الهيئة السعودية للمواصفات والمقاييس والجودة

Saudi Standards, Metrology and Quality Org.(SASO)

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معايير بيئة الطفولة المبكرة

Early Childhood Environment Standards

الهيئة السعودية للمواصفات والمقاييس والجودة

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Introduction

The Saudi Standards, Metrology and Quality Organization (SASO), in cooperation with Al-Muhaidib Social Foundation, developed the standard specification "Early Childhood Environment Standards" after reviewing a number of relevant standards and reference literature and by engaging stakeholders

In this specification the following verbal forms are used to guide the understanding and clarification of the requirements involved:

— "must" indicates an external requirement from the relevant authorities;

— "shall" indicates a requirement;

— "should" indicates a recommendation;

— "may" indicates permission;

— "can" indicates possibility and capability.

It is the responsibility of each party using this document to satisfy any updates to external requirements or to satisfy any additional requirements from the requirements of other relevant external parties.

Contents

Early Childhood Environment Standards

1   Scope

This document specifies the Early Childhood Environment Standards. This document is applicable to Early Childhood Centers (ECC) providing education and/or care services for children from birth to 8 years old. It excludes portable hospitality centers whereas applicable standards can be used as guidance.

2   Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3   Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1

Assessment

A process of observing and documenting information about a child and evaluating their development.

3.2

Caregiver

An adult who is qualified in early childhood care and education and is responsible for the care and development of a child or group of children.

3.3

Child

A young human from birth to 8 years of age.

3.4

Child Protection

Part of the safeguarding process to ensure the safety of children from harm or suffering.

3.5

Cognitive Development

The process of acquiring knowledge, thinking, and reasoning skills.

3.6

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

An ongoing process of personal and professional development through upskilling and gaining further knowledge and skills.

3.7

Creative Development

The process of responding to and expressing one's own ideas using different media and materials.

3.8

Culture

Shared beliefs, norms, behaviors, and values of a given group of people.

3.9

Cultural Diversity

The existence of a variety of cultural or ethnic groups within a society.

3.10

Development

A process of physical, physiological, and behavioral growth and cognitive advancement.

3.11

Early Childhood Centre (ECC)

An establishment for the care and education of children from 0-8 years of age.

3.12

Emotional Development

The process of expressing, recognizing and managing one's own feelings and emotions.

3.13

Evacuation Crib

A crib with sturdy wheels to transport infants and/or young children out of a room quickly.

3.14

Individual Education Plan

A plan or program developed to support the specific needs of a child with special needs.

3.15

Infant

A very young child from birth - 1 year of age.

3.16

Language Development

The process of acquiring speaking, listening and literacy (reading and writing) skills.

3.17

Learning Experience

Any interaction, course, program, or other experiences in which learning takes place.

3.18

Observation

The practice of watching and listening to children to find out how they are developing, what they are learning and their likes and dislikes.

3.19

Physical Development

The process of acquiring fine motor, gross motor and coordination skills.

3.20

Planning

The process of organizing learning experience, activities and resources to support children's development.

3.21

Policy

A set of principles of action adopted or proposed by an ECC.

3.22

Safeguarding

A set of measures to protect infants, children and adults from damage or harm.

3.23

Social Development

The process of learning to create and sustain meaningful relationships and interactions with others.

3.24

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

A child or adult that needs additional support who has learning difficulties or a physical disability.

3.25

Whistleblowing

When an employee raises a concern about a dangerous, illegal activity or wrongdoing of a colleague of the ECC that puts children at harm or risk.

3.26

Wellbeing

The feeling of being comfortable, healthy, and happy.

4   Leadership and Governance

4.1   Quality Assurance

The ECC should have an evaluation and improvement process in place. The system should support the ongoing improvement and development of the ECC to ensure and all standards of the Early Childhood Environmental Framework are met. The evaluation system should provide evidence and documentation of improvement. The process should be ongoing in a cyclic process. The ECC can refer to ISO 9001 regarding quality management systems.

4.2   Roles and Responsibilities

All employees of the ECC shall be given a job description detailing their roles and responsibilities.

4.2.1 Strategic Leadership

The ECC should have a designated leader/leadership team, this can be an additional role of responsibility. They shall have a clear vision and mission in place to build, promote, and drive the ECC forward. The leader/

leadership team should build and promote a positive organizational culture and a professional learning community.

4.2.2   Director

The ECC shall have a designated director who shall deal with the day-to-day operations of the ECC. The director shall ensure all aspects of the ECC runs smoothly and shall ensure all standards of the Early Childhood Environment Framework are implemented. The director should deal with any staff or parent grievances, licensing, or operational requirements.

4.2.3   Assistant Director

The ECC should have a designated assistant director who shall take on the role of director in the absence of the director and deal with the day-to-day operations of the ECC. The assistant director shall ensure all aspects of the ECC runs smoothly and shall ensure all standards of the Early Childhood Environment Framework are implemented during the absence of the director. Large ECC's may have an assistant director to support the director on a daily basis.

4.2.4   Program Coordinator

The ECC should have a designated program coordinator, this can be an additional role of responsibility. The program coordinator should lead and support the implementation and development of the ECC's learning experiences, activities, and program. The program coordinator shall support and lead the development and implementation of the learning program, observations and planning cycle to ensure learning and development takes place for all children in the ECC.

4.2.5   Caregiver

The ECC shall have designated caregivers who are experienced and qualified to care for and teach the age group of children they work with. They shall provide learning experiences, activities and implement the learning program. The caregiver shall provide care and ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of all children in their care.

4.2.6   Assistant Caregiver

The ECC shall have designated assistant caregivers who are experienced and qualified to work with the designated age group of children. They shall support with providing learning experiences, activities, and the implementation of the learning program. The assistant caregiver shall support the care of children and ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all children in their care.

4.2.7   Special Educational Needs Coordinator

The ECC should have a designated special educational needs coordinator (SENCO), this can be an additional role of responsibility. The SENCO shall be qualified and have experience of working with children with special and additional needs. They should provide support to colleagues and advise on the next steps and possible actions to be taken in the identification and support of children with special education needs. The SENCO should be responsible for development, sharing and implementation of Individual Education Development Plans and the monitoring of progress. The SENCO should liaise with parents / guardians, professionals and agencies outside of the ECC.

4.2.8   Special Educational Needs Assistant

The ECC may have a special educational needs assistant to support the SENCO and/or support individual children or groups of children with specific aspects of their learning and/or development. The special educational needs assistant may shadow a specific child and support them with their day-to-day life in the ECC.

The special educational needs assistant should be qualified and have experience of working with children with special and additional needs.

4.2.9   Nurse

An ECC should have a designated nurse who is experienced and qualified to work with children.

The nurse should be responsible for carrying out first aid treatment and administering any prescription medication as per the doctor's instruction and authorized by the parents/guardians. The nurse should be responsible for informing parents/ guardians of any incidents, accidents and treatment given. The nurse should be responsible for updating children's vaccination records and informing staff members of any new or existing allergies or medical issues of specific children.

4.2.10   Admin Personnel

The ECC should have a designated admin personnel this can be an additional role of responsibility. The admin personnel should not be responsible for the planning of children's daily activities but should deal with the day-to-day administration, communication and correspondence of the ECC. The administrator should be responsible for and is not limited to the filing and organization of the ECC, child and staff records. The admin personnel may be responsible for collecting fees and keeping the financial records of the ECC.

4.2.11   Cleaners

The ECC shall have designated cleaners for every 20 children, their role is limited to cleaning work only and they shall not be permitted to be tasked with childcare related tasks.

4.2.12   Security Guard

The ECC shall have a designated guard on the external gate of the ECC. They shall have a communication device and the necessary administrative tools to record the visitation of individuals. The guard shall be provided with a special designated place to conduct their duties. They shall not be permitted to be tasked with childcare related tasks.

4.2.13   Driver with an Escort

If the ECC provides transport the ECC shall have designated driver/s and escort/s.

4.3   Recruitment

The ECC shall have Recruitment Policy in place that explains the process and procedures in recruiting new members of staff. The policy shall state that all employees in the ECC shall hold a valid health certificate from the municipality prior to working with children in the ECC.

The policy should also include, the advertising, application, interview, referencing and the importance of conducting background checks to ensure the right employee is hired and is fit and safe to work with children. The recruitment policy should outline how they orientate new members of staff through the induction program. The policy should also outline the contract requirements such as the probation period.

The ECC should have a pay scale clearly showing the pay distribution for different roles and responsibilities, years of experience.

4.4   Finance

4.4.1 Financial Accounting

The ECC shall have a financial management system in place, it should track the payments, projected forecasts, profits, losses, balance sheets, cash flow and any other monetary systems. Financial records shall be kept for 3-5 years.

4.4.2 Fees

The ECC shall have a fee structure in place that is clearly visible. The fees shall clearly explain the pricing for the number of days, hours and activities provided. The fee shall also include details of payment dates, payment plans and any additional fees, for example, art supplies, materials, and trip.

4.4.3 Refunds

The ECC shall have a Refund Policy in place that details the eligibility for a refund, the process and way to calculate the remuneration to be reimbursed.

4.5 Record Keeping

All licenses, records, and policies shall be accurate and kept up to date. The ECC shall have a Confidentiality Policy in place to ensure all paper based and electronic documents, records and personal information of staff and children remain confidential. The policy shall outline how the records are stored in a safe place with access given to specific designated staff.

4.5.1 Center Records

4.5.1.1 Attendance Records

A daily log of attendance of staff and children shall be kept along with a record of any visitor entering and leaving the premises. The attendance log shall record the arrival and departure times of all staff, children and visitors and will be used as a muster roll in the event of an emergency or evaluation. Any member of staff that leaves the premises during working hours shall inform their line manager of their departure and return to ensure the adult: child ratio is always maintained.

4.5.1.2 Evacuation Drill Records

A record of regular evacuation drills shall be carried out along with the time it takes to fully evacuate the building.

4.5.1.3 Commercial Records, Building Permits and Safety Certificates

The ECC must have a Commercial Record and Building Permit as per the Ministry of Rural Affairs and Housing or other relevant authority requirements and must have copies of all other relevant government and regulatory documentation including a certificate from the Civil Defense or the relevant authority stating the premise has all the safety requirements in place.

4.5.2 Children's Records

4.5.2.1 Child's Official Documents and Contact Information

The ECC must keep up to date records of every child's full name, date of birth as per the required documents.

The ECC must have a copy of the child's birth certificate or family record and a copy of the child's passport and valid visa/Iqama for non-Saudis. The ECC must have a record of the child's address and must have the names and contact information of the child's parents /guardian and emergency contact details including an up-to-date phone number.

The ECC must have a copy of the child's health certificates as per the Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development or relevant authority requirements.

4.5.2.2 Other Child Records

The ECC shall keep a record of every child's enrolment /admission forms and any declarations signed by the parents/ guardians. The record shall show the number of days, hours, and activities the parent/ guardian has agreed to and the fees.

The ECC shall keep a record of every child's daily attendance and should record the departure time from the center.

The ECC shall keep a record of every child's medical history including an up-to-date record of vaccinations, special requirements, food allergies or medication the child may need to take. Record of any accident or incident that may occur at the ECC shall also be kept on in the children record file.

The ECC shall keep a record of every child's reports and/or learning journey and any other specific assessments or specialized reports the child may have.

4.5.3 Staff Records

The ECC shall keep up to date records of every member of staff, this shall include the member of staff's full name and date of birth as per their official documents (passport/Iqama or ID card). The ECC shall also keep a copy of the staff members ID (passport/Iqama or ID), contact details, next of kin details, copies of the member of staff's contracts, qualifications, certificates, and other relevant documents. For non-Saudi nationals, copies of the individual's visa/Iqama documents shall also be kept on file.

The ECC shall keep a record of every member of staff's contract, qualifications and a copy of their up-to-date health certificate for the municipality.

The ECC shall keep a record of any staff member who has a known allergy or needs to take regular medication.

The ECC should keep a record of every member of staff's performance management records these should include and are not limited to; individual personal development plans, lesson observations, participation in professional development training and attended hours and any coaching or mentoring sessions that may have taken place.

The ECC should keep a record of any staff meetings, parent workshops or other such events.

4.6   Information Sharing

The ECC shall have a Confidentiality Policy and a Data Protection Policy in place outlining the process and procedures followed to ensure the information and records stored by the ECC remain confidential and are not shared with any unknown third parties or unauthorized personnel. The ECC can refer to the National Data Governance Regulations (Data Sharing Clause) from the Saudi Data and Artificial Intelligence Authority (SDAIA).

The ECC shall have a regular two-way communication with parents/guardians and shall share the following information with the parents /guardians:

— The learning program and how it supports all aspects of child development and learning and how parents/ guardians can access more information.

— The daily routine and a range of learning experiences and activities provided for the children and how parents/guardians can support their children's development at home.

— The child's progress in all aspects of learning and development.

4.7   Policies and Procedures

The ECC shall develop, implement, and maintain the policies and procedures outlined in Annex A. The policies and procedures shall be reviewed, updated, and edited on a regular basis, any updates, changes or additions to any of the policies and procedures shall be shared with staff.

4.7.1 Admissions Policy

The ECC shall have an Admissions Policy in place outlining the process, procedures and documents required when registering a new child. An Induction Pack should be made available for parents/ guardians explaining the documentation required to register their child and a link or copies of the relevant policies that explain how the ECC intends to ensure the health and safety of their child. The parents/ guardians should sign an acknowledgement to say they have read and understood the policies and agree to the philosophy of the ECC. The policy shall clearly state the age groups served by the ECC.

4.7.2 Complaints Policy

The ECC should have a complaints process in place and a system of recording and dealing with complaints in a timely manner.

4.7.3 Drop off and Collection Policy

The ECC should have a Drop off and Collection Policy in place. The policy should include how and where children are handed over from the responsibility of the parents/ guardians to the ECC staff. The policy should also include the designated members of staff responsible for children who are dropped off early and the earliest possible time staff will be available to receive children in the morning. The policy should include the collection process of staff handing the responsibility from the ECC staff back to the parents/ guardians. The ECC shall stipulate the operational hours. The policy shall include the process and procedures taken for children who are collected late by their parents/ guardians and for children who are not collected by the designated time of closure of the ECC.

4.8 Licensing

The ECC shall have up to date knowledge of the laws and regulations relevant to ECC centers and shall have copies of all the relevant licensing documents.

5   Staffing

5.1 Staff Qualifications

5.1.1 Director Qualifications

The director shall have a bachelor's degree or higher in Education or Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) or a bachelor's degree or higher with at least one year's specialization in childcare (Kindergarten, Psychology, Sociology, Social Work) or bachelor's degree or higher with a certified ECCE qualification (Diploma/ ISCED Level 3) or a bachelor's degree or higher with a certified ECCE leadership qualification (ISCED Level 5). They shall have a minimum 2/3 year's practical experience in ECCE or education. They shall have adequate knowledge and skills in leadership and management. They shall have good knowledge of early childhood care and development. They shall have knowledge and understanding of the policies and procedures required to ensure the safety and protection of all children and staff.

5.1.2 Assistant Director Qualifications

The assistant director should have a bachelor's degree or higher in Education or Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) or a bachelor's degree or higher with at least one year's specialization in childcare (Kindergarten, Psychology, Sociology, Social Work) or bachelor's degree or higher with a certified ECCE qualification (Diploma/ ISCED Level 3) or a bachelor's degree or higher with a certified ECCE leadership qualification (ISCED Level 5). They should have a minimum 2/3 year's practical experience in ECCE or education. They should have some knowledge and skills in leadership and management. They should have good knowledge of early childhood care and development. They should have knowledge and understanding of the policies and procedures required to ensure the safety and protection of all children and staff.

5.1.3 Program Coordinator Qualifications

The program coordinator shall have a bachelor's degree in Education or Early Childhood Care and Education (ECEC) or a bachelor's degree and a certified ECCE qualification with practical experience (Diploma/ ISCED Level 3) or a High School diploma or equivalent together with a certified ECCE qualification with at least one year of practical experience (Diploma/ ISCED Level 3). They shall have a minimum of two years' work experience with children in the ECC.

5.1.4 Caregiver Qualifications

A caregiver shall have a bachelor's degree in Education or Early Childhood Care and Education (ECEC) or a bachelor's degree and a certified ECCE qualification with practical experience (Diploma/ ISCED Level 3) or a High School diploma or equivalent together with a certified ECCE qualification with practical experience (Diploma/ ISCED Level 3). They shall have a minimum of two years' work experience with children in the ECC.

5.1.5 Assistant Caregiver Qualifications

An assistant caregiver shall have a High School diploma or equivalent together with a recognized vocational certificate in Education or Early Childhood Care and Education (ECEC) with practical experience (Certificate / ISCED Level 3).

5.1.6 Special Education Needs Coordinator Qualifications

A special educational needs coordinator should have a bachelor's degree or higher with at least one year's specialization in special educational needs or a bachelor's degree or higher with a certified Special Educational Needs Qualification (ISCED Level 4).

5.1.7 Special Educational Needs Assistant Qualifications

A special education needs assistant shall have a High School certificate or equivalent together with a recognized vocational certificate in special educational needs with practical experience (Certificate / ISCED Level 3).

5.1.8 Nurse Qualifications

A nurse shall have a bachelor's degree in nursing or have a recognized vocational qualification in nursing and be registered with the Ministry of Health.

5.1.9 Admin Personnel Qualifications

An administrator have a bachelor's degree or higher in a relevant field (finance, administration, accountancy, management) or a High School diploma or equivalent together with relevant administrative qualifications (Diploma /ISCED Level 3).

5.1.10   Additional Staff Qualifications

All ECC staff including security guards, cleaners, drivers, and escorts must all have an up-to-date health certificate from the municipality or relevant authority.

5.1.11   First Aid Training

All staff should hold a recognized, up to date infant and child pediatric first aid and CPR qualification prior to working with children. At least one member of staff will hold an adult first aid and CPR qualification.

5.2 Professionalism

5.2.1 Induction Program

The ECC shall have an Induction Program in place which outlines the expected professional behaviors and code of conduct to all new members of staff. Each new member of staff shall accept and acknowledge the professional code of conduct by signing the declaration. This acceptance shall be kept in the individual staff member's file.

5.2.2 Professional Development

Every member of staff should have access to a professional development program, this should include and should not be limited to; one on one coaching and mentoring opportunities with their line manager, individual personal development plans and opportunities to attend ongoing professional development training and courses.

5.2.3 Appraisal System

The ECC should have an appraisal system in place that monitors and supports individual professional development. The appraisal system should have a set criteria to assess the staff members against and caregivers should be observed, given feedback and action points to work on.

5.3 Staff Equity

The ECC shall treat all staff equally and should evenly distribute roles and responsibilities, class sizes, timetables, breaks and staff allocation to ensure workloads are fair and reflect their position, job description and allocated pay. Staff equality may be outlined in an Equality Policy.

5.4 Staff Organization

5.4.1 Adult: Child Ratios

The ECC must adhere to the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development or other relevant authority staff: child ratios for all age groups, all of the time to ensure the safety of all children as per the guidelines. Administrators, cleaners, security staff, drivers and other non-teaching staff shall not be included in the staff: child ratios. However, it is strongly recommended that the ECC should provide higher adult child ratios for younger children:

Children from 12 months of age (1:3)

Children from 0 to 12 months of age shall have one adult to every 3 children. One adult should be a qualified caregiver and have experience of working with babies and children under two years of age and at least half of the other adults should be fully qualified caregivers or assistant caregivers and should have received training in working with babies.

Children from 13 months of age to 23 months of age (1:4)

Children from 13 to 24 months of age shall have one adult to every 4 children. One adult should be a qualified caregiver and have experience of working with babies and children   under two years of age and at least half of the other adults should be fully qualified caregivers or assistant caregivers and should have received training in working with babies.

Children from 24 months of age to 47 months of age (1:8)

Children from 24 months to 47 months of age shall have one adult to every 8 children. One adult should be a qualified caregiver and at least half of the other adults should be fully qualified caregivers or assistant caregivers.

Children from 48 months of age to 71 months of age (1:10)

Children from 4 to 6 years of age shall have one adult to every 10 children. One adult should be a qualified caregiver and at least half of the other adults should be fully qualified caregivers or assistant caregivers.

Children from 6 years to 8 years of age (1:20)

Children from 6 to 8 years of age (school aged children) shall only be accepted into the ECC after school hours. Children from 6 to 8 years of age shall have one adult to every 20 children. One adult should be a qualified caregiver and at least half of the other adults should be fully qualified caregivers or assistant caregivers.

5.4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Each member of staff shall have a job description clearly outlining their roles and responsibilities and who their designated line manager is. The job description shall be shared during the Induction Program to ensure there are clear expectations from both the employer and employee.

5.4.3 Schedules

The ECC shall have a clear staff organization chart in place, showing the breakdown and allocation of staff and any vacancies that need to be filled.

The ECC shall have a clear schedule in place stipulating the hours of work of employees and their daily schedule. The daily timetable for caregivers shall include breaks and named cover staff to ensure the adult: child ratios are adhered to at all times when children are indoors and/or outdoors.

In the event of a caregiver's absence the ECC shall deploy cover staff to ensure the staff: child ratios are maintained at all times. In the event of the director / manager being absent a named replacement shall take on the roles and responsibilities during her absence.

Caregivers should be given time to discuss any issues or concerns about a child's development or well-being with the parents/guardians, the SENCo, program coordinator or director.

The ECC shall provide a designated time to schedule weekly team meetings and should provide ongoing training to upskill their staff.

5.5 Training and Development

5.5.1 Induction program

The ECC should have a comprehensive Induction Program in place to ensure new members of staff fully understand the mission and vision of the early childhood center, their roles and responsibilities, the performance management system and continuing professional development opportunities available. The induction program shall include training and understanding of all the policies and procedures of the ECC. The new member of staff shall sign a declaration stating that they understand and will follow the policies and procedures of the ECC to ensure the health, wellbeing, safety and care of all staff and children.

5.5.2 Professional Development Training

The ECC should have a Professional Development Training Policy in place explaining the importance of ongoing professional development, and a personal development plan, stipulating the number of hours of expected training per year. A record of all staff training and each staff member's personal development plan should be kept up to date by the administrator.

The ECC shall provide training on all the policies and procedures of the ECC, in particular the policies related to Safeguarding, Child Protection and Behavior. The ECC should provide additional training on topics such as, how to support children with additional needs, how to support child's development and other relevant training.

5.5.3 Fire Safety Training

The ECC shall identify key members of staff to be trained in how to develop and execute an evacuation plan and how to ensure fire and safety prevention procedures are in place.

The ECC shall conduct quarterly evacuation drills with all employees and should conduct regular evacuation drills with children to ensure children are familiar with the exit routes and evacuation procedures.

6 Learning Programs

6.1 Program Activities

6.1.1 Daily Schedule

The ECC should have a daily schedule for each class/group that includes and is not limited to; activity time, time to rest/nap, time to eat and outdoor play. The schedules of the daily needs of the child should be considered. The children should be given as much time as feasibly possible outdoors, especially in the cooler months. The schedule should be displayed and shared with parents/ guardians.

6.1.2 The Program

The ECC program should provide an environment that is flexible, varied and age appropriate. The learning experiences, activities, and resources offered should be developmentally appropriate and the environment should:

— support children's interests

— be holistic and support all areas of development, language development, physical development, social and emotional development, cognitive development, psychological development, and behavioral development

— provide opportunities for adult directed, child initiated, small group and large group time

— have clear learning intentions

— have clearly defined learning areas.

6.2 Planning and Assessment

The ECC should have an observation, assessment, and planning cycle in place to support caregivers in the delivery of suitable learning experiences and activities that support all children's development and progress.

6.2.1 Observations

The caregivers should conduct frequent, ongoing observations (formative assessments) of children in their care. A range of different types of observation and recording methods should be used, depending on the age of the child and what is to be observed. Observations should aid in building, maintaining, and updating each child's profile and highlight their areas of strength, abilities and should help in identifying any areas of concerns with a particular child's development or progress. The parent's knowledge and input of the child should also be considered.

6.2.2 Assessment

Caregivers should use the results of their child observations and information shared by the child's parents/guardians to make an assessment. The assessment should provide valuable information about each individual child's progress and highlight any areas that should need support and any areas that should need extending. The assessment results should also identify the effectiveness of the program and highlight caregivers' understanding of their children's needs. The ECC should keep parents/guardians up to date with their child's progress and development.

6.2.3 Planning

Caregivers should plan learning experiences and activities based on their observations and assessments. Learning experiences and activities should be age and stage appropriate and should enable children to explore, discover, question, and enjoy. Planning can take on different formats and should comprise of long-term, medium-term, and short-term plans. The ECC should have consistency in the planning formats used, however caregivers should be given the opportunity to adapt their planning to suit different age groups. An overview of the week's planning should be shared with parents/guardians.

Individual Education Plans (IEP's) should be developed for children with additional needs. The IEP should have achievable targets that are specific to the individual child and should support them to make progress and learn new skills.

6.2.4 Implementation

Caregivers should set up and deliver / implement what they have planned and should make adaptations as appropriate.

6.2.5 Feedback and Reflection

Caregivers should reflect on what went well, what should have been better and should make appropriate adaptations to the program, learning experiences and activities to ensure all children make progress.

This cyclic design should enable caregivers to continually, observe, assess, plan, implement and reflect to ensure all children in their care make progress.

6.3 Using Technology

The ECC should provide an environment that uses different types of technology to enhance learning, this should include, computers, tablets, printers, scanners, cameras, beebots, roamers, microphones, electronic and battery-operated toys. The ECC shall be mindful of the apps, digital books, games, programs, video chatting and different media platforms they use. The aim of technology shall be to support children's development and those children with additional needs. Technology shall not be used as a substitute for a caregiver.

Technology should support children's language development, physical development, math, science, creative development, social and emotional development and should be integrated into all other areas. Opportunities for technology should also be provided outside and should differ to that of the indoor space.

6.4 Language Development

The ECC should create an environment that shall support language development. Children should be given the opportunity to develop vital speaking and listening skills and actively listen, respond, and participate in back-and-forth conversations and interactions. Children should be given opportunities to develop their vocabulary, question, explain and express their ideas, feelings, needs and wants. Children should be given the opportunity to develop their skills in linguistic intelligence, communication, and verbal and non-verbal expression of self, environment, and needs. Careful scaffolding should support the different developmental stages. Children should initially develop an interest in books, and an awareness of print before being introduced to pre-reading and literacy skills. Children should only be supported to independently read and write when linguistically and developmentally ready. A range of different learning experience, activities and resources should be available both indoor and outdoor spaces, and should include:

6.4.1 Speaking and Listening

The ECC environment should have adult and children's chatter. All children shall be spoken to and listened to even the youngest of children. caregivers and other significant adults should sing songs, engage in action

rhymes and clapping songs, play music, read stories, share information, question, model language, interact and engage with children, using age-appropriate vocabulary to stimulate and support speaking and listening skills.

6.4.2 Book / Reading Area

The ECC shall create an area that provides opportunities for children to independently connect with books. There should be an inviting, quiet, cozy space in each classroom and in the outdoors where children can feel calm, relaxed, and comfortable. The area should have comfortable seating and cushions. It should be a space where children can read books independently, and where adults and children can share stories and books. The books should be accessible to the children Arabic with additional books of another prominent language, for example, English. The book / reading area should include:

Under 2 years old

— books, board books and some paper books

— fiction and non-fiction books

— nursery rhyme books

— puppets and soft toys.

2-5 years old

— some board books, mostly paperback books

— fiction and non-fiction books

— traditional stories and rhymes

— books that reflect diversity and inclusion

— books that reflect cultural identity

— books that promote Saudi heritage and culture

— books made by children

— audio books

— story props and puppets

— soft toys.

6-8 years old

- paperback books, some chapter books

- fiction and non-fiction books

- traditional stories and rhymes

- books that reflect diversity and inclusion

- books that reflect cultural identity

- books that promote Saudi heritage and culture

- poems

- comics and magazines

- books written by children

- audio books

- story props and puppets.

Books should also be available in other areas of the classroom to support specific topics and points of interest. An ECC may choose to have an additional library space for the children to regularly visit.

6.4.3 Mark Making / Writing Area

The ECC shall create an area that provides opportunities for mark making and writing. Children should be given opportunities to mark, make, draw, write, freely express themselves, work independently or with the support and guidance of an adult. Classrooms with children over 2 years old should create an engaging mark making / writing space with a table and chairs for children to sit comfortably, children should also be encouraged to work on other surfaces such as large pieces of paper on the floor or wall. There should be a shelf with an interesting range of writing materials and resources that should be easily accessible and support the prominent language/s of the ECC. The mark making and writing area should be age appropriate and should include:

Under 2 years old
- Mark making tools – large chunky crayons, thick pencils, thick pens, stamps, and fingers.
- Mark Making surfaces – large paper, different colored paper, card and paper plates.
- Sensory materials – edible and non-edible materials; rice and pasta.

2-5 years olds
- Mark making and writing tools – crayons of different thicknesses, pencils, pens, stamps, chunky chalk, and whiteboard pens.
- Mark Making surfaces – different sizes and textures of paper and card, concrete floors, walls, windows, mirrors, Perspex, whiteboard, easels, and wet sand.
- Writing prompts – zig zag books, tracing cards, writing templates, such as, birthday cards, and shopping lists.
- Stationary equipment - tape, hole punch, glue, scissors, clip board, whiteboards, post it notes and envelopes.

6-8 years olds

— Writing tools – pencils, colored pencils, different types of pens, stamps, and whiteboard pens.

— Writing surfaces – different sizes and textures of paper and card, journals, diary, laminated cards, and mini whiteboards.

— Writing prompts –writing templates, such as, invitation cards, recipe cards, and posters. alphabet cards, magnetic letters, letter fans, wooden and sandpaper letters.

— Stationary equipment - stapler, tape, hole punch, glue, scissors, rulers, paperclips, string, clip boards, whiteboards, post-it notes, and envelopes.

Mark making and writing opportunities should be available in all areas of the indoor and outdoor environment.

6.4.4 Environmental Print

The ECC should encourage print in the environment, such as, signs, labels, displays and instructions. Caregivers should label storage boxes, cupboards, and shelves to support children's literacy awareness and aid in independently selecting and putting resources away. Children's names should be clearly visible to indicate their personal space and a place to keep their belongings. Any work produced or displayed should have the child's name clearly written. Environmental print should be in all areas of learning.

Books, reading areas, mark making, writing opportunities, environmental print, speaking and listening interactions should be supported in all aspects of the indoor and outdoor environments and should be integrated into all other areas of development including, physical development, cognitive development, creative development, social and emotional development.

6.5 Physical Development

The ECC should create an environment that shall support physical development both indoors and outdoors to promote a healthy and active lifestyle. Children should be given the opportunity to run, jump, balance, climb and take elements of safe risk to develop their special awareness, coordination and develop their gross motor skills and large muscles. Children should also be given the opportunity to develop their fine motor skills such as, hand-eye coordination which is linked to early reading, finger-eye coordination, finger strength and control which is linked to early writing. A range of different learning experience, activities and resources should be available both indoor and outdoor spaces, and should include:

6.5.1 Large Play Area

The ECC should create an area that shall support children's gross motor skills. There should be clearly defined spaces for children under 2. A range of different learning experience, activities and resources should be available both indoor and outdoor, and should include:

Under 2 years old

Playmats with mobiles to bat and grab, baby swings, age-appropriate climbing frames, crawling tunnels, a range of different rides on push toys and bikes, push along walking aids. The ECC shall not provide large sit in walkers.

2-5 years olds

Age-appropriate climbing frames, crawling tunnels, balance bikes, trikes of different sizes and designs, balancing beams, bats, small and large soft to medium balls, bean bags, different sized hoops, and a medium sized parachute.

6-8 years olds

Age-appropriate climbing frames, balance bikes, trikes of different sizes and designs, two-wheel bikes with pedals, balancing beams, bats, large and small balls, hoops, cones, goals, parachutes and skipping ropes.

6.5.2 Construction Area

The ECC should create an area that shall enable children to develop their motor skills by constructing and building. Classrooms with children over 2 years old should create a construction. There should be a carpet and storage shelf with a range of different materials and resources that should be easily accessible to the children. A range of different learning experience, activities and resources should be available both indoor and outdoor, and should include:

Under 2 years old
— Indoors - stackable cups, large blocks of different sizes and weights.
— Outdoors - Recycled materials, cardboard boxes and crates.

2-5 years olds
— Indoors– large lightweight blocks, wooden blocks, and Duplo.
— Outdoors - crates, planks, sheets, tiers, and tents

6-8 years olds
— Indoors - Lego, magnetic tiles, construction kits.
— Outdoors – parachute, crates, planks, sheets, tiers, and tents.

6.5.3 Sand and Water Area

The ECC should create areas that shall enable children to explore, experiment with sand and water. Sand and water play may be indoors and or outdoor and should be in an area that is easily cleanable. There should be storage facilities, such as a shelf or large boxes to store a range of different objects, and resources they should be easily accessible to the children. A range of different learning experience, activities and resources should be available, and should include:

Under 2 years old
— Buckets, spades, scoops, wheels, funnels, and cups.

2-5 years olds
— Buckets, spades, scoops, wheels, funnels, sieves, bottles, cups, large pipette, and small world objects.

6-8 years olds
— Buckets, spades, spoons, funnels, sieves, bottles, measuring cups, pipes, different sized pipets, small world objects, floating and sinking objects.

6.5.4 Physical Education

The ECC should create an area that provides space for children to engage in a physical education program. The space should be outdoors and indoors where children should participate in a regular physical education program that should focus on a range of different skills appropriate for the different ages and stages of development, the program should include infant tummy time activities. There should be an appropriate storage facility to store a range of equipment which should include:

— bean bags, a range of different sized and textured balls and bats

— hoops, cones, walking stilts, skipping ropes, and balancing beams.

— parachutes.

6.5.5 Enhancing Physical Development

The ECC should incorporate additional resources, learning experiences and activities in the indoor and outdoor environment that should further support children's gross and fine motor skills. They should be stored in an appropriate place which should be easily accessible to children and should include:

Under 2 years old
— wooden puzzles, floor puzzles, push along toys and ramps.

2-5 years olds
— large cars, garage, ramps, Duplo, pushchairs, threading cards, laces, beads, tongs, and small world objects.

6-8 years olds
— a range of different types of puzzles that increase in difficulty and the number of pieces, small movable vehicles, Lego, sewing kits, small threading kits, tweezers, small work objects, woodwork benches and tools.

Physical development should be supported in all aspects of the indoor and outdoor environments and should be integrated into all other areas of development including, language development, cognitive development, creative development, social and emotional development. Opportunities for physical development outside and should differ to that of the indoor space.

6.6 Social and Emotional Development

The ECC should create a physical and emotional environment that shall support social and emotional development. The environments shall ensure all infants and children feel safe, happy, and secure and should support children to develop important social skills and how to self-regulate and manage their own emotions.

6.6.1 Interactions

The ECC shall provide a positive emotional environment and values the interactions children have with their parents/guardians, caregivers, and each other as a vital role in the development of children's social and emotional development. The ECC should provide children with:

- Adults who:
    - show empathy and are caring to their individual needs
    - build meaningful, positive, warm relationships
    - understand and support their emotions and feelings.
- a sense of feeling safe and secure
- the opportunity to show and express their feelings and emotions
- a warm and welcoming environment
- a feeling of being included especially for children with special educational needs and disabilities
- independence, support, and guidance
- stability
- opportunities to build friendships with other children.

The ECC shall refer to Clause 7 for detailed guidance on interactions and relationships within the ECC.

6.6.2 Behavior Management

The ECC shall have a Behavior Policy in place that shall promote principles and values of social responsibilities, respect for others, honesty, patience, and resilience. The policy should outline the behavioral aims of the ECC, strategies for promoting positive behavior and how to manage challenging behaviors to ensure all children remain safe and develop a positive sense of wellbeing. The ECC shall use and display age-appropriate tools that promote positive behavior.

The ECC should have an Anti-Bullying Policy in place that outlines the signs to look out for, necessary steps to be taken and support to be provided to both the child who is being bullied and the bully.

6.6.3 Role Play Area

The ECC should create an area that should provide opportunities for role play. Children should be able to use their imagination and take on different roles. Classrooms with children over 2 years old should create an inviting role play area that has a theme and simulates a 'real' life environment for example, a home corner. The space may use child sized appropriate furniture, partitions, recycled material, cushions, props, and soft furnishings. There should be a range of dressing up clothes, pretend and real, tools and objects, books, signs, and labels. Role play should support all areas of development, in particular creativity, speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

The social and emotional environment is fundamental to children's learning and development and should be supported in all aspects of the indoor and outdoor environments and should be integrated into all other areas of development including, language development, physical development, cognitive development, and creative development.

6.7 Cognitive Development

The ECC should create an environment that shall support different aspects of cognitive development. Children should be given the opportunity to develop mathematical and scientific skills and knowledge. They should be given opportunities to develop an awareness and respect for the natural environment. A range of different learning experience, activities and resources should be available both indoor and outdoor spaces, and should include:

6.7.1 Math Area

The ECC should create opportunities for mathematical development. Children should be encouraged to develop mathematical skills of number, pattern, shape, spaces, and measure. Math should be embedded into daily practice and children should be encouraged to identify patterns, relationships and connections through meaningful, practical, hands-on experience and should not be guided solely by worksheets and paper-based tasks.

Classrooms with children over 2 years old should create an engaging math area with a table, chairs and a small carpet for children to sit comfortably and a shelf for children to independently select resources, materials, and tools. The space should be changed regularly to have a different focus. The area should include:

Under 2 years old
— Number – props for counting games, props for counting songs, large numbers to 5, and a variety of natural and man-made counting objects.
— Shape, Space and Measure – different shapes, sizes, and lengths of objects, large 2D and 3D shapes, filling and pouring containers, bottles, and cups for water and sand play.
— General – plates, bowls, objects, cardboard boxes, baskets, and containers.

2-5 years olds
— Number – props for counting games, props for number song, numbers, ten frames, number lines, washing line, magnetic numbers, calculators, number fans, variety of counting objects; shells, pebbles, cubes, bottle tops…
— Shape, Space and Measure – rulers, tape measures, sand timers, clock, balances, scales, 2D and 3D objects, magnetic shapes, measuring cups, scoops and spoons for water and sand play.
— General – counting books, shape books, plates, trays, sorting trays, puzzles, whiteboards, and pens.

6-8 years olds
— Number – props for number games and songs, numbers 10 and beyond, ten frames, small dice number lines, washing line, magnetic numbers, 100 squares, calculators, and a variety of small counting objects.
— Shape, Space and Measure – rulers, tape measures, sand timers, clock, balances, electronic weighing scales, 2D and 3D objects, magnetic shapes, small measuring cups, scoops and spoons for water and sand play.
— General – plates, trays, sorting trays, puzzles, whiteboards, and pens.

Math development should be supported in all aspects of the indoor and outdoor environments and should be integrated into all other areas of development including language development, physical development, science, creative development, social and emotional development. Opportunities for math outdoors should differ to that of the indoor space.

6.7.2 Science Area

The ECC should create an environment that encourages children to explore, experiment and investigate both indoors and outdoors. The environment should be encouraged to use their senses to see, smell, hear, taste and touch to make sense of the world. Children should be given practical, hands-on experience and should not be guided solely by worksheets and paper-based tasks.

Classrooms with children over 2 years old should create an inviting science and investigation area with a table and chairs for children to sit comfortably to interact, explore and test their ideas. There should be a shelf for children to independently select an interesting range of tools, natural materials, objects, and books. The area should be changed regularly to have a different focus. The area should include:

Under 2 years old
— Tools – magnifying glasses, torches, mirrors, and color paddles.

— Materials and Objects – treasure baskets, different colors and textures of fabric, large pebbles, feathers, leaves, see through colored blocks, objects of different textures, smells, and sounds.

— Books – non-fiction books, photographs and pictures of birds, insects, and animals.

2-5 years olds
— Tools – magnifying glasses, simple torches, magnets, paddles, mirrors, binoculars, and specimen jars.

— Materials and Objects – natural and sensory materials; fabric, pebbles, shells, twigs, leaves, plants, feathers, fossils, herbs and spices, magnetic and non-magnetic objects, floating and sinking objects, pencils, pens, clip boards, white boards, and pens.

— Books – non-fiction books, posters, photographs of real insects, animals, plants, flowers and things of interest, magazines.

6-8 years olds
— Tools – magnifying glasses, different types of torches, different types of magnets, different types of mirrors and prisms, binoculars, pipette, tweezers, microscope, petri dishes and specimen jars of different sizes.

— Materials and Objects – natural and manmade materials, rocks, shells, twigs, leaves, plants, fossils, magnetic and non-magnetic objects, floating and sinking objects, paperclips, elastic bands, pencils, pens, clip boards, white boards, and pens.

— Books – non-fiction books, fact posters, magazines, photographs of planets, stars, and things of interest.

6.7.3 Nature Area

The ECC should create an area that enables children to be involved in planting and caring for plants. There should be a designated area outdoors, however it may be indoors and should be easily accessible by the children and should include:
— the natural ground or raised planter boxes or pots

— A variety of child friendly plants, including sensory plant with prominent fragrance, flower, fruits plant, vegetable plants and seeds

— Gardening tools, spades, rakes and watering cans.

The ECC should create opportunities for the children to be involved in taking care of and handling pets/ animals. The pets/ animals should be child friendly, disease free and manageable to take care of.

Science exploration and investigation, activities, tools, and resources should be supported in all aspects of the indoor and outdoor environments and should be integrated into all other areas of development including language development, physical development, creative development, social and emotional development.

6.8 Creative Development

The ECC should create an environment that shall support creative development. Children should be given the opportunity to use their imagination and creativity through music, visual arts, role play, drama and storytelling using a variety of skills, techniques, and resources. A range of different learning experience, activities and resources should be available both indoor and outdoor spaces, and should include:

6.8.1 Creative Area

The ECC should create an environment that shall provide opportunities for arts and crafts. Children should be given opportunities to freely create their own pieces of art, work independently or with the support and guidance of an adult. Classrooms with children over 2 years old should create an exciting creative area with a

table and chairs for children to sit comfortably and engage in messy activities. There should be a shelf with an interesting range of tools, materials and resources that should be easily accessible. The creative area should be age appropriate and should include:

Under 2 years old
— Tools – large chunky crayons, thick pencils, thick pens, thick paint brushes, assortment of brushes, sponges, and fingers.
— Surfaces – large paper, card, concrete floor, walls, windows, Perspex, mirrors, large trays.
— Materials – edible and non-edible materials; rice, pasta, glitter, playdough, white glue, glue sticks, and paint.

2-5 years olds
— Tools – crayons of different thicknesses, pencils, pens, paint brushes of variable thicknesses, sponges, playdough tools, cookie cutters, scissors, and paint pots.
— Surfaces – different sizes and textures of paper and card, newspaper, concrete floors, walls, windows, mirrors, Perspex, and easels.
— Materials – poster paint, watercolor paint palette, recycled materials, glitter, sequins, popsicle sticks, tape, feathers, glue sticks, white glue, playdough and salt dough.

6-8 years olds
— Tools - pencils, colored pencils, different types of pens, paint brushes of variable thicknesses, clay sculpting tools, cookie cutters, scissors, and color mixing palette.
— Surfaces – different sizes and textures of paper and card and recycled materials.
— Materials – poster paint, watercolor paint palette, recycled materials, glitter, sequins, popsicle sticks, tape, feathers, glue sticks, white glue, clay, and plasticine.

6.8.2 Music and Movement

The ECC should create an environment that should provide opportunities for children to engage with music, movement, songs and instruments and create their own tunes, songs, and rhythms and rhymes. Each classroom should have a basket, box or space for children to independently access a range of simple musical instruments. Larger ECC's may choose to have a designated music room that children can visit weekly with a specialist music teacher.

6.8.3 Performing Arts (Drama)

The ECC should also provide an environment where children can be involved in short performances, plays and opportunities to showcase their work. There should be a facility either indoors or outdoors where children can perform and invited adults to watch.

7   Interactive Environment

7.1 Acceptance and Respect

7.1.1 Culture and Heritage

The ECC should respect and appreciate Saudi heritage and culture and should include a range of age-appropriate cultural activities and events, including Saudi National Day and Founding Day. The ECC should use some traditional fabrics, cushions, props, and items in the learning areas for children to use and further understand and appreciate Saudi culture and customs.

7.1.2 Cultural Identity and Diversity

The ECC should be inclusive and accept children from different cultures and backgrounds. The ECC should show an awareness, appreciation, and understanding of different cultures and languages from around the world. The ECC should aim to build positive relationships with all parents/ guardians, children and staff from a diverse range of backgrounds. The ECC should celebrate the different cultures and languages of the ECC.

7.2 Relationships between Caregivers and Parents/Guardians

The ECC should create an environment where parents/ guardians feel welcome and a valued part of the ECC. The ECC should recognize the environment is more than the physical space and includes the relationships between the parents/ guardians and the staff of the ECC. The ECC should seek to create a positive emotional environment where communication and engagement should be key aspects of building strong, trusting relationships with parents/guardians.

7.2.1 Communication

The ECC should have a two-way communication system between home and school that should enable staff and parents/ guardians to communicate in an open and supportive manner.

The ECC should provide parents with information about their child's day at the ECC, this should include and is not limited to, daily diaper changes, daily activities, eating habits and the child's general mood/attitude and parents should be encouraged to share information about their child that may affect their day. The ECC should provide regular newsletters and updates of any events planned and other important information and should include any staff changes that may affect their child.

The ECC should create regular opportunities for staff, parents/ guardians to discuss the progress of each child and should provide guidance to parents on how to support their child's development through different learning experiences, activities, and projects.

The ECC should share relevant policies and procedures with the parents.

Parents should be given the opportunity to share their views, ideas, and thoughts.

7.2.2 Engagement

The ECC should encourage parents/guardians to connect with each other and should facilitate events such as coffee mornings. The ECC should provide support for parents/ guardians and offer parent workshops and training.

The ECC should invite parents/guardians into the ECC to be involved in activities and events, such as, reading stories, special events, and showcasing children's work.

The ECC should value parents/ guardians' opinions and should create partnership opportunities for parents/guardians to give feedback on the positive aspects of the ECC and how they could improve.

The ECC should have a Settling-In Policy that outlines the process and procedures in place. It should stress the need for a partnership between parents/ guardians and the caregivers. The policy should provide guidance and support for caregivers in settling new children and their families into the ECC. The policy should include the importance of building positive relationships between the caregivers, parents/ guardians and their children and should include strategies and approaches used to welcome and settle children into the ECC.

The ECC should have a Parent Handbook that includes the enrolment and registration process and should include useful information about the ECC, such as, the ECCs mission and values, a sample daily schedule, timings, and copies of or links to relevant policies and procedures.

7.3 Relationships between Caregivers and Children

The ECC shall create an environment where children feel happy, safe, and secure. The ECC should recognize the environment is more than the physical space and should include the attachments, emotional bonds and

relationships made between caregivers and children. The ECC should seek to create a positive emotional environment where caregivers should form strong attachments and should be responsive to each child's needs. These should be key elements of building strong, trusting professional relationships with each individual child in their care.

7.3.1 Attachments

Caregivers should develop trusting professional relationships with all children. They should have a genuine bond and a secure attachment with each child in their care and should create a warm, caring environment where children's voices are heard. Caregivers should respect, acknowledge, and respond sensitively to children's needs and feelings.

7.3.2 Responsive Caregivers

Responsive caregivers should take the time to support children with the transition from home to the ECC and should help them to become familiar with the ECC, rules and routines. Caregivers should continue to support children daily as they separate from their parents/ guardians.

Caregivers should understand each child is unique and should be responsive to their individual needs.

Caregivers should listen to and value children's ideas, suggestions, and questions and should support each child to thrive and flourish.

Caregivers should make careful ongoing observations and assessments of each child and should understand and respond appropriately to their moods, temperaments, likes, dislikes, and needs. Caregivers should support every child's individual learning journey.

Caregivers should be empathetic and understanding and should support each child to manage their feelings and behaviors. Caregivers should help children feel happy, secure, and become confident.

Caregivers should be aware of their own words, feelings, and attitudes and the impact they have on children and their relationships.

7.4 Relationships between Children

The ECC shall create an environment where all aspects of social and emotional development are supported. The ECC should value the need for children to develop important social skills and build positive relationships and friendships with each other. The ECC should support children to develop social competencies of care, empathy, and respect for others. Social competencies should form the foundations of developing healthy relationships. Children should learn how to self-regulate their feelings and emotions to develop healthy connections with others.

7.4.1 Self -Regulation

The environment should support children to understand and self-regulate their emotions and develop skills of care, empathy, and respect. Children should be supported to negotiate their personal needs, respect other's feelings, develop important skills of how to deal with difficulties and how to be assertive without being aggressive.

7.4.2 Social Skills

The environment should provide opportunities for children to build positive relationships, foster friendships and develop important social connections. Children should be encouraged to interact with each other and develop valuable social skills of how to interact with one another and how to be a friend. Children should learn to respect, appreciate, and relate to others from different cultures and backgrounds.

7.5 Working Relationships

The ECC should encourage a positive working environment and ethos where each member of staff should feel valued and supported. The ECC should understand staff's wellbeing and morale are a vital part of forming positive working relationships. Teamwork and good communication should be essential components of creating an effective, happy, and harmonious working environment.

7.5.1 Teamwork

The ECC should encourage teamwork and should work together towards the common goals or objectives of the ECC. Each individual member of the team should value and respect each member of staff, their role and responsibilities and should have a fair distribution of workload. Staff should appreciate and value individuals' skills and strength and should collaborate to problem solve, offer help and support when required. The ECC should advocate an environment where staff openly share ideas and best practice.

7.5.2 Communication

Communication should be an essential part of an effective team. The ECC should enable staff to have open, honest, and transparent discussions where they should be able to voice their thoughts, ideas, concerns or grievances. The staff should use different communication channels to share and receive relevant and important information.

7.6 Relationships with the Community

The ECC should develop strong relationships with other ECCs and schools to support the transition of children from and between the different settings. The ECC should create a network of relationships with other educational, health and social care professionals to support individual children's needs. The ECC should develop connections with the local community in the area.

7.6.1 Transitions

The ECC should build relationships with other ECCs in the area to share good practice and collaborate in the event of a child transitioning from one ECC to another. The ECC should develop strong links with the schools in the area and should aid in the transitioning of children from ECC into school.

7.6.2 Other Professionals

The ECC should develop good communication links and relationships with other professionals, such as, language therapists, psychologists, occupational therapists and other specialists and work in partnership to support the development and progress of children within their care. The ECC should create a welcoming environment for the professions to visit, assess and work with specific children and their parents/guardians.

7.6.3 The Local Community

The ECC should create a network of links within the community. The ECC should connect with the local police service, fire service, doctors, and other key services professionals. The ECC should invite them into the ECC to discuss the importance of their role within the community. The ECC should also make links with members of the local community and should invite them into the ECC to share their skills and knowledge with the children.

8   Physical Environment

8.1 Premises Requirements

The ECC must comply with all relevant building regulations of the Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing and Civil Defense Fire Safety regulations and/or other relevant authorities' regulations. The ECC must

ensure the building and any outbuildings or annex must be exclusively used as an ECC and must not be used as a residential facility.

8.1.1 Location Requirements

The ECC must be located no less than 500 meters from the nearest kindergarten or another ECC.

The ECC must be located no less than 50 meters from the nearest gas station or gas store.

The ECC must be located no less than 50 meters from the nearest intersection of commercial and main streets.

8.1.2 Independent Buildings

The ECC independent buildings must be on a non-commercial street, the road width must not be less than 12 meters.

The ECC site area must not be less than 300 square meters.

The ECC must have parking; one space per 100 square meters of the ECC area.

The ECC must be on the ground floor and first floor only.

The ECC must have outside shaded playgrounds.

8.1.3 Attached Buildings

Areas of ECC's attached to workplaces in commercial complexes, residential complexes, towers, commercial centers, universities, institutes, associations, institutions, or other locations must not be less than 50 square meters.

If an outdoor space is not possible in attached buildings an indoor play area must be provided.

8.2 Indoor Specifications

The ECC must follow the Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing, Public Health Authority and Civil Defense Fire Safety and/or relevant authority regulations.

8.2.1 Window Safety

All rooms should have windows and shall have a safety lock to prevent children independently opening the windows.

8.2.2 Lighting

Rooms shall be well lit and have as much natural light as possible. Artificial light should be appropriate as per the need of each room, activity, or individual child.

8.2.3 Air Quality

8.2.3.1 Ventilation

The ECC must follow the Public Health Authority or relevant authority's guidelines and ensure the indoor spaces have good ventilation, especially gathering places and an ambient temperature is maintained.

Adults and children should be exposed to as much fresh air as possible when the weather permits.

Bathrooms should be well ventilated.

8.2.3.2 Air Conditioning and Heating

Air conditioning shall be installed in all rooms and an ambient temperature of 20-25 degrees should be maintained all year round.

ECCs that use heating inside the premises shall maintain an ambient temperature of 20-25 degrees.

8.2.3.3 Portable Outdoor eaters

ECCs that use portable outdoor gas heaters must follow Civil Defense or relevant authority's Fire and Safety regulations and ensure they are within the safe limits and installed at a specific distance.

8.2.4 Gates and Barriers

8.2.4.1 Barriers

The ECC must provide architecturally approved barriers to ensure the privacy of the neighbors as per the Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing or relevant authority regulations.

8.2.4.2 Gates

The ECC shall ensure there are safety gates installed at the bottom and top of stairs. Additional safety gates may be installed in other areas to ECCs to ensure the safety of the children.

8.2.5 Entry and Exit

There shall have lockable security gates at all entrances and exits; the locks or electronic opening systems should be above children's reach. The main entrance and exits of the ECC shall have a security guard and an air conditioned / heated guard hut.

8.2.6 Flooring

The ECC should have non-slip, easy to clean flooring throughout the ECC. Areas around a water source, such as bathrooms, changing tables, kitchens and areas with water play should have anti-slip flooring. Large play equipment should have impact cushioning flooring underneath.

8.2.7 Stairs and Railings

An ECC with stairs should ensure the flooring on the stairs is non-slip. The stairs should have a safety gate at the top and bottom. The stairs should have a railing of at an appropriate height as per the age of children using the stairs.

8.2.8 Basements, Balconies and Roof Terraces

An ECC with a basement or underground space must ensure the specifications and usages meet Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing and Civil Defense Fire Safety or relevant authority regulations.

An ECC with balconies, roof terraces or any other outside space above ground must ensure the height of the walls must meet Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing and Civil Defense Fire Safety or relevant authority regulations to ensure the safety of the children.

8.2.9 Doors and Handles

An ECC with children under 4 years of age should have finger guards fitted on all doors. The main exit doors should have handles at a height of between 48 - 54 inches / 120 - 135 cm to ensure the safety of all young children.

8.2.10   Laundry Rooms

The ECC should make arrangements for the laundering of sheets, bedding, and any other washable items. The ECC may decide to make arrangements with a local laundry service or the ECC may decide to make arrangements with parents to wash their own child's bedding and return it to the ECC in a timely manner or the ECC may decide to have a laundry room onsite. For ECCs with a laundry room on site it should not be accessible to children, there should be a laundry schedule to ensure the laundry is turned around in a timely manner. Sheets and bedding should be washed at 60 degrees.

8.3 Indoor Environment

8.3.1 Feeding Area

For ECC's with infants who are breastfed, the ECC should provide a space or room where mothers can breastfeed their babies in privacy.

8.3.2 Diaper Changing Area

The ECC should provide 1 changing station for every 10 children under the age of 2 years.

The ECC should provide 1 changing station for every 15 children over the age of 2 years.

All changing stations should be of adult height and have a wipe down mat. The changing station should have sides. The changing station should have access to running water within reach and shall have a bin with a lid for disposing soiled diapers. There should be a storage facility within reach that shall have a designated space per child for storage of individual new diapers, cream, and powders etc. that shall be labeled with the child's name.

8.3.3 Potties

The ECC should have a designated area in the bathroom with potties for children who are toilet training. The ECC shall provide at least 1 potty for every 5 children under 3.

8.3.4 Children's Toilets

8.3.4.1   Toilet Specifications

The ECC must conform to the bathroom and toilet rations as per the Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing or otherrelevant authorities' regulations. However, it is strongly recommended that the ECC should have separate facilities for children.

— 1 child sized toilet per 15 children

— 1 child sized sink per 15 children

— 1 shower / bath per ECC (including washing area for infants)

The ECC must ensure toilets are suitable for the age and size of the children as per the Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development or relevant authority regulations. The ECC must ensure water and paper are easily accessible as per the guidance from the Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development or relevant authorities.

8.3.4.2   Assistance and Privacy

All toilets should be given privacy; however, adults should be given access should a child need assistance.

8.3.5 Adult's Toilets

The ECC must conform to the bathroom and toilet rations as per the Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing or relevant authorities' regulations. However, it is strongly recommended that the ECC should have separate facilities for adults.

— 1 adult sized toilet per 15 adults

— 1 adult sized sink per 15 adults

The ECC must ensure water and paper are easily accessible as per the guidance from the Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development or relevant authorities.

8.3.6 Sleep Areas

8.3.6.1 Cribs and Beds

An ECC with children under 2 years of age shall have a designated sleep room. The sleep room should have 10 cribs per each exit out of the room.

Children over 2 years of age that regularly nap should have a quiet space set up for daily rest and naps.

There must be one bed/ mattress / camp crib allocated per child as per the Public Health Authority or relevant authorities' guidelines.

8.3.6.2 Sleep Area Space

The ECC must use the Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development or relevant authorities' ratios of 1.4 square meters per child.

8.3.7 Food Preparation Space

8.3.7.1 Food Preparation Area

The ECC must have a designated space for preparing infant milk and children's food / meals that must meet the health and safety standards of the Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development and the Saudi Food and Drug Authority or other relevant authorities.

8.3.7.2 Food Preparation Area Resources

The space should have access to running water, a fridge for storage of milk, a kettle or bottle warmer to warm milk and a microwave to heat food.

8.3.8 Activity Spaces

The ECC shall have designated spaces for different learning experiences and activities which are age appropriate and support all areas of development. The spaces should be child-friendly, attractive and inviting with a variety of open-ended, stimulating and appropriate materials. The classroom should have different learning areas/centers that support individual, small and large groups activities. The space should be divided into different areas and should include:

  — A large carpet for whole group sessions

  — Book / Reading Area

  — Mark Making / Writing Area

  — Large Play Area

  — Construction Area

  — Sand and Water Area

  — Math Area

  — Science Area

  — Nature Area

  — Creative Area

  — Role Play Area

The ECC should make provision for sand and water play and large play equipment outside. If there is no outside provision the ECC should make provision for these spaces indoors.

8.3.9 Indoor Play Space

The ECC must have a designated indoor play space as per the Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development or relevant authorities' regulations. It should be free from hazards, supports physical development and should be age and stage appropriate.

8.3.10   Storages Facilities

8.3.10.1   Records Storage

The ECC shall also have a designated lockable storage space for records, files and confidential documents.

8.3.10.2   Food, Bedding, Toys and Equipment Storage

The ECC should have separate designated storage spaces for food, bedding, toys, large and small play equipment.

8.3.10.3   Hazardous and Combustible Materials Storage

The ECC must designate lockable storage spaces with shelving to organize and store cleaning materials and other hazardous materials as per the Civil Defense Fire Safety or relevant authorities' regulations.

Combustible materials must not be stored in exits, stairwells, on or under ramps.

8.3.11   Office

The ECC shall have at least one designated office to be used for the Manager and administrative personnel to use and conduct private meetings. The director should have a designated space to work and have private conversation with lockable storage.

8.3.12   Staff Room

The ECC shall have a designated space for the staff to have time quiet away from the children, parents / guardians and to rest and eat. The space can also be used to conduct staff meetings.

8.3.13   Reception

The ECC shall have a reception area. The reception area should be a place where parents, guardians and visitors can enter the ECC and feel welcome and be greeted and supported by a member of staff. The area can be used as a waiting area and should have seating.

8.4 Furnishings and Resources

8.4.1 Furniture

The ECC must ensure the highest standard and safety of all furniture is proved as per the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development or other relevant authorities' regulations. The ECC shall provide furniture that shall support play, care, learning experiences and daily activities.

The ECC should provide sufficient furniture without overcrowding or cluttering the space. The ECC should maximize the available floor space by limiting the number of tables and chairs in a room. The ECC should ensure the furniture is age and size appropriate. The ECC should provide a range of furniture for different functions, for example, storage of books, messy activities, quite cozy spaces and tabletop activities. The ECC should ensure the corners of tables and other furniture are rounded or safety protected, especially in rooms that cater for children under 2-year-olds.

The ECC should provide open shelves, baskets, and transparent trays to store resources so that children can easily independently select materials and resources that they need. The ECC shall provide storage for each child to store their personal belongings.

The ECC should provide feeding chairs for children under 2, the chairs should have attached trays and should have straps.

The ECC should provide display boards to showcase children's work and projects. The display boards should be at an appropriate height to enable children to interact with the displays.

8.4.2 Resources and Materials

The ECC must provide the highest standard and safety of all tools, play equipment, books, resources, and materials as per the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development or relevant authorities' regulations. The ECC should provide a sufficient quantity of equipment and materials for the number of children when indoors and outdoors. The ECC should follow guidelines of toys and resources used. The ECC should provide tools, equipment, resources, and materials that are developmentally appropriate and suitable for the different ages and stages of children in the ECC. The ECC should include man-made, natural and recycled materials that are clean, in good condition and safe for the use of children. All resources shall be non-toxic.

The ECC should ensure there is a balance of resources that are regularly changed to support children's interest and development.

The ECC shall ensure any battery-operated toys are safe and the battery compartment is securely locked. The ECC shall ensure any spare batteries or batteries that are recharging are out of reach of children.

8.4.3 Large Play Equipment

The ECC should have large play equipment to support children's physical development. The play equipment should be made from a range of materials including, natural and manmade non-toxic materials and should be clean, in good condition and safe for the use of children. It is recommended the ECC should follow the following height guidelines for climbing frames and balance beams:

6 - 24 months

— Climbing equipment up to a maximum height of 32 inches / 83 cm.

25 - 59 months
— Climbing equipment up to a maximum height of 60 inches / 152 cm.
— Balance beams up to 12" high / 30cm.

5 - 8 years olds
— Climbing equipment up to a maximum height of 84 inches / 213 cm.
— Balance beams up to 16" high / 40cm.

8.4.4 Aesthetics

The ECC should look for ways to make the environment calm, warm and welcoming and should carefully select the textures, paint colors, wall hanging and floor coverings to ensure the children are not over stimulated.

8.4.4.1   Textiles

The ECC must ensure any curtains or hanging textiles meet Civil Defense or relevant authority's Fire Safety regulations.

8.4.5 Bins

8.4.5.1   Wastepaper baskets and diaper bins

The ECC shall ensure wastepaper baskets and diaper bins have lids. The bins should be emptied at least once a day.

8.4.5.2   Bin Safety

Wastepaper baskets and diaper bins must be made of non-combustible materials as per Civil Defense Fire Safety or relevant authorities' regulations.

8.5 Outdoor Environment

8.5.1 General

The play spaces should be appropriate for the different ages and stages of development. The learning experiences and activities should differ from those of the indoors and should give children choice, and encourage them to be engaged, active and to enjoy the outdoor environment.

The outdoor space should be designed to enable staff to always be able to see the children.

The outdoor space shall be made accessible for children with physical disabilities and challenges.

8.5.1.1   Shading of outdoor spaces

A stand-alone independent ECC must have outside play spaces that must be shaded as per the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development or relevant authorities' regulations.

Children under 2 years old should have their own designated area that is separate to that of the older children. The space should be fences to ensure the children are contained within the area.

8.5.2 Outdoor Spaces

The outdoor space should have areas for different types of play and should include areas for safe sand and water play, bikes, and trikes, and should have sufficient large play equipment that is developmentally appropriate to support children's physical development. There should also be areas for quiet, calm activities that support all other areas of development.

The outdoor space should be aesthetically pleasing with some natural plants and trees that shall be non-poisonous. There should be an area for gardening or raised planter boxes to involve the children in growing and caring for their own plants.

8.5.3 Drinking Water

The ECC shall encourage children to drink plenty of water. The ECC shall provide a drinking water source, or the children shall carry their individual water bottles outside and keep them in a designated area for easy access.

8.5.4 Storage

The ECC shall provide appropriate storage for outside equipment and resources.

8.6 Child: Space Ratios

8.6.1 Indoor Child: Space Ratios

The ECC shall follow the stipulated child: space ratios as per the Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development. However, it is strongly recommended that the ECC should provide more space for younger children:

— Birth- 23 months: One child shall be allocated 3.5 square meters.

— 24 - 47 months: One child shall be allocated 2.5 square meters.

— 4 - 8 years: One child shall be allocated 2 square meters.

8.6.2 Maximum class/group sizes

The ECC should have a maximum number of children per group:

— Birth-12 months: 12 children

— 13-24 months: 15 children

— 25-35 months: 16 children

— 3-5 years: 20 children

— 6-8 years: 25 children

8.6.3 Outdoor Child: Space Ratios

The ECC should provide an outdoor space. The ECC should calculate the outdoor floor space for a group of no less than 12 children, with the following guidelines:

— Birth - 23 months: One child shall be allocated 3.5 square meters.

— 2- 6 years: One child shall be allocated 5 square meters.

8.7 Maintenance

8.7.1 Fire Systems

The ECC should schedule and conduct regular servicing and maintenance of fire systems, sprinklers, fire extinguishers and other fire prevention systems are up to date and checked by trainee professionals.

8.7.2 Air Conditioning and Heating

The ECC should schedule and conduct regular maintenance of air conditioners and heaters. The maintenance must include cleaning and changing of air filters and other ventilation devices to maintain air quality in the building as per the Public Health Authority or relevant authorities' guidelines.

8.7.3 General

The ECC must schedule and conduct regular maintenance of the interior and exterior of the building to ensure it complies with the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development and Civil Defense Fire Safety or relevant authorities' regulations and is safe for all children and adults.

Maintenance works should be scheduled to occur as much as possible when the children are not on site.

The ECC shall promptly repair or remove any broken, cracked, rusty toys, play equipment or materials that pose a risk to children's safety.

8.8 Inclusion and Accessibility

8.8.1 Inclusion

The ECC should be inclusive and accept children with disabilities and additional needs, such as and not limited to; language delay, speech delay, second language learners, children with sight issues, hearing impairment, physical needs and those with mild - moderate needs that are within the scope of staff's training and experience. The ECC should provide or recommend where children can get additional support for their individual needs.

The ECC should accept and respect children and parents/ families from different cultural backgrounds.

8.8.2 Accessibility

The ECC should provide pathways to access the different areas of the ECC, any steps or stairs shall be clearly visible.

The ECC should provide one adapted bathroom with wheelchair access to ensure the safe movement of individuals with wheelchairs.

The ECC should be adapted to enable children with mobility issues to be able to move around the ECC and there should be ramps and railings for wheelchair access.

8.8.3 Special Educational Needs

The ECC should have a Special Educational Needs Policy that states their commitment to providing an environment that supports staff, children, parents/guardians and other visitors with Special Educational Needs. The policy should identify working partnerships between the ECC and the parents/ guardians to support their child's individual needs and enable them to reach their full potential.

9   Risk and Emergency Management

9.1 Risk Management

9.1.1 Risk Assessment

The ECC shall have a Risk Assessment Policy in place outlining the process and procedures of how to conduct regular risk assessment checks of the equipment, resources, inside and outside spaces to ensure the health and safety of children and adults. The policy shall include how to record risks any identified risks shall be dealt with in a timely manner.

The ECC shall ensure electrical, gas or any other appliances are out of reach of children.

9.1.2 Pest Control

The ECC shall have a Pest Control Policy in place to ensure regular checks are the management of pests.

9.1.3 Adverse Weather

The ECC shall have an Adverse Weather Policy in place outlining the process and procedures in such an event.

9.1.4 Transportation

The ECC shall have Transportation Policy in place to ensure the safety of the children and staff when traveling to and from the ECC, this should include adult: child ratios and the use of seatbelts.

9.2 Emergency and Evacuation

9.2.1 Medical Emergency

The ECC shall have a Medical Emergency Policy and a Critical Incident Plan in place outlining the process, procedures and the roles and responsibility of the staff in the event of a medical emergency or critical incident. All staff shall know and regularly practice the procedures.

9.2.2 Evacuation

The ECC shall have an Evacuation Policy in place which outlines the roles and responsibility of the staff in the event of evacuating the premises. The policy must include an approved evacuation, safety and fire prevention plan as per the Civil Defense or relevant authorities' Fire and Safety Regulations. The evacuation routes should be displayed in a prominent location for easy use. For ECC's with children under 12 months of age on site the policy should include the process and procedures for their evacuation and the use of evacuation cribs.

9.3 Fire Safety

The ECC must have a Fire Safety Policy in place that complies to Civil Defense or relevant authorities' Fire Safety Regulations. The policy shall outline the processes, procedures and the roles and responsibility of all staff members in the event of a fire or natural disaster.

9.3.1 External Safety

The ECC must ensure the building's address is clear and readable at all times. The road access to the ECC must be unobstructed and accessible for fire trucks at any time and fire hydrants must be accessible and unobstructed from all sides as per the Civil Defense or relevant authorities' Fire Safety Regulations.

9.3.2 Fire Evacuation Routes

The ECC must identify and clearly label fire exits and fire escape routes, including stairs with luminous easy visible signage, in the event of signage and/or lighting of fire escape routes that requires power, a backup power source must be in place to ensure the signs and lights continue for up to 90 minutes without mains power. Corridors must be fireproofed and meet the Civil Defense or relevant authorities' Fire Safety Regulations.

9.3.3 Fire Exits

The exit must open without a key or effort and must open in the direction of the exit if the number of people exceeds 50. The number of exits must be sufficient in accordance with Civil Defense or relevant authorities' Fire Safety Regulations.

The ECC must ensure all fire exits are free from obstacles at all times. Fire doors must close automatically and be maintained and checked annually.

9.3.4 Fire Extinguishers

The ECC must have fire extinguishers distributed throughout the building, they must be located with a maximum distance of 23 meters between each extinguisher.

The extinguishers must be placed in prominent positions that are easily located and accessible.

All fire extinguishers must be installed correctly and must be regularly serviced and maintained by trained experts as per the Civil Defense or relevant authorities' Fire Safety Regulations.

9.3.5 Sprinkler Systems

The ECC must have an automated sprinkler system in place that must be regulatory checked and maintained by a trained expert. The sprinkler system and other fighter fighting alarms must be individual labeled.

9.3.6 Fire Alarm System

The ECC must have an operational fire alarm system that is connected to the water supply and must be regularly maintained and serviced by a trained professional as per Civil Defense or relevant authority' Fire Safety Regulations.

9.3.7 Kitchen Safety

ECC's with kitchens and cooking facilities must adhere to the Civil Defense or relevant authorities' Fire Safety Regulations and must ensure cooking appliances and equipment are protected and have fire extinguishers and automatic extinguishing systems in place. Kitchen extinguishing systems must be regularly maintained by trained experts. There must be a facility to stop the supply of fuel or electricity to any cooking appliance.

9.4 Electrical Safety

9.4.1 Electrics

The ECC's electric boxes, sockets, switches, lighting, and wiring must conform to the Civil Defense or relevant authorities' Fire Safety Regulations specifications and must be covered. All electrical sockets must be securely connected to the wall and should be out of reach of children. Sockets without plugs must be covered with a guard. Extension cords must only be used for portable electrical appliances and must be securely connected to the wall sockets. Power cords must comply with Saudi standards specifications.

The electric control panel must be clearly labeled. The electric room shall be labeled, and the door must push open in the direction of the exit of people and must have a push-opening arm.

9.4.2 Electrical appliances

Electrical appliances must comply with Saudi standards specifications when applicable. All electrical appliances and installations must be tested by an authorized expert. Children must not have access to electrical appliances without the supervision of an adult.

9.4.3 Servicing

The ECC must ensure electric motors are clean and in good conditions in the workspace for the maintenance of electrical service equipment conform to the Civil Defense or relevant authorities' Fire Safety Regulations specifications.

9.5 General Safety

9.5.1 Building Safety

The ECC must comply with all relevant building regulations of the Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing and Civil Defense Fire Safety or other relevant authorities' regulations.

9.5.2 Water Safety

The water in shallow water trays and tough trays shall be changed daily. Water in deeper trays with lids shall be changed weekly. All water play activities shall be checked to ensure it is free from trash, foreign objects and pollution.

The ECC shall not have a swimming pool of any form or type on site.

9.5.3 Sand Play Safety

Sandpits should be covered when not in use, regularly checked, cleaned, and disinfected.

9.5.4 Storage

9.5.4.1   Cleaning Products

The ECC shall store cleaning products in a lockable storage cupboard and on shelving.

9.5.4.2   LPG Gas Cylinders

LPG gas cylinders must be stored correctly, and any hazardous materials shall be labeled with a warning sign as per the Civil Defense or relevant authority's' Fire Safety regulations.

9.5.5 Pick up and Drop off Safety

The ECC should designate drop off and pick up locations and safe areas to cross the road. There should be parking facilities for parents/guardians and buses transporting children to and from the ECC. The ECC should designate different pick up and drop off times for different age groups / classes to reduce traffic congestion.

10   Health, Safety and Hygiene

10.1 Health

10.1.1   Health Clinic

The ECC must have a health clinic. The designated room must have a WC and a sink. The health clinic must be equipped with a bed and the necessary medical and first aid equipment as per the Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing or relevant authorities' regulations.

10.1.2   Medical Staff

The ECC should always have a qualified nurse on site when there are children on site. The ECC should make an agreement with a medical center close by to provide support in the event of an emergency.

All members of staff should have an up to date pediatric first aid qualification. At least one member of staff shall hold an adult first aid qualification.

10.1.3   Medical Records

All medical records shall be kept in a lockable secure location with access by designated members of staff only. Medical records shall include, individual medical records of staff and children, including any allergies, dietary requirements, consent forms, incident, and accident forms.

In the event of an incident or accident a record/report of the event shall be kept, decaling the child/children involved, the location, time of the incident and treatment given. The parents shall be informed of any accident or incident involving their child.

10.1.4   Medicines and Medical Supplies

The ECC shall have an Administration of Medicine Policy in place, explaining the process, procedures, roles and responsibilities of designated staff. During the registration process parents shall be shown the policy and sign a disclaimer / agreement agreeing to their child receiving certain medication and first aid treatment by the designated trained staff. Medication prescribed by a doctor shall be labeled with the child's name and administered as per the doctor's instructions, parents shall sign a disclaimer / agreement agreeing to their child receiving the medication at the ECC.

The ECC shall have a stock of medical protective equipment including and not limited to gloves and masks for the use of staff.

All medical supplies and medicines shall be kept in a lockable cupboard. A designated lockable fridge should be available to store medication.

10.1.5   Diseases Control

The ECC must have a robust Disease Control Policy in place that includes the sterilization and cleaning routines. The policy must follow the Public Health Authority guidelines and should include the necessary steps taken to control infectious diseases or food poisoning from food prepared on site and the recording and reporting procedures of such cases to the relevant authorities.

The ECC must follow the Public Health Authority instructions 'The practical guide for cleaning and disinfectant for public facilities to combat COVID-19' Ministry of Health of KSA."

10.1.6   Immunization

Prior to being admitted into the ECC all children must have an up-to-date immunization record as per the Ministry of Health or relevant authorities. Vaccination records shall be maintained, and up-to-date records kept for every child in the ECC.

10.1.7   Management of Illnesses

The ECC shall have a Sickness and Illnesses Policy in place that includes the necessary steps to manage sickness and illnesses of staff and children. The nurse and/ or staff shall monitor children for signs and symptoms of any potential health issues and shall raise any concerns with the parents / guardians on the same day.

The ECC shall have a Sanitation Policy in place explaining the process, procedures, roles and responsibilities of designated staff to ensure the ECC setting is clean.

10.1.8   Incidents, Accidents and First Aid

The ECC shall have an Incident, Accident and First Aid Policy in place to explain the process, procedure, and reporting in the event of an accident, incident, or administration of first aid. First aid kits shall be labeled, maintained and accessible to staff in classrooms, indoor spaces, and outdoor spaces.

10.1.9   Allergies and Allergic Reactions

The ECC shall also have an Allergies and Allergic Reaction Policy in place explaining the signs, symptoms to look out for along with the process and procedures in such an event. A list of children and adults with allergies shall be recorded and available to all relevant members of staff. Individuals who need emergency medication, for example, EpiPen for shall be within reach of the individual at all times.

10.2 Hygiene

10.2.1   Hand Washing and Drying

The ECC should follow the Public Health Authority or relevant authorities' guidelines and ensure hand sanitizer is distributed and placed in visible locations and hand soap is available in all bathrooms.

The ECC should adhere to the Public Health Authority or relevant authorities' guidelines of hand washing routines, ensuring children wash their hands frequently with soap and water for at least 40 seconds or with an approved sterilizer for 20 seconds in the absence of soap and water.

All children and staff shall wash their hands before and after:

— Handling food

— Handling medication

— Water play

All children and staff shall wash their hands after:

— Diapering, using the toilet toileting or assisting a child in using the toilet

— Handling bodily fluids (e.g. mucus, blood, vomit)

— Playing in sand or outdoors

— Cleaning or handling the garbage

All children and staff should dry hands after washing with clean, disposable paper or a single-use cloth towel.

10.2.2   Toileting

The ECC shall have a Diaper Changing Policy in place explaining the process, procedures, roles and responsibilities of staff while changing and disposing of diapers. ECC staff responsible for changing diapers shall wear gloves and masks and shall ensure the surfaces are wiped down after each use with disinfectant or disposable sheets are removed and replaced after each use.

The ECC shall have a Potty-Training Policy shall be in place explaining the process, procedures, roles and responsibilities of staff during potty training. Potties shall be emptied and disinfected after each use.

The ECC shall provide toilets and sinks for the use of adults and children - see Clause 8.3 for specifications.

Children should be reminded to flush the toilet and wash their hands after every use.

All sinks should have a soap dispenser and should have disposable paper towels mounted at the appropriate height for ease of access by children and adults.

Toilets should be disinfected after each use as per the Public Health Authority or relevant authorities' guidelines.

10.2.3   Personal Hygiene

The ECC shall ensure the personal items of the children are not shared and single use food utensils shall be used if the child does not have their own.

The ECC shall allocate one crib per infant and one bed per child during rest and sleep times. Bed sheets and bed covers shall not be shared and shall be replaced after each usage. Mattresses shall be disinfected regularly.

10.2.4   Cleaning Routines

The ECC must have robust cleaning routines in place that include the cleaning of all spaces, toys, indoor and outdoor play equipment as per the Public Health Authority or relevant authorities' guidelines. The routines must include the regular cleaning and must include surfaces being disinfected every two hours with an emphasis on places with high contact, disinfecting of toilets after every use and sterilization of toys and equipment.

The ECC should schedule for deep cleaning to occur at least twice a year.

The ECC should keep a record of all cleaning routines.

The ECC should follow the Public Health Authority or relevant authorities' guidelines and ensure any disinfectant cleaning materials contain 60-80% alcohol and comply with the Food and Drug Authority or relevant authorities.

10.3 Nutrition

10.3.1 Infant Feeding

The ECC shall have a Breast-Feeding and Bottle-Feeding Policy be in place to ensure the correct handling, storage, labeling and heating of milk. It shall also include any special arrangements to encourage mothers to feed their infant/babies on site.

10.3.2 Food preparation

The ECC should have a Food Prepared Policy in place that explains the safety measures in place for handling and preparing food on site, including the heating of food. The policy should adhere to the Saudi Food and Drug Authority or relevant authorities' guidelines.

10.3.3 Food and Drink

The ECC shall have a Food and Drink Policy in place outlining the routines and practices used in the ECC. The policy shall include that children shall be seated on appropriate side chairs and tables when eating and children who are provided with meals, snacks, and drinks by the ECC, shall be nutritious and healthy.

Staff shall be aware of any individual staff and children's, food intolerances, allergies, or special requirements and these shall be displayed in the classroom. Drinking water shall be always accessible and available.

10.3.4 Health Education

All children shall be encouraged to eat a healthy and balanced diet. The ECC should have a Health Education program in their center, suitable for different ages of the children to promote and encourage healthy eating and healthy lifestyles.

10.3.4.1 Awareness Brochures

The ECC must raise public awareness of and use the brochures issued by the Ministry of Health and the Public Health Authority or relevant authorities' about:

— Modes of disease transmission and prevention.

— Hand washing protocol and paying attention to personal health care.

— Sneezing and coughing etiquette.

10.4 Wellbeing

The ECC shall have a Wellbeing Policy in place to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of all members of staff and children. The policy should include how wellbeing is fundamental to the overall health and happiness of staff and children. The policy shall explain how to identify the signs and symptoms of stress in children and adults and how to raise any concerns.

10.5 Sleep Safety

The ECC shall have a Safe Sleep Policy in place outlining the sleep spaces, bedding, and staffing requirements along with guidance to safe sleep practices and the recording and reporting procedures.

10.5.1 Sleep Spaces

Children from birth to 2 years of age

Children from birth to 2 years of age shall have a separate sleep room. There shall be one crib with sides per infant/child.

Infants and children shall not be permitted to sleep in bouncers, rocker, highchairs, carriers, or pushchairs. In the event a child falls asleep outside of their crib they shall be transferred to their crib in the sleep room.

The sleep room shall be staffed at all times when there are infants and children sleeping.

Children over 2 years of age

Children over 2 years of age must be allocated one bed/ mattress / camp crib per child as per the Public Health Authority or relevant authorities' guidelines to allow children to sleep, nap or rest when required.

Mattresses and camp cribs shall be lifted off the floor daily to air and allow cleaning routines to take place.

10.5.2 Bedding

The ECC shall provide sheets, covers and mattress protectors or the parents shall provide bedding that is named. The ECC shall ensure the bedding is used by the same infant/child and shall be washed weekly unless otherwise soiled. Infants shall not be provided with heavy blankets, duvets, pillows, or bedrolls.

10.5.3 Infant Safe Sleep Practices

Infants shall be placed on the crib and sleep on their back. The infant shall be covered up to their armpits ensuring their arms are free. The sheet / cover shall be tucked into the mattress.

10.5.4 Sleep Routines

Infants and children should be allowed to sleep as per their individual needs. A record of the sleep times, wake up time and duration shall be recorded and parents/ guardians shall be informed. Children 2 years and above who cannot sleep should be given the opportunity for alternative quiet calm activities.

10.6 Sun Safety

The ECC should have a Sun Safety Policy in place outlining the importance and health benefits of outdoor play. The policy should state that children should wear a hat and sunscreen during outdoor activities. The policy should identify the maximum time children can spend outdoors during the extreme summer temperatures.

10.7 Safeguarding

10.7.1 Child Protection

The ECC shall have a Safeguarding Policy and shall provide information on how the ECC protects all children in their care in line with all the laws and regulations of KSA. The policy shall specify that there shall be no violence or assault of any form, from any adult or child. The policy shall outline the signs and symptom of child abuse and the procedure and procedures to follow in such a case.

10.7.2 Whistleblowing

The ECC shall have a Whistle Blowing Policy in place that explains how the ECC aims at any serious concerns that may arise with another member of staff.

10.7.3 Confidentiality

The ECC shall have a Confidentiality Policy in place that explains how the ECC protects the privacy of children and their families.

10.7.4 CCTV

10.7.4.1 CCTV installation

The ECC must have surveillance cameras / CCTV installed to ensure the safety of the children and staff of the ECC as per the Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing or relevant authorities' guidelines.

10.7.4.2   CCTV Policy

A CCTV Policy should be in place outlining the purpose and safe practice of saving, sharing, and retrieving CCTV footage.

10.7.5   Premises Access

The ECC shall have Premises Access Systems in place to safeguard the children on site. Only authorized personnel shall be allowed to enter the ECC, the system shall also prevent children leaving the premises unattended.

10.7.6   Safe use of Technology

The ECC should have a Cyber Security Policy and a Social Media Policy in place to explain how the ECC safeguards the children.

The ECC should have a guideline in place for caregivers to promote good practice and explain the best use of technology with children at different ages. The ECC shall monitor the amount of screen time children are exposed to during their time at the ECC and caregivers shall be mindful of the content. The ECC should not expose children under 2 years of age to any screen time, screen time for 2–5-year-olds should be limited, carefully monitored, and should not exceed 20 mins per day. Screen time for over 5 year olds should not exceed 30 mins per day.

- Mobile Phones: The ECC shall have a Mobile Phone and E-safety Policy in place that explains the safe practices and use of mobile phones, cameras, and other recording devices. Documents published by the National Cybersecurity Authority or the relevant entity can be used in the development of these documents. The policy shall include safe practices for the use of the internet and other forms of technology to safeguard the welfare of children. The policy shall include data protection and storage of personal data. A consent form from parents shall form part of the induction pack allowing parents to accept or decline photographs / videos to be taken of their child and shared on social media.

Annex A

Policies

A.1 Checklist of ECC Policies

Policy	Clause/ Sub-Clause	Tick box☑
Administration of Medicine Policy	10.1.4	☐
Admissions Policy	4.7.1	☐
Adverse Weather Policy	9.1.3	☐
Allergies and Allergic Reaction Policy	10.1.9	☐
Anti-Bullying Policy	6.6.2	☐
Behavior Policy	6.6.2	☐
Breast-feeding and bottle-feeding Policy	10.3.1	☐
CCTV Policy	10.7.4	☐
Confidentiality Policy	4.5, 4.6 & 10.7.3	☐
Critical Incident Plan	9.2.1	☐
Cyber Security Policy	10.7.6	☐
Data Protection Policy	4.6	☐
Diaper Changing Policy	10.2.2	☐
Drop off and Collection Policy	4.7.3	☐
Disease control Policy	10.1.5	☐
Evacuation Policy	9.2.2	☐
Equality Policy	5.3	☐
Fire Safety Policy	9.3	☐
Food and Drink Policy	10.3.3	☐
Incident, Accident and First Aid Policy	10.1.8	☐
Medical Emergency Policy	9.2.1	☐
Mobile Phone and E-safety Policy	10.7.6	☐

Pest Control Policy	9.1.2	☐
Potty Training Policy	10.2.2	☐
Premises Access System	10.7.5	☐
Professional Development Training Policy	5.5.2	☐
Recruitment Policy	4.3	☐
Refund Policy	4.4.3	☐
Risk Assessment Policy	9.1.1	☐
Safeguarding Policy	10.7.1	☐
Safe Sleep Policy	10.5	☐
Sanitation Policy	10.1.7	☐
Sickness and illnesses Policy	101.7	☐
Social Media Policy	10.7.6	☐
Special Educational Needs Policy	8.8.3	☐
Sun Safety Policy	10.6	☐
Transportation Policy	9.1.4	☐
Wellbeing Policy	10.4	☐
Whistle Blowing Policy	10.7.2	☐

Annex B

External Regulations

B.1 Checklist of External Regulations

Clause/Sub-Clause	Entity Requirement	Tick box☑
4.5.1.3	Civil Defense, Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing	☐
4.5.2.1	Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development	☐
5.1.10	Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development	☐
5.4.1	Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development	☐
8.1	Civil Defense, Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing	☐
8.1.1	Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing	☐
8.1.2	Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing	☐
8.1.3	Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing	☐
8.2	Civil Defense, Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing	☐
8.2.3.1	Public Health Authority	☐
8.2.3.3	Civil Defense	☐
8.2.4.1	Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing	☐
8.2.8	Civil Defense, Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing	☐
8.3.4.1	Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development	☐
8.3.5	Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development	☐
8.3.6.1	Public Health Authority	☐
8.3.7.1	Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development, Saudi Food and Drug Authority	☐
8.3.9	Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development	☐
8.3.10.3	Civil Defense	☐
8.4.1	Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development	☐

8.4.2	Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development	☐
8.4.5.2	Civil Defense	☐
8.5.1.1	Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development	☐
8.7.2	Public Health Authority	☐
8.7.3	Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development	☐
9.2.2	Civil Defense	☐
9.3	Civil Defense	☐
9.3.1	Civil Defense	☐
9.3.2	Civil Defense	☐
9.3.3	Civil Defense	☐
9.3.4	Civil Defense	☐
9.3.5	Civil Defense	☐
9.3.6	Civil Defense	☐
9.3.7	Civil Defense	☐
9.4.1	Civil Defense	☐
9.4.2	Civil Defense	☐
9.4.3	Civil Defense	☐
9.5.1	Civil Defense, Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing	☐
9.5.4.2	Civil Defense	☐
10.1.1	Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing	☐
10.1.5	Public Health Authority	☐
10.1.6	Ministry of Health	☐
10.2.1	Public Health Authority	☐
10.2.4	Public Health Authority	☐
10.3.4.1	Ministry of Health, Public Health Authority	☐
10.5.1	Public Health Authority	☐

10.7.4.1	Ministry of Municipal Rural Affairs and Housing	☐

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