



DRAKENSTEIN

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Early Childhood Development Policy

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GLOSSARY

Baby/Infant

A child from 0-18 months old.

CBO

Community-based organisations concerned with helping the community local to the Organisation. CBOs are not for profit organisations. Also see NGO.

Child

A person under the aged of 18 years.

Child minder/day mother

A person who, whether for gain or charge, takes care of a maximum of six children away from their homes. Registration and assessment will be addressed in the new comprehensive Child Care Act. Presently some municipalities require child minders to register with them. Since a child minder is responsible for the care and development of children in her care, she must be familiar with basic safety measures and good child-care practices.

Children with disabilities

Children who have an impairment, i.e. physical e.g. loss of a limb, sensory e.g. loss hearing and sight, intellectual e.g. learning difficulty.

Communicable disease

A disease that can be passed on to others e.g. scabies, chickenpox, measles.

Department

In these Guidelines, Department refers to the Department of Social Development. If reference is made to any other government department, that department will be mentioned specifically.

Development appropriate

This term is used to describe activities, equipment or programmes. It is a way of working with children that takes note of what is known about child development and also what is known or learnt about each child and her development.

Director-General

In these guidelines, Director-General refers to the Director-General of the national Department of Social Development.

ECD

Early Child Development is the process of emotional, mental, spiritual, moral, physical and social development of children from birth to nine years.

ECD Centre

Any building or premises maintain or used, whether or not for gain, for admission, protection and temporary or partial care of more than six children away partial care of more than six children away from their parents. Depending on registration, an ECD Centre can admit babies, toddlers and/or pre-school aged children. The term ECD Centre can refer to crèche, day care center for young children, a playgroup, a pre-school, after school care etc. ECD centers are sometimes referred to as ECD sites.

ECD Service

A range of service provided to facilitate the emotional, intellectual, mental, spiritual, moral, physical and social development and growth of children from birth to nine years.

ECD Programmes

These are planned activities designed to promote the emotional, mental, spiritual, moral, physical and social development and growth of children from birth to nine years.

Family

Individuals, who either by contact or agreement, choose to live together and provide care, nurturing and socialization for one another.

Grade R

The national Department of Education has identified three models of provision of Reception Year/Grade R: those within the public primary school system, those within community-based sites and the independent provision of reception year programmes. Grade R refers to the year before Grade 1.

Head of Department

In these Guidelines, this refers to Head of Provincial Department of Social Development.

HIV

Human Immunodeficiency Virus that attacks the immune system of the body.

Medical health officer (MHO)

A health officer in the service of a provincial or local authority. Also referred to as the Communicable Disease Control Officer.

Minister

Member of Parliament responsible for a Ministry.

NQF

The National Qualification Framework is a Framework on which agreed standards and qualifications are registered for the main purpose of bringing together separate education and train systems into a single, national system.

NGO

All non-governmental, non-profit organisations that are concerned with the betterment of society or the individual. NGOs are private, self-governing, voluntary organisations operating not for commercial purposes but in the public interest, for the promotion of social welfare and development, religious, charity, education and research.

Notifiable disease

Disease that must be reported to the Department of Health, local or provincial, e.g. measles, hepatitis.

Orphan

A child who has lost one or both parents.

Place of care

Any building or premises, which are maintained or used, whether or not gain, for the admission, protection and temporary or partial care of more than six children away from their parents. This does not include a boarding school, hostel or institution that maintained or used mainly for teaching or training of children as is controlled or registered or approved by the State, including a provincial administration. Depending on its registration, a place of care can admit babies, toddlers, pre-school aged children and school-going children on a full day or other basis. In cases where parents work night shift, children could be cared for at night. Caution should be exercised that parents do not utilize the place of care as a boarding facility.

Practitioner

The term refers to all ECD education and training development practitioners, i.e. educators, trainers, facilitators, lecturers, caregivers and development officers, including those qualified by their experience, and who are involved in providing services in homes, center and school.

In respect of educators and trainer, the term includes both formally and non-formally trained individuals providing and educational service in ECD. This would include persons currently covered by the Educators Employment Act (Act no.138 of 1994).

Pre-school child

A child under six years of age not yet attending formal school.

Qualification

Formal recognition of the achievement of the required number and type of credits and such other requirement at specific levels of the NQF as maybe be determined by the relevant bodies registered for such purpose by the South African Qualifications Authority.

Quality Assurance

The process of ensuring that the degree of excellence specified is achieved.

SAQA

The purpose of the South African Qualifications Authority is to ensure the development and implementation of National Qualifications Framework (NQF) that contributes to the full development of each learner and to the social and economic development of the nation at large.

Subsidy

Financial support to ECD services by the government, including a place of care grant referred to in Regulations of the Child Care Act, 1983

The Act

For the purpose of these Guidelines, it means the Child Care Act, 1983 (Act 74 of 1983).

Toddler

A child between 18 and 36 months old.

Vulnerability

Heightened or increase exposed to risk as a result of one's circumstances.

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This policy seeks to outline a guiding framework within which an integrated and holistic ECD service would be implemented to ensure sustainability and innovation. It aims to use best practise models that addresses child development needs such as literacy, numeracy, life skills, capacity building support to parents, childcare centres and the community.

2. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

2.1 Clause 28 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic South Africa specifies that every child have the right:

- 2.1.1 To family care or parental care, or to appropriate alternative care when removed from the family environment;
- 2.1.2 To basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services and social services; and
- 2.1.3 To be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation.

Clause 28 (2) also requires that a child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child. In terms of schedule 4, part b of the Constitution, the local authority has the legislative competence to pass legislation relating to childcare facilities.

2.2 The Child Care Act No.74 of 1983 provides for the establishment of certain institutions for children, including a place of care which is defined as any building or premises maintained or used, whether for profit or otherwise, for the reception, protection and temporary or partial care of more than six children apart from their parents, but does not include any boarding school, school hostel or any establishment which is maintained or used mainly for the tuition or training of children and which is controlled by or which has been registered or approved by the state, including a provincial administration.

3. FUNCTIONAL AREA OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Local authorities have a legal mandate in the Constitution (Schedule 4B) around its duty to provide facilities for early childhood development, but other imperatives can be gleaned from its responsibility towards promoting social and economic development.

The constitution lists childcare as a function of local government and the Drakenstein ECD Forum identified it as a functional area for the future Drakenstein Municipal area to consider in its service delivery model.

4. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The policy on early childhood development centres is premised on a distinction between small and large-scale facilities as a means of reflecting and providing for the variations in demand for ECD centres of differing sizes and levels of care provision. The motivation for a standard policy for ECD centres for Drakenstein municipality arises from:

- 4.1 The growth in the number of applications for ECD centres;
- 4.2 The lack of uniformity in the manner in which applications are handled with different procedures and criteria being applied both between and within administration;
- 4.3 The prevalence of issues particular to ECD centres, particularly the impact of noise and traffic. The policy must provide a framework to assist officials in assessing applications for ECD centres as well as informing operators of council requirements in this regard.

The policy should also guide the assessment of new land use development applications for ECD centres. The focus should lie mainly with the land use aspects that need to be taken into consideration in such assessments and not with the health and welfare requirements only.

5. POLICY RATIONALE AND PRINCIPLES

This policy is intended to attain a consistent and holistic approach for ECD centres across Drakenstein Municipality. The policy is based on the following underlying principles:

- 5.1 Promotion and safeguarding of the amenity and environmental quality of local areas where ECD centres are located;
- 5.2 Balancing the need for access to the social service provided by ECD centres with support to the early childhood development sector and appropriate location and factors;
- 5.3 Promoting a responsible and sustainable approach to facilitating ECD centre establishment and integration of these land uses into neighbourhoods, without detracting from these areas;
- 5.4 To promote accountability and efficiency in regulating and servicing the ECD sector; and
- 5.5 To build sustainable partnerships between the municipalities, other spheres of government the ECD sector, private businesses and the communities.

6. THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY WITHIN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The argument for local government involvement lies in the fact that it is a means by which cities can provide services for its youngest and most vulnerable citizens.

Drakenstein Municipality will endeavour to:

- 6.1 Protect and promote the rights of children of Drakenstein in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as ratified in 1989 and that came into effect in 1990;
- 6.2 Implement child related policy as delegated by the National Authority within budgetary Provisions;
- 6.3 Contribute towards the development of the community by supporting early childhood development facilities, services and programmes within the budgetary provisions;
- 6.4 Assist communities, non-profit organisations, churches, employers, individuals, groups etc. who are prepared to initiate and establish early childhood development services within the budgetary provisions; and
- 6.5 Assist with the monitoring of the quality of early childhood development facilities, services and programmes, if so requested by the Department of Social Development.

7. THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

For many children, life is characterised by hunger and malnutrition, insecurity and trauma, instability, family breakdown and dislocation of communities. Lack of primary health care and education opportunities and the absence of adequate housing, electricity, running water and sanitation should be addressed adequately.

The early years are of vital importance in the development of the young child. During these years, the foundation is laid for the child's development. It is the period during which the most intense physical and intellectual development takes place.

During these years, development is more rapid than during any other period of life and deprivation can have a lasting effect on the child.

The needs of the most vulnerable sector of the population, young children, must always be high on the agenda in our country and in Drakenstein Municipality.

8. DEFINITIONS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTRES

In terms of the Children's Act of 2005 Early Childhood Development is regarded as the process of emotional, cognitive, sensory, moral, physical, social and communication development of children from birth to school going age.

An 'ECD Centre' means any building or premises maintained or used for the care of children. It includes a playgroup, crèche, aftercare centre, pre-school and nursery school. According to the Department of Social Services ECD Manual, ECD Centres can operate under a variety of names, including:

- 8.1 Crèches, which provide full day, care for children between 3 months and 7 years of age. The main intention is to provide day care and stimulation for children of working parents. They tend to operate throughout the year and staff does not have to be qualified, though they will usually have undergone a training programme;
- 8.2 Nursery schools which is a school for the education of children over the age of 2 years, but who are not yet of an age to be admitted to ordinary school. The primary task of a nursery school is the provision of pre-school education. They must have qualified teaching staff; and
- 8.3 Educare centres are described as centres that integrate education, health and welfare services for pre-school children. They encompass characteristics of both crèches and nursery schools.

9. CRITERIA TO BE USED IN ASSESSING LAND USE APPLICATIONS FOR ECD CENTRES

9.1 Locational Criteria

- 9.1.1 Large scale ECD centres should be located close to public open spaces schools, churches, community facilities, clinics, sports fields and libraries, etc. This clustering promotes sharing of infrastructure, such as parking, maximises access and confines the traffic impact to a defined area;
- 9.1.2 Their proximity to public transport nodes is also to be taken into consideration; and
- 9.1.3 The ECD centres should not be located next to a tavern, sports bar, adult centres, or any other facility that would not be of a positive influence.

9.2 Access and Parking

Both pedestrian and vehicle access are to be provided. A suitable, safe dropping off area is to be provided. Adequate provision is to be made for on site visitors parking. Should this be limited the number of attendees should be accordingly limited

9.3 Land use Planning

The aim of the Drakenstein Municipality is to cater for development and to ensure that it is conducted in an orderly manner to contribute to the quality of life of all inhabitants. The most important tool in land use planning is the zoning scheme regulations. There are four sets of zoning schemes applicable in our Municipality i.e. development applications such as rezoning, consent uses, land use departures housing, shops and farm subdivisions. Drakenstein Municipality must, as far as possible, assist the Provincial Department of Social Development with its programme to have unregistered ECD centres registered, so that grants from the municipality become more accessible. Special affordable rates, as approved in the Tariff Policy and included in the Tariff Book, will be applied. After acquiring the necessary land use rights for a property all building plans must be scrutinised in order to comply with land use parameters applicable to the zoning of that property. The cost of consent use applications and rezoning w.r.t. ECD applications will be determined according to affordability factors for poor communities.

9.4 Requirements for ECD Centres

Large-scale ECD centres accommodate 25 children and more and small-scale 24 children and less. With small-scale centres, the operator should be an owner or lessee of the property. The operator should reside on the property, except if the facility operates from the premises of a place of worship, school or community centre. Specified maximum number of children is to be adhered to. Practically this means land use refers to a land that is already having infrastructure or developed for a certain purpose residing on ECD premises.

In effect, when an application is made only the adjustments are required for an example, Drakenstein Municipality will in its Tariff Books make provision for needy ECD centres.

In the event where the application is for a small-scale centre that will be operating from the owner's premises, the consent of the neighbours is a pre-requisite before granting consent to use the premises. This is also applicable when the operator is the lessee to a certain property, the neighbours to that property must give their consent to the use of that property as an early childhood development centre. This does not in any way preclude these centres from obtaining a permit for a piece of land to operate their activities. However, it must always be kept in mind that this will always depend on the availability of a suitable land.

Small scale ECD's catering for a maximum of 6 children do not need additional land use rights if it is operated by the person residing on the property.

Daily registers of these centres must reflect the exact numbers of their intake, whether large or small. These centres must be duly registered as envisaged and operate as contemplated in their documentation. Each centre must have a sound book keeping system as well as certified financial statements.

- 9.5 **Locational Aspects to be considered in assessing an application for small and/or large-scale centres:**
- 9.5.1 **Surrounding land uses and ERF sizes, as well as the location of community facilities must be assessed;**
- 9.5.2 **The facility should be able to be incorporated into the local area without detrimentally affecting its character and complying with all other policies of Drakenstein Municipality; and**
- 9.5.3 **The principle of ensuring a well-distributed network of small and large-scale centres as means of maximising access must be promoted.**

- 9.6 **Criteria Used In Determining the Number of Children in a Facility:**
Extent of the ERF and the floor area of the buildings and any other relevant requirements are to be used to determine the maximum number of children to be accommodated, as more fully specified in paragraph 12.

Consideration is to be given to surrounding property sizes to ensure that the scale of the ECD centre is in keeping with density and residential fabric of the surrounding area. Applications to increase the maximum number of children should be provided for as the need arises from time to time and this must be approved by the municipality.

- 9.7 **Zoning Scheme Regulations:**
 With respect to the land use approval aspect of early childhood development centres, applications for such centres are a legal requirement emanating from the provisions of the applicable zoning scheme regulations of Drakenstein Municipality. In most instances, local authority approval for such land use activity is required. In assessing applications, the primary concern lies with the desirability of the proposed activity in terms of appropriateness of its location, the scale of the facility and its impact on the surrounding residential area and services.

- 9.8 **Other Applicable Legislation**
 It should also be noted that applications for early childhood development centres would need to comply with other applicable legislation. Also, the municipal environmental health by-law should be adhered to, to ascertain that the centre is operating in a healthy environment and that it does not become a health hazard due to its location.

10. **SCOPE AND APPLICATION**

This policy is to be used to guide the assessment of proposals for the development or establishment of ECD centres in Drakenstein, as well as the subsequent operational management of and support to such centres after their establishment.

Application for the establishment of ECD centres can be submitted in accordance with different definitions of ECD centres, namely aftercare centre, crèche, home childcare facility, nursery school, play group, pre-schools, Educare centres and or similar facilities.

11. POLICY PROVISIONS

This is to assist property owners and prospective operators in the planning, establishment and on-going operation of such facilities. ECD facilities must conform to the necessary land use requirements and those that do not conform must be subjected to the provisions of Council's Land Use Enforcement Policy. Under all circumstances, the requirements of land use application or proof of the correct land use rights, by means of a zoning certificate etc. will be the starting point for the establishment of an ECD centre. Facility owners and prospective operators should as a first step, consult the Planning department and the department of Community Services to ensure if such rights are in place.

ECD's can be permitted to operate as a low key childcare facility e.g. an ECD centre accommodating a maximum of 6 children subject to, without any formal approval from the planning department, however only if they operate from a single residential dwelling, by the person residing on the property.

In the assessment of land use application, distinction must be made between small and large-scale facilities as a means of addressing the variations in impacts of ECD centres of differing sizes and levels of care provision.

For the purposes of this policy, a centre that accommodates 24 or less children are considered appropriate to be referred to as small scale and those that accommodate 25 or more a large-scale one. This is not to say that 24 children should be accommodated in a small-scale centre or 25 in a large-scale centre. Of course, in both instances where circumstances warrant, a restriction on the number of children to be accommodated can and will be imposed.

12. POLICY STANDARD HEALTH REQUIREMENTS FOR LEGALLY REGISTERED CENTRES

Cape Winelands District Municipality is responsible for the enforcement of standard health requirements for legally registered centres. ECD centres must comply with health requirements, which include, but is not limited to the following:

- 12.1 An unobstructed indoor play area of at least 1.5-meter square per child must be provided;
- 12.2 An outdoor play area of at least 2-meter square per child must be provided. If no outdoor space is available, add an extra 1-meter square per child indoor;
- 12.3 The learning indoor and outdoor play areas must be separated from the children and after play areas;
- 12.4 Where children are, bottle-fed suitable facilities must be provided for cleaning of the bottles;
- 12.5 One potty for every 5 children must be provided;

- 12.6 The pottles must be washed and disinfected after each usage and the waste of the pottles must be disposed of hygienically in a toilet;
- 12.7 Storage facilities for soiled nappies must be provided;
- 12.8 Pottles and nappies may not be cleaned near the food preparation and eating areas;
- 12.9 Facilities for the washing of children (babes) must be provided;
- 12.10 Covered, safe, clean and waterproof mattresses and or cots must be provided;
- 12.11 Bedding should be provided and the blankets should be washed frequently;
- 12.12 A separate nappy changing area should be provided;
- 12.13 A separate nappy washing area should be provided and or disposable nappies should be stored and disposed in an approved manner; and
- 12.14 Health requirements must be adhered to as required by the district municipality regulations.
- 13. DRAKENSTEIN MUNICIPALITY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SECTION REQUIREMENTS**
- ECD'S must have the following on site:
- 13.1 Practitioners' profiles: qualifications and details;
- 13.2 ECD centre program of activities;
- 13.3 Copy of NPO certificate (if applicable);
- 13.4 Copy of the centres constitution or code of conduct;
- 13.5 Centre institutional arrangement (Centre governing body);
- 13.6 Letter of recommendation from community based ECD forum or residents committee;
- 13.7 Land tenure arrangement: Copy of lease agreement or title deed;
- 13.8 The hours of operation and a daily timetable (Including list of activities), including time allocated for outside play;
- 13.9 Number of children accommodated in the facility; and
- 13.10 Total number of people employed in the facility, including general and part time workers.

14. DRAKENSTEIN MUNICIPALITY'S ROLE AS LOCAL AUTHORITY

Drakenstein Municipality has a legal obligation, according to the RSA Constitution of 1996 to provide childcare facilities. Drakenstein Municipality will, thus, endeavour:

- 14.1 To protect and promote the rights of children of Drakenstein in line with our Constitution and UN Convention on Rights of the children;
- 14.2 To implement child related policies as delegated by the national authority, within budgetary provisions;
- 14.3 To contribute towards the development of our communities by supporting early childhood development services, within budgetary provisions and in collaboration with the Cape Winelands District Municipality and the Western Cape Department of Social Development;
- 14.4 To assist communities, non-profit organisations, churches, employers, groups, individuals etc., who are prepared to initiate and establish early childhood development services within budgetary provisions and in collaboration with the Cape Winelands District Municipality and the Western Cape Department of Social Development;
- 14.5 To ensure health and safety standards for early childhood development facilities, services and programmes via Cape Winelands District Municipality;
- 14.6 To allocate land and sites on a needs basis to organisations wishing to provide services for children, depending on land availability, within budget provisions; and
- 14.7 To support early childhood facilities, services and programmes via special tariffs.