

Report on TUH classroom

An inspection of the classroom in the Children's Ward at the Townsville University Hospital was undertaken on Friday 9th May. The current layout of the classroom is depicted in Figure 1.

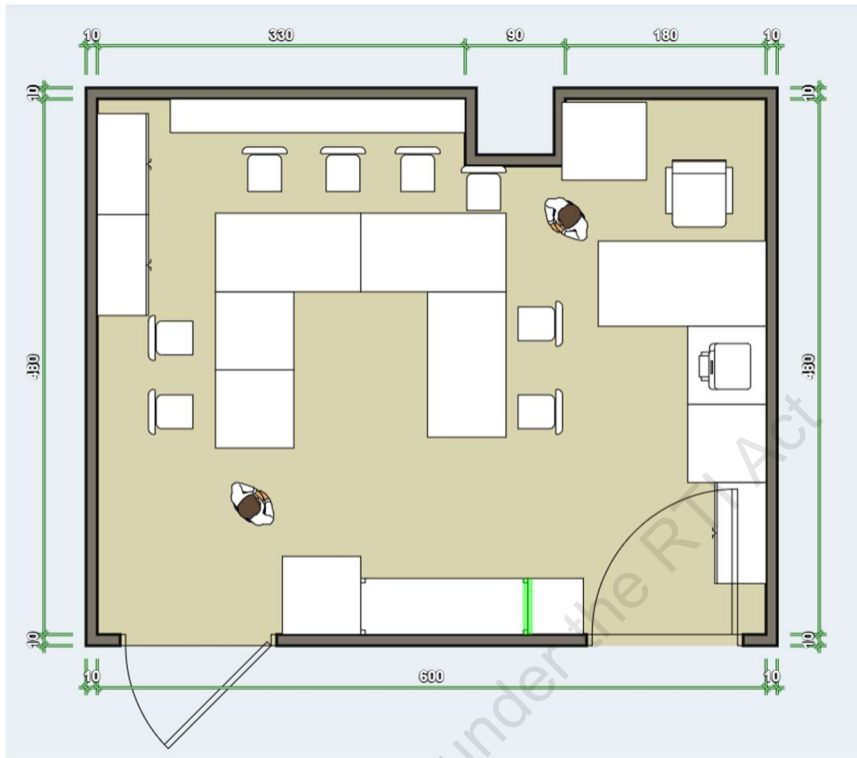


Figure 1. Current layout of room

Fire Safety

I would recommend that a clearway between the exits be kept for wheelchair use during an emergency. This clearway would be about 1.2m wide to allow easy access for wheelchairs equipped with drips etc. (see Figure 2.)

The external exit leads to a fenced area with a locked gate. In an emergency this would lead to children being dropped over the fence and staff climbing over. This would hamper an evacuation and possibly lead to injuries.

Hazard

The bookshelves in the room need to be fixed to the wall as they could fall over if a student tries to climb them.

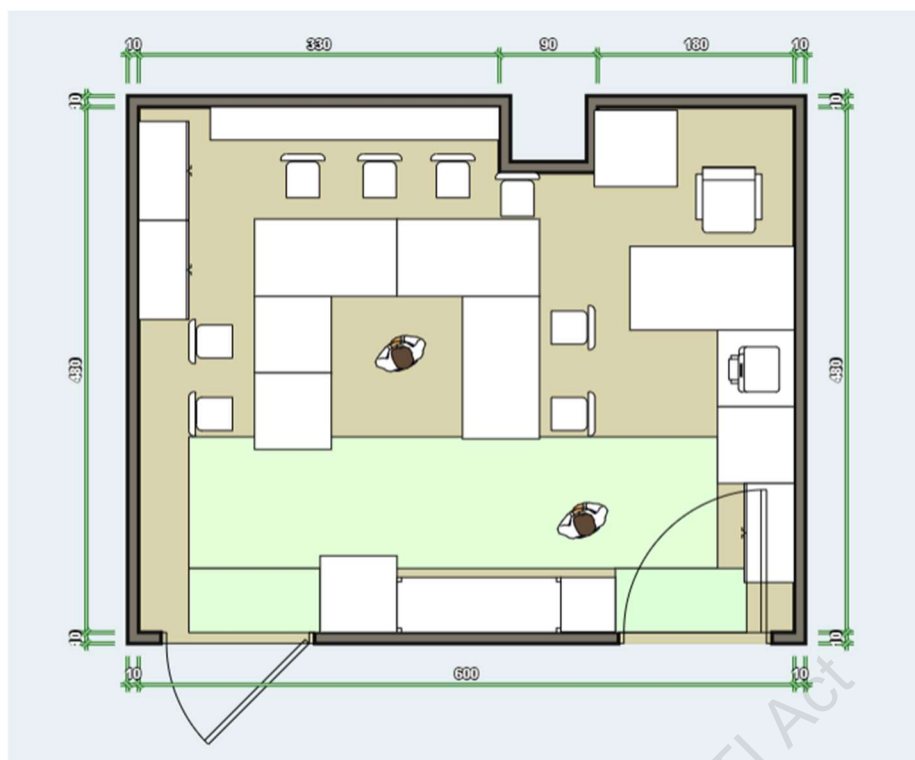


Figure 2. Green area represents 1.2m wide clearway.

Space to Work

The room allocated has a floor space of approximately 28.8 m².

The current furniture etc. shown in Figure 2 takes up approximately 23.7m². (See Table 1.)

Table 1. Space taken by furniture etc.

Item	Qty	Size (m2)	m2 used
Metal Cabinets	3	0.414	1.242
Double desk - chair out	3	1.82	5.46
Single desk - chair out	3	0.98	2.94
Single desk storage only	3	0.49	1.47
Built in cupboard	1	0.54	0.54
Bookshelf (doubled up)	1	0.63	0.63
Bookshelf (single)	1	0.45	0.45
TV/monitor	1	0.75	0.75
Table/desk -chair out	1	2.1	2.1
Shelf behind desk	1	0.525	0.525
Shelf beside door	1	0.36	0.36
Wheelchair access 1.2m wide from exit to exit	1	6.72	6.72
A person requires	2	0.24	0.48
		Total	23.667

Removing all storage cupboards etc. will free up approximately 3.5m². This would enable more desks and chairs in the room. (See Figure 3 for an example) This option is not possible at present as there is no where else to store resources. As this classroom services a wide range of year

levels, a larger supply of resources is probably required compared to a single year level classroom.

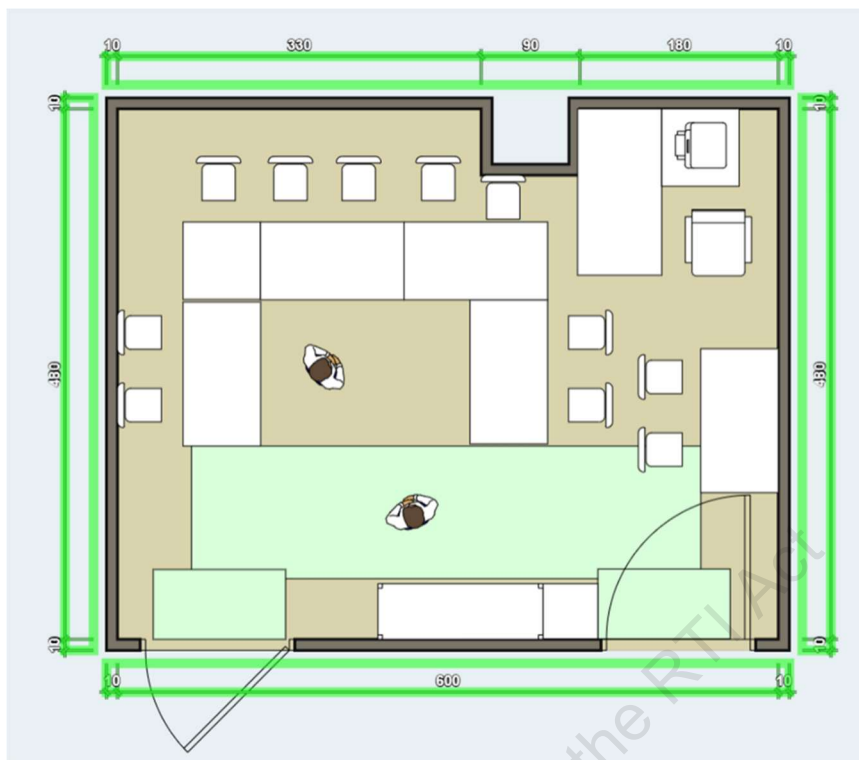


Figure 3 All storage items removed

An option to create more floor space is the built in cupboard and shelves have an area above that may be empty. (See Figure 4.) If these areas are empty, it may be possible to have some shelves installed to create more storage without impacting on floor space. This would require approval of the Health Department.



Figure 4 Built in cupboard and shelves

An outside table and chairs would be useful for when there is an overflow of students, however I was informed that the area is out of bounds due to black mould. A further option would be to have an external shed installed outside the classroom so that the storage cupboards and bookshelves could be removed from the classroom. This would require approval of the Health Department and again the outside area is out of bounds.

Legislation

The following extracts from the “Managing the work environment and facilities Code of Practice 2021” are relevant to this workplace:

2.The work environment

WHS Regulation section 40

Duty in relation to general workplace facilities

As a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) you must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that:

- the layout of the workplace allows, and is maintained to allow, persons to enter and exit the workplace and move within it safely, both under normal working conditions and in an emergency
- work areas have space for work to be carried out safely

2.1. Entry and exit

The means of entry and exit to and from the workplace must be safe. This must include ensuring that workers with special needs or disabilities can safely enter and leave the workplace.

Entries and exits should be slip-resistant under wet and dry conditions.

Aisles and walkways should be at least 600 mm wide and kept free of furniture or other obstructions at all times.

3.2. Drinking water

Clean drinking water must be provided free of charge for workers at all times. The supply of the drinking water should be:

- positioned where it can be easily accessed by workers
- separate from toilet or washing facilities to avoid contamination of the drinking water.
- The temperature of the drinking water should be at or below 24 degrees Celsius. This may be achieved by:
 - refrigerating the water or providing non-contaminated ice, or
 - shading water pipes and storage containers from the sun.
- Water should be supplied in a hygienic manner, so that workers do not drink directly from a shared container. This may involve:
 - a drinking fountain, where the water is delivered in an upward jet, or
 - a supply of disposable or washable drinking containers.

Water supplied for certain industrial processes or for fire protection may not be suitable for drinking. These water supply points should be marked with signs warning that the water is unfit for drinking.

3.5. Dining facilities

Workers must be provided with access to hygienic facilities for eating and for preparing and storing food. Depending on the type of workplace, a range of facilities may be appropriate, which could include a shared facility such as a canteen or cafeteria, a dedicated meals area or allowing time for mobile workers to access eating facilities.

Facilities for small static workplaces

For some small workplaces, an area within the workplace for making tea and coffee and preparing and storing food might be all that is needed. The facility should be protected from the weather, be free of tools and work materials and be separated from toilet facilities and hazards including noise, heat and atmospheric contaminants. It should be supplied with:

- seating
- a sink with hot and cold water, washing utensils and detergent
- an appliance for boiling water
- clean storage, including a refrigerator for storing perishable food
- vermin-proof rubbish bins, which should be emptied at least daily.

3.6. Personal storage

Accessible and secure storage should be provided at the workplace for personal items belonging to workers, for example handbags, jewellery, medication or hygiene supplies.

Conclusion

Considering the lack of facilities for staff, the limited work area, and the lack of storage options this classroom is probably at capacity. More furniture could be squeezed in however this would create a dangerous situation in an emergency which would be in breach of the WHS Act and the Building Fire Safety Regulation.

The lack of facilities can only be addressed by taking up further space in a crowded space, however this should be addressed so that DoE is not in breach of the WHS Act.