

Yarram Early Learning Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy

Mandatory – Quality Area 4

PURPOSE

This policy provides guidelines for the engagement and participation of volunteers and students at the Yarram Early Learning, while ensuring that children's health, safety and wellbeing is protected at all times.

POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

The Yarram Early Learning 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 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.
- Allowing volunteers to develop reciprocal relationships with children and families to create a trusting and safe environment for both children and the volunteers/students to learn in.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of the Yarram Early Learning

BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

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 Yarram Early Learning wherever appropriate and possible.

Volunteers and Students

Volunteers and students can expect:

- A safe and well-managed workplace
- Meaningful work experience with appropriate direction, supervision and training
- Recognition for their contribution.
- Learning opportunities from experienced and qualified educators.

The role that volunteers play in children's services varies and can include

- Working with groups of children
- Preparing materials or food
- Assisting with administrative tasks or
- Working one-on-one with individual children
- Students may undertake assessment tasks/observations required by their institution, under the supervision of a qualified staff member or supervisor. (communicated with room leader/director prior to task/observation so adequate staffing can be arranged to ensure a safe environment for the children.

The children's service is responsible for ensuring that volunteers are suitable to work with children, and that children's health, safety and wellbeing is protected at all times. Prior to participation at the service, a volunteer (aged 18 years or over) must be in possession of a Working with Children (WWC) Check card, unless they are under the direct supervision of a staff member who is over 18 years of age and holds, or is actively working towards, an approved diploma level education and care qualification (Regulation 358) (refer to *Staffing Policy*).

Volunteers should only be engaged to complement, not replace, the work of paid staff. Accordingly, services should not engage volunteers to fill the place of an employee who is ill or on leave, or to fill a vacant budgeted position.

Volunteers 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
- Where there is a conflict of interest.
- **Students and volunteers are not included in staff to child ratios**

Prior to commencing work at the service, all volunteers should be interviewed to ascertain their suitability for, and interest in, the tasks they will be undertaking, and to assess whether the volunteer's goals can be achieved. The interview process also provides an opportunity for volunteers to have their questions answered. Volunteers should be familiar with Emergency and Evacuation Policy, mobile phone policy, hygiene and privacy and confidentiality policies. Reference checks must be undertaken by the Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor, to confirm work abilities or character attributes. Good practice in volunteer management includes acknowledgement and recognition of volunteer contributions, and this can involve a mixture of formal and informal recognition strategies.

It is a requirement under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* that the Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor uses the staff record to document the details of all students and volunteers. The staff record must include the full name, address and date of birth of each student or volunteer who participates at the service. The Approved Provider of a centre-based service must also keep a record for each day on which the student or volunteer participates at the service, including the date and the hours of participation. In addition to this, it is recommended that students and volunteers undertake an induction to the service

and complete an induction checklist (refer to Attachment 1), which should also be stored with the staff record.

Participation of Parents/Guardians and Family Members

NQS: Quality Area 6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

The Yarram Early Learning 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 staff value each other’s knowledge and roles, communicate freely and respectfully and engage in shared decision making” (*Early Years Learning Framework*). Yarram Early Learning 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*).

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Section 169
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 123, 145, 149, 157, 355,358, 360
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic)
- *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth)(amendments up to 2018)
- *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
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic)
- *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017*
- *Working with Children Act 2006* (Vic)

DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

Conflict of interest: (In relation to this policy) refers to an interest that may affect, or may appear reasonably likely to affect, the judgement or conduct of the volunteer, or may impair their independence or loyalty to the service. A conflict of interest can arise from avoiding personal losses as well as gaining personal advantage, whether financial or otherwise, and may not only involve the volunteer, but also their relatives, friends or business associates.

Student: A person undertaking a practicum placement as part of a recognised early childhood qualification. This student will be supported by an educational institution in the completion of their placement.

Volunteer: A person who willingly undertakes defined activities to support the education and care programs at a children's service in an unpaid or honorary capacity. These activities may include direct contact with children, administrative tasks, or preparing materials or food.

Working directly with children: For the purposes of the National Regulations, working directly with children is defined as being physically present with children and directly engaged in providing them with education and/or care.

Working with Children (WWC) Check: The check is a legal requirement for those undertaking paid or voluntary child-related work in Victoria and is a measure to help protect children from harm arising as a result of physical or sexual abuse. The Department of Justice assesses a person's suitability to work with children by examining relevant serious sexual, physical and drug offences in a person's national criminal history and, where appropriate, their professional history. A WWC Check card, notice or document (valid for five years), is granted to a person under working with children legislation if:

- They have been assessed as suitable to work with children
- There has been no information that, if the person worked with children, they would pose a risk to those children
- They are not prohibited from attempting to obtain, undertake or remain in child-related employment.

SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): www.acecqa.gov.au
- National Early Years Learning Framework: <http://deewr.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework>
- Working with Children Check <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>

Service policies

- *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- *Code of Conduct Policy*
- *Complaints and Grievances Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Determining Responsible Person Policy*
- *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
- *Staffing Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

PROCEDURES

The Committee of Management is responsible for:

- Developing guidelines in consultation with the Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor and staff 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 Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor
- 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 (Regulations 123, 355, 360), (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*)
- Ensuring that, where required, the Working with Children (WWC) Check has been read/sighted prior to the volunteer's commencement at the service
- Ensuring that the staff 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 (Regulations 145, 147, 149)
- Ensuring 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
- Ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children
- Ensuring 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 this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor or staff under the law (Regulation 157)
- Developing a range of strategies to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service
- Providing volunteers/students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures, and a copy of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- Ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while attending the service
- Developing an induction information sheet for student observations (refer to Attachment 1)
- Developing a checklist for volunteers/students attending the service (refer to Attachment 2) in consultation with the Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor and staff.

The Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- Assisting the Approved Provider to develop guidelines for applications from volunteers/students to work at the service
- Assisting the Approved Provider with decisions in relation to accepting/rejecting a potential volunteer/student based on the circumstances of the service at the time
- 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 (Regulations 123, 355, 360) (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*)

- Ensuring that, where required, the Working with Children (WWC) Check has been read/sighted prior to the volunteer's commencement at the service, and that details are included on the staff record
- Ensuring 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
- Ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children
- Ensuring 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 this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or staff members under the law (Regulation 157)
- Ensuring strategies are in place to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service
- Providing volunteers/students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures, and a copy of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- Ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while attending the service
- Assisting in the development of an induction information sheet for student observations (refer to Attachment 1)
- Assisting in the development of a checklist for volunteers/students attending the service (refer to Attachment 2) in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and staff members.
- Ensuring that, where required, the Working with Children (WWC) Check has been read/sighted prior to the volunteer's commencement at the service.
- Ensuring that volunteers and students have completed the induction checklist (refer to Attachment 1) and have been provided with a copy of the staff handbook, if applicable.
- Informing volunteers, students and parents/guardians of the services emergency and evacuation procedures (Regulations 97, 168 (2)(e))
- Ensuring volunteers and students on placement at the service are not affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication) that would impair their capacity to supervise or provide education and care to children (Regulation 83) (refer to *Tobacco, Alcohol and other Drugs Policy*)

Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor and staff are responsible for:

- Assisting the Approved Provider and Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor to develop guidelines for applications from volunteers/students to work at the service
- 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 (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*)

- Providing volunteers/students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures, and a copy of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- Ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while attending the service
- Complying 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
- Complying with the requirement that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children
- Enabling 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
- Encouraging the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service
- Assisting in the development of an induction information sheet for student observations (refer to attachment 1)
- Assisting in the development of a checklist for volunteers/students attending the service (refer to attachment 2) in consultation with the certified supervisor, nominated supervisor and staff members.
- Informing volunteers, students and parents/guardians of the services emergency and evacuation procedures (*Regulations 97, 168 (2)(e)*)
- Identifying children with medical conditions, the child's medical management plan and the location of the child's medication (*Regulations 90, 168(2)(d)*)
- Ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians are aware of how to comply with child protection law and Child Safe Standards obligations
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Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for:

- Ensuring they have provided all details required to complete the staff record
- Undertaking a Working with Children (WWC) Check and presenting a current WWC Check card or other notification, as applicable
- Understanding and acknowledging the requirement for confidentiality of all information relating to staff and families within the service (refer to *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*)
- Complying 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*, Emergency and evacuation, mobile phone, hygiene and privacy and confidentiality (at the service undertaking the induction process and completing the induction checklist (refer to Attachment 1) prior to commencement at the service
- Following the directions of staff at the service at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.
- Asking questions to your supervision of anything they may be unsure of to ensure a safe and comfortable environment for staff, volunteers and children.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Complying 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 attending the service
- Following the directions of staff at the service at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor will:

- Check staff records on a regular basis to ensure details of students and volunteers are maintained in line with all legislative requirements as outlined in the policy
- Regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- Monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- 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: Student Observations - Induction Information
- Attachment 2: Policy Manual induction checklist for volunteers/students
- Attachment 3: Volunteer Validation of person information
- Attachment 4: Volunteer orientation checklist

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by Yarram Early Learning Incorporated in May 2020

REVIEWED BY COMMITTEE – May 2023

TO BE REVIEWED - DATE: May 2025

ATTACHMENT 1

Yarram Early Learning

Student Observations - Induction Information

About

Yarram Early Learning philosophy is based on an image of the child as creative, capable and inquisitive. The children's learning program is designed and implemented by qualified early childhood Educators. The mission is to provide an exemplary educational experience in a humanistic and environmentally mindful setting.

Visiting Information

Please provide:

- Photo copies of your Student Card
- Contact details of the appropriate supervisor
- Working with Children Check – unless under the age of 18

Dress code: Neat casual, including a sun hat when UV rating is 3 and above. Please do not wear gym gear, singlet tops, open toe shoes/sandals or thongs.

Upon arrival please make yourself familiar with the layout of the Service:

- Emergency exits and group assembly points
- Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor's Office
- 4 Children's rooms
- Adult Bathrooms
- Staff Room
- Storage Areas and Resource Collections
- Central First Aid Cabinet & Children's Medical Lists
- Computer & Printing Access

Student Conduct:

- Please conduct your observations quietly to avoid disruption of the class room learning experiences.
- Please consult with the Room Leader before interviewing a child/ren.
- Please be respectful of each child's personal space.

- Please ensure the safety of all those associated with the observations and research.
- Please ensure that observations and research comply with established guidelines in the lesson plans.
- Please refrain from taking photographs or using phones while at Yarram Early Learning.
- Please familiarise yourself with the relevant policies and procedures listed within the Policy Manual Induction

Please do not hesitate to speak with Yarram Early Learning Staff if you have any questions.

ATTACHMENT 2

Policy Manual Induction Checklist for volunteers/students

Name: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by all students/volunteers participating at the Yarram Early Learning and returned to the Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor prior to commencing at the service.

Please tick

I have sighted a copy of the Yarram Early Learning Policy and Procedures Manual.

I understand the content of service policies and procedures, including those relating to:

- Conduct while at the service (*Code of Conduct Policy*)
- Emergency, evacuation, fire and safety, including locations of fire extinguishers and emergency exits (*Emergency and Evacuation Policy*)
- Accidents at the service (*Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*)
- Dealing with medical conditions (*Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy, Asthma Policy, Anaphylaxis Policy, Diabetes Policy, Epilepsy Policy and Administration of Medication Policy*)
- Sun protection while at the service (*Sun Protection Policy*)
- Good hygiene practices (*Hygiene Policy*)
- First aid arrangements for children and adults, including the location of the nearest first aid kit (*Administration of First Aid Policy*)
- Daily routines
- Interacting appropriately with children (*Interactions with Children Policy*)
- Reporting of serious incidents and notifiable incidents at the service (*Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy, Complaints and Grievances Policy and Occupational Health and Safety Policy*)
- Reporting hazards in the workplace (*Occupational Health and Safety Policy*)

The expectations of my placement/engagement, my role and responsibilities (including attending to the requirements of children with additional needs) have been clearly explained to me by my supervisor.

I am aware of the non-smoking policy of the service.

YES/NO

I am aware that I am expected to participate in general tasks, including maintaining the environment in a clean, safe and tidy condition.

YES/NO

Volunteer/student name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor/Room Leader name:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ATTACHMENT 3



VOLUNTEER Validation of Personal Information

This form is to be completed by all volunteers at Yarram Early Learning. This form will form the basis of your volunteer personnel file held at the service. You should provide any updated information to the service. All volunteers must provide a current Working With Childrens Check.

1. Personal Details (Please use BLOCK LETTERS)			
Family Name:		Given Name(s):	
Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Date of Birth: / /
Address & Contact Information			
Number/Street:			
Suburb/Town: State: Postcode:			
Phone No: Alternative No:			
Email Address:.....			
Emergency Contact:			
Name: Phone Number:			
Medical Information			
Do you suffer from Allergies/Anaphylaxis/Asthma/Diabetes or any other Medical Conditions that the centre should be aware of? If so please give details.		<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (please give details)	
		
		

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Do you have any special skills/talents you would like to share with the children at the centre?

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.....

6. Working with Childrens Check

Work with Children's Check Number:		Expiry date:	
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8. Declaration

I declare that the information I have provided is true and correct.

Signature of Volunteer:..... Date ____/____/____

ATTACHMENT 4



**PLEASE BRING IN ON
YOUR ORIENTATION DAY**

Volunteer Orientation Checklist

Staff Details

Name:		Date of Birth: / /
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Address:

Following forms/information received: please tick

	Validation of Personal Information
	WWC Check <i>Checked for currency on WWCC website and attached verification</i> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Relevant Qualifications or Course Enrolment Information
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Nominated Supervisor: please only complete this section if requested to do so

I accept the designation of Nominated Supervisor of Yarram Early Learning Centre
and understand and accept my responsibilities under the Education and Care Services Nation Law and National Regulations

	Signed letter for nominated supervisor received. <i>(please tick)</i>
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Signature of Approved Provider:	Date:
Signature of Nominated Supervisor:	Date:

Director or second in charge to discuss and new staff member to initial when understood		Initials
Introductions	Volunteer officially introduced to all staff by the Nominated Supervisor	
	Staff Roles; (2nd in charge; Room leaders, Director, Administration, Educational Leader, First Aid Officer, Food Safety Officer)	
	Greeting families	
	Tour of centre	
Service information	Service philosophy	
	Integrated Service	
Staffing arrangements and resources	Access to building	
	Educators In-services	
	Phone use	
	WHS/OHS information (eg correct lifting and storage procedures)	
Supervision	Adequate supervision with your interactions with children at the service (e.g. cannot be left unsupervised with any child within the centre)	

Emergency Information	Sun smart	
	Location of fire extinguishers, fire blankets etc	
	Fire drill procedures	
	Location Material Safety Data Sheets	
	Emergency Evacuation Plan	
	Emergency phone numbers	

	Location and use of emergency whistle, alarm	
	Location of First Aid Kits	
	Location of children's medication	
	Medical management plans & risk minimisation plans	
	Administration of medication	

To be completed by Staff Member Conducting Orientation

I..... confirm that I have discussed the above items with the new staff member

Date: Signed:

Other staff member to discuss and new staff member to initial when understood		Initials
Tour of Centre	Visitor sign in/out	
	Staff Toilet & Lockers	
	Break Room	
	Staff Food Storage / labels /dates	
	Planning Room / Educator Resources	
	Location of bins	
	Kitchen cleaning and hygiene procedures (including dishwasher)	
	Nappy change/Toileting procedures	
	Hand washing procedure	
	Room Guides	
Food	Allergy and anaphylaxis information (special diets)	

To be completed by Staff Member Conducting Orientation

I..... confirm that I have discussed the above items with the new staff member

Date: Signed:

Centre Policies (to be initialled by new staff member when read and understood)		Initials
Administration of First Aid Policy		
Administration of Medication Policy		
Anaphylaxis Policy		
Asthma Policy		

Code of Conduct Policy	
Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy	
Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy	
Diabetes Policy	
Emergency and Evacuation Policy	
Epilepsy Policy	
Hygiene Policy	
Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy	
Interactions with Children Policy	
Occupational Health and Safety Policy	
Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy	
Privacy and Confidentiality Policy	
Sun Protection Policy	

To be completed by New Staff Member

I hereby acknowledge that on (date) I received a digital copy of the Yarram Early Learning Centre Policies and Procedures Manual and the Staff Handbook I have read and understood the above listed Centre Policies which it contained.

I understand the contents of said policies and agree to abide by the principles, practices and consequences set out within.

I understand that the Yarram Early Learning Incorporated Committee / The Certified Supervisor, Nominated Supervisor will address any breach of these policies, and that any serious breach could lead to legal or disciplinary action.

I understand that a signed copy of this acknowledgement will be kept on my staff record while I am working at the service.

Date: Signed: