

Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy

Purpose

This policy will provide guidelines for the engagement and participation of volunteers and students at ECMS services whilst ensuring that children’s health, safety and wellbeing is protected at all times.

Policy principles

ECMS is committed to:

- supporting connections with educational institutions to provide opportunities for students to undertake practicum placements as part of their studies
- building relationships with community members and providing suitable opportunities to engage volunteers and family members to contribute to the programs and activities of the service
- ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of each child at the service through consistent compliance with this policy and procedures when engaging volunteers and students.
- Values honest and open reciprocal communication between volunteers and family helpers and the service based on mutual respect, equity and fairness.
- Values connectedness. Educators will assist volunteers and family helpers to feel connected with, and help them develop trust and confidence in, the service.
- ECMS staff will ensure that volunteers, work experience students and parent helpers are provided with adequate information, training and supervision to participate safely in the services.
- Volunteers and students may participate in programs and activities at the service from time to time in order to observe and experience the provision of centre-based education and care. This will be encouraged and facilitated by the nominated supervisor/centre director wherever appropriate and possible.
- Each ECMS service values the participation of parents/guardians and other family members, and the voluntary contribution they make to the education and care of their own and other children. “In genuine partnerships families and educators value each other’s knowledge and roles, communicate freely and respectfully and engage in shared decision making” (*Early Years Learning Framework*).
- Each ECMS service aims to provide a range of opportunities for family members, volunteers and students to participate in programs and activities while adhering to clear guidelines regarding appropriate interactions and communication with staff, and other adults and children at the service (refer to *Code of Conduct Policy*).

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Scope

This policy applies to all ECMS staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of ECMS services.

Roles & Responsibilities

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| Director, Early Childhood Education | <p>Accountable for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting awareness Ensuring implementation and compliance |
| Area Managers | <p>Responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing guidelines in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor/Centre Director and educators for accepting applications from volunteers/students to work at the service accepting or rejecting a potential volunteer/student based on the circumstances of the service at the time, in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor/Centre Director ensuring that children being educated and cared for by the service are adequately supervised, and the legislated educator-to-child ratios are complied with at all times supporting nominated supervisors/centre directors to develop a range of strategies to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service developing an induction checklist for volunteers/students attending the service |
| Centre Directors & Nominated Supervisors | <p>Responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring that, where required, the Working with Children (WWC) Check has been read/sighted prior to the volunteer's/student's commencement at the service and checked for currency/amendments ensuring that a volunteer/student record contains information for 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 (WWC) Check ensuring that volunteers/students and are adequately supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected ensuring that volunteers/students are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children providing volunteers/students with access to all service policies and procedures, and a copy of the <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</i> ensuring that volunteers/students comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the <i>Code of Conduct Policy</i>, while attending the service |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring strategies are in place to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service assisting the Approved Provider to develop an induction checklist for volunteers/students at the ensuring that volunteers/students have completed an induction checklist. |
| The volunteer/student supervisor | <p>The Volunteer/Student Supervisor will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan the volunteer's/student's specific duties and tasks in collaboration with the volunteer/student, (4.4.2 Volunteer agreed duties) other relevant team members and where appropriate children and families. (template provided at the end of this document) Provide regular constructive feedback to the volunteer/student. Address as early as possible any concerns regarding unsatisfactory performance of the volunteer/student in a constructive and respectful manner. Ensure that the volunteer/student is directly supervised whenever children are present. Ensure that the volunteer/student is not included in educator to child ratio. Provide volunteers/students with an induction to the service by the nominated supervisor and /or designated volunteer/student supervisor on the first day of attendance. Inform volunteers/students at induction that they are subject to the obligations and penalties enacted in the Education and Care Services National Laws and Regulations and that, if they breach those laws or engage in any reportable conduct under Victoria's Reportable Conduct Scheme, then their behaviour will be reported to the appropriate authorities. |
| Volunteers/Students | <p>Volunteers/Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure they have provided all details required to complete the 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 records undertake a Working with Children (WWC) Check and presenting a current WWC Check card or other notification, as applicable (unless their child is part of the group/activity) understand and acknowledge the requirement for confidentiality of all information relating to educators and families within the service comply with the requirements of the <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</i> and with all service policies and procedures, including the <i>Code of Conduct Policy</i>, while at the service undertake the induction process and complete 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. |

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| Related Legislation | <p><i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) Sections 16K & 16M</i></p> <p><i>Education and Care Services National Law 2010 (Vic) Sections 165-167, 183</i></p> <p><i>Education and Care National Regulations 2011 (NSW) Regulations 82-83, 90, 149, 168, 170-171, 181-183, 189</i></p> <p><i>Health Records Act 20001 (Vic)</i></p> <p><i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) Sections 21 & 23</i></p> <p><i>Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)</i></p> <p><i>Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)</i></p> |
| Sources and Further Reading | <p>www.dhs.vic.gov.au</p> |
| Related to NQS Q.A | <p>4 and 6</p> |
| Attachments | <p>Volunteer or Student Record</p> <p>Volunteer agreed duties template</p> |

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