect for the solidity and hardness of rocks and boulders and develop their own sense of care, concern, and safety when they climb on them. Boulder sizes vary with the age of the children using them, however, ensure that the boulder measures less than 500mm from playing surface level for ease of access and to avoid tested surfacing requirements. When positioning boulders, take care to prevent entrapment hazards such as gaps or tunnels where children can injure their legs/feet/ankles. Rocks and boulders are buried into the ground with at least 1/3 of the boulder mass being below ground surface. Make sure boulders are stabilised (this may be assisted with the use of cement / mortar) so that no movement occurs as children and adults travel over them. Ensure that any sharp corners/edges are removed from rocks and boulders to provide smooth well rounded surfaces.

Mounds

Mounds give a three dimensional aspect to an area that may be otherwise flat and a child may experience a feeling of being the king or queen of the castle and view the world from a different level. Mounds can be crawled over safely by babies, can be used to “hide” behind, for sitting or lying on, and can have a wide variety of play items added to them.

Mounds should be constructed with a maximum of 1 in 3 gradient for mowing and allow children access without slipping (or if a tractor-mounted mower is used then this gradient should be a maximum of 1 in 4). This means that for every 1 metre in height, the mound will need to be three (or four) metres in length. An extra one metre width should also be allowed on top of the mound for a flat area to allow the addition of a landing or low level platform. Therefore a one metre high mound (sufficient for the smaller child) should be seven metres in diameter.

Mounds can also be used for a variety of other items to be inserted on or through the mound. This can include slides which are installed onto the mound giving added safety as a fall by a child would be from a reduced height. This can reduce costs as the slide is less than 500mm above ground level therefore certified impact absorbing surfacing is not required either side of the slide, however, a 1000mm free space is required from the centre of the slide to each side. A 2000mm run out section (fall zone) filled with certified impact absorbing surfacing is required from the end of the slide. At the top and bottom of the slide *Kidsafe NSW* recommends the addition of a synthetic product such as wet pour rubber or synthetic grass to eliminate erosion. Timber decks may be used at the top of the slide for this purpose but may get slippery when damp or wet. A steadying post (with optional handle grips) is also recommended at the slide entrance to assist children upon entering.

Mounds can be landscaped with plants suitable to your area including small trees for shade, shrubs and native grasses.

Other items for mounds include timber stages, shopfronts, pergolas, telephones, dry creek beds, boulders, rock climbing activities and fragrant gardens using aromatic plants. Bridges can be installed between a series of mounds and if kept below 500mm above ground level these do not need certified impact absorbing surfacing. Amphitheatres are perfect for mounds using sleepers set into the mound with the step height approximately 375mm high and the landing width approximately 600mm deep to allow for seating.

RESOURCES TO BE CONSULTED

Early Childhood Outdoor Learning Environments – Vision and Values
Department for Education and Child Development – South Australia
www.earlyyears.sa.edu.au/files/links/A4_Value_Vision_pamphlet_s.pdf

Playground Manual 2007
Department of Recreation and Sport – South Australia
www.recsport.sa.gov.au/pdf/Revised%20Playgrounds%20Manual%20v2%2015%20November%20ORS%20version.pdf

Site Profiles 1-4 - Early Childhood Outdoor Learning Environments
Department for Education and Child Development – South Australia
www.earlyyears.sa.edu.au/pages/Resources

Outdoor Play Guide for Victorian Children's Services
Department of Education of Education and Early Childhood Development - Victoria
http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/107921/20100120-1116/www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/childcare/dg/ecs_design_guide_april_2005v1.pdf
Note: This publication has been archived due to outdated links through legislative changes; however design principles and concepts are relevant.

Natural environments photographs, Practice Note 5(a)
Department of Education of Education and Early Childhood Development - Victoria
www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/licensed/pn5a-natenvirments.pdf

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