

Participation of Volunteers & Students

QUALITY AREA 4: STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

Policy Statement

Our service is committed to providing a safe environment for all children where their health, safety wellbeing is of paramount importance. In order to remain compliant with regulations and legislation and ensure this is preserved during the engagement of students from universities, TAFE, RTO's and schools and volunteers, the service will abide by the strategies and practices outlined in this policy.

Goals / What are we going to do?

Our education and care service values volunteer participation as a connection to our local community and exposure to a range of people and experiences.

Accepting students on placement is part of our professional responsibility to support our sector and provide valuable experience and learning opportunities.

Strategies / How will it be done?

- Volunteers and students do not make up part of the staff-to-child ratio and cannot be used to fill the place of an employee.
- The nominated supervisor or director interviews and completes an induction to the service.
- All students and volunteers are required to follow the services policies and procedures at all times.
- Students and volunteers do not commence at the Service until they have provided all required documentation including:
 - Full name, address and date of birth;
 - Current Working with Children check (if applicable);
 - A written statement on what is expected of them by their university, school or training organisation; and
 - A poster for display which has their name, photograph, brief background including any special interests, course of study, and the period they will be at the Service.
- Students and volunteers must inform their mentor or the Nominated Supervisor of any incident, injury, trauma and illness that they may have witnessed over the course of the day before leaving the Service.
- All students and volunteers are to complete the [Students and Volunteers Sign-in Sheet](#).
- No person under the age of 18 is to be left alone with children and must be supervised by an employee over the age of 18, at all times. (Regulation 120)
- The placement of students or volunteers at the Service will be terminated if they do not adhere to the Service's Policies and Procedures or for conduct deemed by the Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider as inappropriate
- Volunteers and students must not be asked to perform tasks:
 - that they are untrained, unqualified or too inexperienced to undertake;
 - that put the children or themselves in a vulnerable or potentially unsafe situation;

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Authority/Responsibility For
Approved Provider	• Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011 with regard to the delivery and collection of children at all times. • Ensure that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are adequately supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected. • Ensure that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children. • Ensure that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where permitting the parent's entry would pose a risk to the safety of children or educator, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or staff under the Law, or if the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor reasonably believes that permitting the parent's entry would contravene a court order. • Ensure that the staff record contains information on all volunteers/students attending the service with details of name, address, date of birth, days and hours of participation and details of the working with children check (or equivalent). (Regulation 149). • Ensure the policies and procedures are current and followed by the student and volunteers.
Nominated Supervisor	• Ensure an induction to the service is completed before the student or volunteer begins placement • Provide supervision, guidance and advice to ensure adherence to the policy at all times. • Ensure that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are adequately supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected. • Ensure that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children. • Provide volunteers/students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures. • Ensure that volunteers/students and parents/guardians comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures. • Conduct risk assessment around volunteers and student participation in the program.

Role	Authority/Responsibility For
Early Childhood Educators	• Comply with the requirement that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are adequately supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected. • Comply with the requirement that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children. • Enable parents/guardians of children attending the service to access the service premises at any time the child is being educated and cared for, except where this poses a risk to the safety of children and/or staff. • Encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service.
Student/Volunteer	• Ensure they have provided all details required to complete the volunteer or student record. • Ensure that they are under 18 years of age they are never alone • Undertake a working with children check (or equivalent) and presenting a current working with children check (or equivalent) (unless exempt due to being under the age of 18). • Understand and acknowledge the requirement for confidentiality of all information relating to staff and families within the service (refer to Privacy and Confidentiality policy). • Comply with the requirements of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and with all service policies and procedures, including the code of conduct policy, while at the service. • Undertake the induction process and completing the induction checklist prior to commencement at the service. • Follow the directions of staff at the service at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected. • Volunteers will not subject any child to any form of corporal punishment or any unreasonable discipline as per the Law.
Families	• Comply with the requirements of the Education and Care Services National Regulations and with all service policies and procedures, while attending the service. • Follow the directions of staff at the service, at all times, to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every 18 months.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

Related Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks

- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements – Standard 4.2
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership – Standard 7.1, Element 7.1.3

Related Legislation

- Education and Care National Law Act 2010: Section 166(3)
- Education and Care National Regulations: 149, 168(2)(i)(iii)
- Australian Child Protection Legislation

Related Policies

- Child Protection and Risk Management Policy
- Excursion Policy
- Incidents, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Supervision Policy

Sources

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) – www.acecqa.gov.au
- NSW Office of the Children's Guardian – ocg.nsw.gov.au/resources