



6.5 Staffing Policy Changing to Student/Volunteer policy

(Recruitment and Induction of new staff, volunteers,
students and ongoing support staff)

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Aims

The nature, dispositions and capabilities of those who work with 3-5 year olds is extremely important during these formative stages of development and learning. Because of this the employment and induction of new staff is a critical process. To this end the Director will:

1. Ensure that the centre has the correct number of staff and that all staff are appropriately qualified as required by the Australian Education & Care Services National Regulations with regard to (1) centre size (as per the number of children attending), (2) the ages of the children attending and (3) the additional NSW Schedule within the ECSNR regarding educator to child ratios (regulations 271, 272). These specific regulations are identified in this policy under 'Relevant Early Childhood Professional Standards' below and include the position of educational leader who will be the 'responsible person present at the service' as per ECSNR requirements under 'Part 4.4 Staffing Arrangements'. The Director will maintain daily records of staff members working hours as per sign-on/sign-out book usage in line with ECSNR regulations 145-152

2. Ensure all staff members follow an appropriate code of conduct in fulfilling their responsibilities. In line with this, Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics will be made available to all staff members by the Director as part of their induction to the centre. This code of ethics is applied in all policies this centre has developed, and those relevant to the present policy can be identified below under 'Relevant Early Childhood Professional Standards.' Ethical conduct in relation to staffing refers to:
 - Staff relationships that are mutually respectful, supportive and of a collaborative nature thereby ensuring that high quality team work results. It is a strongly held view at this centre that ethical practices such as these will positively contribute to maintaining staff stability over time

 - Parent/child relationships that are respectful, inclusive and where confidentiality is assured

3. Seek and interview new centre staff in a way that is fair to all and does not discriminate against anyone

4. Provide a thorough induction for all new staff including volunteers and practicum students, that comprises clear expectations about their working arrangements, and all aspects of the centre's functioning

5. Provide sound and ethically based leadership in supporting the ongoing development of staff after the induction and probationary periods

6. Ensure staff are aware of their leave entitlements

Legislative Requirements

Child Protection (Prohibited employment) Act 1998

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Children (Education and Care National Law Application) Act 2010

Equal Opportunity Act

NSW Anti-discrimination Act 1977

Privacy Act 1998 and Amendment 2000

Date reviewed by staff: April 2016

Date reviewed by committee: June 2016

Next review date: June 2019

Who Is Affected By This Policy?

Child
Staff
Management

Relevant Early Childhood Professional Standards

Early Childhood Code of Ethics:	1-2, I-10, 3-5, Section V, Section VII
Early Years Learning Framework:	Principles: 1-4
Education & Care Services Australian National Regulations:	83, 118,120, 122, 149, 130-134, 271, 14 -152
National Quality Framework:	2.2, 4.1, 4.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3

Sources/References

Early Years Learning Framework, Belonging, Being and Becoming, Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments, 2009.

National Quality Framework, Australians Children's Education and Care Quality Authority 2017

Children's Services Regulations 2004

Children's Services Amendments Regulation 2010

Procedures

1. Recruitment of new staff

1.1 In the situation where volunteer staff or students apply to work in the centre, the Director will be responsible for this process including the organisation and implementation of it. As such her/his decision will be taken in regard to:

- The suitability of the individuals concerned (including a 'Working with Children' police check)
- Whether the timing of such visits would be in the best interests of the children
- Awareness of the need to not overwhelm children with the presence of too many adults

1.2 When it becomes necessary for the recruitment of new staff, the Director and Committee of Management or representatives thereof will ensure the centre's staffing profile will be commensurate with the appropriate regulations as per Aim 1 of this policy. They will also determine the selection criteria for each new staffing position. The position will be advertised in a local paper. All such advertisements will provide intending applicants with an appropriate period of time in which to submit an application and résumé and a clear statement of the roles and responsibilities that the position entails.

1.3 The position advertised and required qualifications or certification will be as per the Education and Care Services National Regulations noted above

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1.4 Equal opportunity will be given to all applicants and a core set of questions for the interview will be decided upon by the Director and Committee of Management or its chosen representative/s. Interview questions will be based around the job description as per the advertised position. This is to ensure fairness for all interviewees. However, it is also accepted industry practice that during the course of an interview, unscripted subsidiary questions may be asked by an interview panel if (1) they assist in providing further details about an interviewee's strengths, previous experience etc. that pertain to the advertised position and (2) they are not biased in relation to gender, age, culture etc. and are not in fact about these things (see the centre's Anti Bias Policy)

1.5 The Director will determine who will be selected for an interview based on information gained from the applications and their relevance to the selection criteria

1.6 Applicants will be notified by telephone of interview time and place, by the secretary of the Committee of Management

1.7 The interview committee will consist of the Director, a Committee of Management representative and another parent representative (who may or may not be on the Committee of Management) who will be invited to this committee by the Director

1.8 At the interview, applicants will be informed of wages, superannuation, leave entitlements, period of probation etc. and will be given an opportunity to ask questions of the interviewing committee

1.9 The interviewing committee will discuss all applicants following the interviews, but the Director will ultimately determine who the successful applicant is

1.10 A referee will be contacted to confirm each applicant's detail and work practices.

1.11 The successful applicant will be notified by phone of their success as soon as possible, whereupon a letter confirming the applicant's success, job description, employment details, period of probation, superannuation membership form and **Working with Children Check** will immediately be forwarded to the applicant by the director. All unsuccessful applicants will receive either a phone call or a letter of thanks and confirmation that their application was unsuccessful. The Director will undertake this latter task as soon as possible after the interviews but not before the successful candidate has accepted the position

1.12 All new staff, whether employed or a volunteer or a practicum student, will be subject to a **Working with Children Check**. Any intending staff member, volunteer or student who does not have a clear record will not be employed or allowed to visit the centre. All students from either a university or TAFE will have already had a background police check undertaken; nonetheless the Director will always request confirmation of this fact from the institution concerned.

1.13 For newly employed staff, a probation period will be decided upon by the Director who will also evaluate the new staff member's progress during this time and ultimately decide on their suitability, after discussion with the Committee of Management

2. Procedures for the induction of new staff, volunteers & students

The number of policies this centre has developed attests to the complexity that exists in relation to the key areas of activity in preschool centres, namely: OH&S, administration and management, health, education and care, and parental and community involvement. Within these areas of activity the legal, economic, ethical and educational responsibilities are many and are interwoven. Consequently, the induction of new centre staff is a complex job and one that must occur over time. The induction process will vary depending on whether the new staff member is qualified, is an untrained helper, student teacher or volunteer. The process of inducting new staff is seen by this centre as a period of transition and not a one-off event. It is seen to consist largely of on-site training over time whereby meaningful links can be made among daily practice/experiences and (1) early childhood regulations and how they relate to practice, (2) theoretical underpinnings that affect both child:adult relationships and educational processes/teaching style and (3) ethical considerations that affect parental involvement, child management techniques and staff relationships in this small rural community. The centre's induction process is also seen to be dualistic in nature, i.e. it will occur both informally (as the Director works side by side with a new staff member or student) and formally (sit down meetings, exchange of printed material etc.). To this end in relation to the induction of new employees, volunteer workers or practicum students, the Director will:

2.1 Show the new staff member around the centre and provide introductions to the other staff members and other parents as the opportunity arises

2.2 Initially focus on the more urgent and legal aspects of working in a preschool centre e.g. getting to know the children, critical OH&S issues (including aspects such as equipment safety, safe handling and management of food, safety re water play) confidentiality of family information, where the First Aid kit and emergency phone numbers are etc.

2.3 Ensure that volunteers and students will not be privy to the same amount of confidential information about children and families that new employees may be, or have access to family records or any other kind of confidential information held at the centre. (Further details on this issue are in the centre's 'Security of Buildings & Confidential Information Policy', Procedure 2.11)

2.4 Ensure that neither a volunteer worker, child care trainee or student teacher visiting the centre will be left in sole charge of the centre or children. Thus any student undertaking practicum or volunteer work at the centre will always be working under the supervision of the Director

2.5 On an ongoing basis, continue the induction with new employees across all other relevant areas (see 2.2 above) both formally and informally, e.g. further procedures for OH&S, emergencies (including evacuation of the centre), for children who may be on medication, for parental involvement etc. It is expected this process may take one to two months

2.6 Establish and reinforce the practice that all staff relationships are to be developed around respect and support within an overall framework of shared ideas and collaboration so as to ensure a positive centre ethos. The Director's role here will be one of leadership by:

- Actively fostering ongoing professional development or training for all staff members as appropriate and/or desired by them
- Modelling appropriate behavior in relation to all aspects of the program but particularly in relation to interactions with parents and children
- Provide individualised support and feedback in relation to work practices, for all staff on an ongoing basis

2.7 Expectations of students will be discussed with them at time of induction, this will include confidentiality, phones and multimedia, signing in and out, clothing and being sun safe, nutritious foods, helping during the day, speaking to the parents, no sole supervision, being punctual, personal hygiene/ washing of hands on arrival and before meals and wearing gloves. Students will need to have a photo and some information for parents about themselves and why they are at the service and have it on display out the front during their time at the preschool. A student badge/ lanyard needs to be worn at all times at the service.

2.8 The times the student will be at the service will be discussed between the director and the student on induction, expectations of the student staying at the service during these times will be discussed and noted.

2.9 Whilst we welcome students to the Cootamundra Preschool, placement is always at the director's discretion before commencement. If the conduct of the student while at the preschool does not meet the requirements of the placement or expectations are not met the director has the discretion to terminate after consultation with the student's supervisor. We will only ever have one student at any one time at the service.

3.0 The staff at the Cootamundra Preschool provide high quality care to the children and are eager in assisting and guiding students to achieve quality care throughout their interactions with the children and responsibilities through TAFE/ University/ School. A letter of the responsibilities expected of the student while at the service will need to be provided on induction.

3. Ongoing support of staff

The Director's leadership role in relation to the ongoing development of skills and work related knowledge in all staff members is as follows:

3.1 Feedback and encouragement will be given individually on a continual basis. This will involve acknowledging and supporting the individual strengths of staff members as well as providing support in areas of weakness (see 'Education Program & Practice Policy' Procedure 5 & 20, Equipment & Educational Materials Policy, Procedure 15)

3.2 The working ethos and modelling set by the Director will be such that individual staff members support, encourage and compliment each other's work as appropriate

3.3 The Director will actively encourage staff members and practicum students to feel a valued team member and reinforce the notion of team work and collaboration. That is, the Director's approach will be one of empowerment by providing encouragement, support and intrinsic motivation for further progress

3.4 All staff under the Director's guidance will continually evaluate (1) the working effectiveness of the centre's equipment and educational materials, (2) the ways in which children engage with these and learn from them and (3) the staff's own contributions to this process which includes program planning. The usual practice for this is to occur daily, either as staff set up in the morning and/or as they put equipment away at the end of the day. The Director will also use this time to encourage staff and help them to further their knowledge on an individual basis. Thus this process is an ongoing verbal one and will occur frequently whereas having to document such discussions in writing would not be possible, practicable or sensible in this busy rural preschool

3.5 The Director will encourage and assist any staff members who express interest in further training or formal education, to pursue this goal

3.6 The Director will involve staff members in both her/his educational program for the group as a whole, as well as her/his educational planning for individual children, and all staff will share feedback on these matters

3.7 The Director will remain observant and aware of the personal state and development of each staff member and support them accordingly. This includes the Director assuming a mentoring role in relation to staff and practicum students, on an ongoing basis. (See also the centre's 'Educational Program & Practice Policy' (Procedure 5)

3.8 The Director will both foster and model sensitivity to others' needs, respect for their individuality and fairness to all, thus establishing an ethos of harmonious and respectful relationships amongst staff, with the aim of eliminating/minimising conflict and disharmony

3.9 The Director will communicate clearly and sensitively with children, staff and parents at all times and encourage all staff to do so

3.10 The Director will always be approachable and will foster a positive ethos consisting of a democratic and participatory style of management and administration

The Director will ensure that this policy is maintained and implemented at all times.