

Yarram Early Learning Developing and Assessing Employee Performance Policy

Mandatory – Quality Area 7

PURPOSE

This policy provides guidelines for developing staff at Yarram Early Learning, including:

- ensuring a strong partnership between supervisor and employee.
- supporting staff to fulfil duties in their position description and further develop skills.
- detailing how poor performance will be managed.
- promoting a team based approach.
- describing the professional development opportunities that will be available to all staff.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following service policies:

- *Code of Conduct Policy*
- *Staffing policy*

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

Yarram Early Learning is committed to:

- establishing strong partnerships amongst staff that recognise the broad perspectives and experience that each staff member brings to the centre.
- Ensuring that each staff member is clear of their responsibilities, accountability and line management.
- Providing varying opportunities and support structures to maintain best practice employee performance in line with the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.
- Open and transparent conversations with staff about their performance.
- Continuous monitoring of employee performance with no surprises at the 6 monthly assessment.
- Addressing poor employee performance.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor, Educators, other staff, students on placement and volunteers at Yarram Early Learning.

3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

Employee satisfaction and a positive and supportive workplace culture are interconnected. By following simple processes and providing the right tools and documentation ensures that employees feel valued, supported and satisfied in their workplace. This in turn impacts on the enjoyment, learning and development and communication with children and their families / main caregivers who access Yarram Early Learning.

Without structures for assessing and supporting employee performance there can be frustration, division and lack of teamwork. It is essential for staff to work collaboratively and cooperatively when working with children and their families / care givers. The team approach is integral to considering the many perspectives that there can be around understanding a child's behaviour, their approach to learning, family influences and family values systems.

Professional Development for Staff

Professional development of staff can be achieved through a variety of methods:

- Attending formal training workshops and courses
- Participation in professional networks – ie. Wellington Early Years Network
- Case studies and discussions at team meetings
- Mentoring from a colleague
- Discussion and reflection with workplace supervisor or centre Director while undertaking work roles
- Specific time for one to one supervision

Addressing Poor Performance

All staff must be provided with the opportunity to have a strong understanding of their role responsibility, managerial expectations and key performance tasks.

This information is available through;

- The employee's Position Description
- Staff code of Conduct for Yarram Early Learning
- Induction and orientation processes
- Employee Performance and Development plan
- An employee's regular and ongoing open and transparent communication with their supervisor
- Excellent understanding of and familiarity with the centres policies and procedures
- Organisational structure for Yarram Early Learning

Where an employee falls below the expected standards of professional workplace performance and or behaviour, in the first instance, the employee should be counselled and support by their manager or supervisor to improve their behaviour and or performance to the required standard.

Where an employee is concerned with the performance and or behaviour of a supervisor and or workplace peer, in the first instance the employee should discuss with their supervisor. If this is not possible, the employee can approach the supervisor of their supervisor.

A person assessing any employee performance (generally the manager or supervisor) should determine the employees understanding of the policies and expectations of the organisation, their willingness to follow them, any barriers, systems failures and workplace obstacles preventing compliance. An analysis of the situation and or behaviour will work out whether the action was the result of an excusable mistake, an inexcusable error or deliberate action.

The decision to move from addressing poor performance to commencing formal performance management should be a last resort for a manager / supervisor when all other attempts at effective communication and or problem solving have been unsuccessful.

Australian workplace law requires the disciplinary and performance management process to be a fair procedure.

An employee undergoing a formal performance management process is entitled to bring a support person to any meeting arranged by the organisation to discuss the discipline issue or during performance management. A support person can be a representative of a union, a spouse, family friend or a colleague who can support the employee during the meeting. The support person cannot speak on the employee's behalf at the meeting, but can assist the employee in their communication.

Yarram Early Learning Centre will adopt the Managing Performance and Warnings process and guidelines as outlined by Fairwork Australia, to implement disciplinary procedures. See <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/managing-performance-and-warnings>

Staff Dispute and Grievance Resolution.

Every attempt (where appropriate) should be made to resolve the dispute or grievance with the staff member concerned. If this is not possible, please consult your line manager, or their line manager.

Confidentiality must be adhered to during and after the process of making and resolving grievances. This requirement seeks to protect the rights and privacy of all involved and to ensure a comfortable and productive working environment. Should an individual's grievance become more widely known,

there is the potential for undue embarrassment and workplace tension. In addition, it is less likely the grievance will be successfully resolved.

It is acknowledged that each party to a grievance is entitled to both personal and professional advice and support. This may involve approaching and confiding in a trusted friend, a personnel counsellor, the relevant contact person, and/or a responsible departmental officer with expertise in the area of grievance management. It is not the role of those people approached to make judgements on the matter or to adopt an advocacy role on behalf of any party. It is expected these people will maintain strict confidentiality.

Where a grievance cannot be resolved amongst staff it may be referred to the Chairperson of the Management Committee.

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Sections 12, 13, 14, 161, 162, 165, 169
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 14, 15, 16, 46, 47, 48, 49, 83, 84, 118, 120, 121–123, 125–126, 129–135, 136, 137–143, 145–152, 355, 357, 358, 360–364
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic)
- *Fair Work Act 2009*
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements
 - Standard 4.1: Staffing arrangements enhance children’s learning and development and ensure their safety and wellbeing
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management
 - Standard 7.1: Effective leadership promotes a positive organisational culture and builds a professional learning community

4. DEFINITIONS

Certified Supervisor: An educator with a Supervisor Certificate (in accordance with the National Regulations) who may consent to being placed in day-to-day charge of the education and care service. The designation must be made by the Approved Provider or the Nominated Supervisor and accepted in writing by the Certified Supervisor. A Certified Supervisor placed in day-to-day charge of a service **does not** have the same responsibilities under the National Law as the Nominated Supervisor.

Applications for Supervisor Certificates are assessed by the Regulatory Authority.

Educator: An individual who provides education and care for children as part of an education and care service.

Educational Leader: The Approved Provider of an education and care service must designate, in writing, a suitably-qualified and experienced educator, co-ordinator or other individual to lead the development and implementation of educational programs at the service (Regulation 118). This person must have a thorough understanding of the *Early Years Learning Framework* (or other approved learning framework), be able to guide other educators in their planning and reflection, and mentor colleagues in the implementation of their practice.

5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): www.acecqa.gov.au
- National *Early Years Learning Framework*:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/news/archive/Pages/elframework.aspx>
- Victorian *Early Years Learning and Development Framework*:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/learningdev/Pages/veyladf.aspx>
- Victorian *kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria*:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/Pages/default.aspx>

- Working with Children Check unit, Department of Justice – provides details of how to obtain a WWC Check: www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren/
- Victoria Police – National Police Record Check: www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document_ID=274

Service policies

- *Staffing Policy*
- *Code of Conduct Policy*
- *Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Maintaining this policy in partnership with staff to ensure appropriate and best practice employee performance.
- Ensuring that all employees are provided with the opportunity to participate in professional development including;
 - Attending formal training workshops and courses
 - Participation in professional networks – ie. Wellington Early Years Network
 - Case studies and discussions at team meetings
 - Mentoring from a colleague
 - Discussion and reflection with workplace supervisor or centre Director while undertaking work roles
 - Specific time for one to one supervision (where appropriate)
- Ensuring that the Yarram Early Learning Centre has;
 - Position Descriptions in place for all centre roles
 - A Staff code of Conduct for Yarram Early Learning
 - A current Policy and Procedure manual
 - A current diagram of the organisational structure for Yarram Early Learning
- Ensuring that the Yarram Early Learning Centre promotes regular and ongoing open and transparent communication among supervisors and supervisees within the centre.

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- Making sure that all employees actively participate in professional development opportunities including maintaining currency in compulsory training, ie. Senior First Aid, Anaphylaxis and Allergy etc.
- The provision of orientation to the centre for all staff including making sure that each staff member receives copies of or access to;
 - Their Position Description
 - The centre's Code of Conduct
 - The centre's policy manual
 - The organisational structure
- Role modelling a culture of open and transparent communication amongst staff to continuously improve staff skills.
- Providing regular one on one supervision to all Room Leaders and the centre's Educational Leader.
- Working in partnership to develop and implement individual annual Performance and Development Plans with Room Leaders and Educational Leader.
- Participating in regular one to one supervision with the Committee member who is designated the Nominated Supervisor's line manager and developing an annual Performance and Development Plan.
- Promoting staff grievance procedure.

The Educational Leader is responsible for:

- Inspiring, motivating, affirming and also challenging or extending the practice and pedagogy of educators. It is a joint endeavour involving inquiry and reflection, which can significantly impact on the important work educators do with children and families.
- Continuous improvement, supporting centre staff to consider what strategies are needed to improve the educational program in the approved service. Strategies might include:
 - leading and being part of reflective discussions about practice and implementing the learning framework
 - mentoring other educators by leading quality practice
 - discussing routines and how to make them more effective learning experiences

- observing children and educator interactions, and making suggestions on how to improve interactions and intentional teaching
- talking to parents about the educational program
- working with other early childhood professionals such as maternal and child health nurses and early childhood intervention specialists
- considering how the program can be linked to the community by working with other community services and groups such as Aboriginal Elders
- establishing systems across the service to ensure there is continuity of learning when children change room or attend other services, and then in their transition to school
- assisting with documenting children's learning and how these assessments can inform curriculum decision making
- Working in close partnership with the Nominated Supervisor to support staff skill building.

Room leaders are responsible for:

- Role modelling a culture of open and transparent communication amongst staff to continuously improve staff skills.
- Participating in regular one on one supervision with the Nominated Supervisor.
- Providing regular on the job feedback to all staff under their supervision including creating opportunities for reflection on practice. This may include seeking input from staff under their supervision using the following prompts;
 - What worked well today? What didn't work so well and what can be improved?
 - I noticed that you (insert what was noticed) today, what was going on for you there?
 - How did you feel about the way we approached (a given situation), would you do anything differently next time?
 - What could be other reasons why this approach did / didn't work?
 - What was going on for the child in this situation?
 - What learning did you see today in the children? How could you further develop any interests shown?
- Working in partnership to develop and implement individual annual Performance and Development Plans with all staff under their supervision. Completing six monthly reviews with staff.
- Encouraging staff to put items on the agenda for staff meetings to discuss practice.
- Seeking advice from the Nominated Supervisor before commencing any formal performance management process with a staff member.
- Promoting and utilising staff grievance procedure.

Certified Supervisors, educators and other staff are responsible for:

- Actively participating in discussion about practice with their Room Leader, Educational Leader and during team meetings.
- Working with their supervisor to develop and implement their annual Performance and Development Plan.
- Participating in six monthly reviews.
- Utilising Staff grievance procedure.

Parents/guardians, volunteers and students on placement are responsible for:

- Reading this Policy and asking any questions.

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- Regularly check staff records to ensure Performance and Development Plans and reviews are current and complete
- Check that records of professional development undertaken by staff and discussion of practice at team meetings are being kept.
- Regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness.
 - Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice.
 - Revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required.
- Notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Staff Performance and Development Plan template.

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by Yarram Early Learning Incorporated in November, 2015.

REVIEW DATE: Version 1, September, 2016. Version 2, review date due September 2017.

ATTACHMENT 1

Staff Performance and Development Plan

Annual plan, Year: _____

Staff member name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Key Tasks (taken from Position Description and or other sources)	Benchmark	Comments (completed at review time)
<i>(Example)</i> Regularly communicate with parents/families on their child's learning and development.	<i>(Example)</i> Extended chat completed, (minimum of five minutes) with each parent / family on a monthly basis about their child's learning and development. Documented in daily sign in/out sheet.	<i>(Example)</i> Was this achieved? Were there any barriers?

Performance against the values and philosophy of the centre:

Key Values	Self Rating		Supervisor Rating		Comments (completed at review time)
	6 months	12 months	6 months	12 months	
Child centred practice					
Confidentiality					
Customer Service					
Teamwork					
Integrated Centre					
Child Safe Environment					

Rating

1. Unsatisfactory – major improvement needed
2. Some improvement necessary
3. Satisfactory
4. Satisfies requirements to a high standard
5. Outstanding Performance

Professional Development opportunities for the coming 12 months:

Areas for development for the coming 12 months:

--

6 month review completed

Achievements:

--

Staff member name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

12 month review completed

Achievements:

--

Staff member name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____