

Policy Statement

This policy acts to ensure that:

- Our service is committed to providing a safe environment for all children, where their health, safety and wellbeing is paramount. In order to ensure this is preserved during the engagement of students and volunteers, and in order to remain compliant with regulations and legislation, the service will abide by the strategies and practices outlined in this policy
- Student and volunteers have an opportunity to gain experience and demonstrate their competencies within a service setting

Explanation

Professional development is an important aspect of training. Enabling students and volunteers to participate in our service programs demonstrates that Country Children's Early Learning is committed to the training needs of students and volunteers, and the need to impart knowledge and experience from Staff and Educators.

Goals

- 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

- All students and volunteers will be required to undertake a Working with Children Check (over 18 years of age)
- Volunteers and students also includes parents or guardians who are at the service for the purpose of volunteering or completing relevant studies, and the same requirements are applicable
- Volunteers and students do not make up part of the staff to child ratio and cannot be used to fill the place of an Educator
- 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

Policy Created
February 2016

Policy Last Updated
June 2024

Policy Review Date
May 2026

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider

- Ensure that volunteers and students are adequately supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected
- Ensure that volunteers and students are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children
- Ensure that the staff record contains information on all volunteers and 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 (over 18 years of age)

Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person

- Facilitate the participation of students and volunteers in our services from within the community
- Offer placements to:
 - High school students who wish to gain work experience as part of a high school program, where the school has initiated the work experience, identified the student's suitability, worked with the service to arrange suitable times and provide authorisation for the student to participate
 - Students attending other registered training organisations and studying in a relevant field, such as childcare, teaching, recreation or community services where the training organisation has initiated the placement, identified the student's suitability, worked with the supervisor in relation to times and expectations and provided written authorisation for the student to participate
- Offer placements to volunteers after determining their commitment and suitability
- Collect all relevant forms and information from students that is provided by the school or training organisation
- During a work experience or a volunteering role induction, provide volunteers and students with guidelines identifying their responsibilities, expectations and code of conduct while at the service
- Provide supervision, guidance, support and advice to ensure adherence to the policy at all times
- Ensure that volunteers and students are adequately supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected

- Seek approval from CCEL Management prior to accepting a volunteer or student at the service
- Ensure that volunteers and students are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children
- Volunteers and students are not counted in ratios so cannot be counted as Working Directly with the children
- Service staff and Educators must always oversee the role that students and volunteers are conducting whilst at the service
- Ensure that volunteers and students comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures

Educators

- Comply with the requirement that volunteers and students are adequately supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected
- Seek approval from CCEL Management prior to accepting a volunteer or student at the service
- Comply with the requirement that volunteers and students are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children
- Assist volunteers and students to feel welcome and that they belong to the team
- Encourage students and volunteers to participate and communicate in an open and honest manner
- Ensure students and volunteers do not discuss children's development or other issues with parents
- Request that students and volunteers adhere to all areas of confidentiality
- Ensure students and volunteers are never left alone or in charge of any children
- Volunteers and students are not counted in ratios so cannot be counted as Working Directly with the children
- Service staff and Educators must always oversee the role that students and volunteers are conducting whilst at the service
- Expect students and volunteers to take responsibility for the role that they are undertaking whilst on placement, viewing it as part of their own professional development
- Seek written consent from parents before a student or volunteer is to be placed at the service
- Inform families when a student or volunteer is on placement at the service

- Provide ongoing constructive feedback and assessment that is fair and equitable
- Provide students and volunteers with opportunities to learn and participate in a positive, encouraging environment

Volunteer/Student

- Ensure they have provided all details required to complete the staff record
- Undertake a Working with Children Check (over 18 years of age)
- Understand and acknowledge the requirement for confidentiality of all information relation to staff and families within the service
- Comply with the requirements of the Education and Care Service National Regulations and with all service policies and procedures, including the Staff Code of Conduct while attending the service
- Undertake the induction process and complete the induction checklist prior to commencement at the service
- Provide the service with all relevant paperwork that is provided by the school or training organisation
- Maintain confidentiality in regards to the children, Educators and staff at the service
- Follow the directions of Educators at the service at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected
- Not subject any child to any form of corporal punishment or any unreasonable discipline as per the Law

Families

- Complying with the requirements of the Education and Care Service National Regulations and with all service policies and procedures while attending the service
- Follow the directions of Educators at the service at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected

LINKS TO:

- **Education & Care Services National Law**
Section 166(3), 167
- **Education & Care Services National Regulations**
149, 168(2)(i)(iii), 172
- **National Quality Standards/Elements:**
4.2, 7.1, 7.1.3
- **Child Safe Standards**
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

Continual Monitoring and Improvement

Continual improvement and monitoring will occur in the following ways:

- Incidental and planned consultation with families
- Approved Provider and Coordinators accessing current relevant information
- Approved Provider, Coordinators and Educators accessing current and relevant training
- Internal evaluation of incidences and the improvement of systems

SOURCES

- Education and Care Services National Regulations - December 2021
- Education and care Services National Law - January 2022
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations - October 2017
- Guide to the National Quality Standard - January 2020
- Implementing the Child Safe Standards: A Guide for Early Education and Outside School Hours Care Services, NSW Department of Education, 2021
- A Guide to the Child Safe Standards, NSW Office of the Children's Guardian, 2020
- ACECQA – FDC Approved Provider compliance responsibilities – October 2017
- Be You
- My Time Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia
- The Early Years Learning Framework
- ECA Code of Ethics
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- NSW Office of the Children's Guardian

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES:

- Child-Safe Environment
- Child Protection
- Privacy & Confidentiality
- Supervision
- Staff Code of Conduct