

PARTICIPATION OF VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS POLICY

QUALITY AREA 4 | ELAA VERSION 1.1



PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines for the engagement and participation of volunteers and students at Leslie Moorhead Pre-School Centre Inc, while ensuring that children’s health, safety and wellbeing is protected at all times.



POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Leslie Moorhead Pre-School Centre Inc 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.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Leslie Moorhead Pre-School Centre Inc, including during offsite excursions and activities.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Developing guidelines for accepting applications from volunteers and students to work at the service in consultation with the nominated supervisor, ECT and educators and which are aligned with the <i>Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy</i>	√	√	√		

Accepting or rejecting a potential volunteer or student based on the circumstances of the service at the time, in consultation with the nominated supervisor	√	√			
Obtaining a valid WWC Check (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) and providing details to the service prior to commencement					√
Checking the status of the Working with Children (WWC) Clearance (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) of volunteers and students where required, and ensuring that the details are recorded in the staff record	R	√			
Ensuring that the staff record contains the full name, address and date of birth of volunteers and students attending the service (<i>Regulations 145, 149(1)</i>).	R	√			
Requesting additional information on the staff records such as emergency contact/next of kin and medical conditions	√	√			
Keeping a record for each day on which each student or volunteer participates with the date and the hours of participation (<i>Regulation 149(2)</i>)	R	√			
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 (<i>National Law, Section: 167</i>)	R	√	√		
Following the directions of staff at the service at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.				√	√
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 (<i>Regulation 83</i>) (<i>refer to Tobacco, Alcohol and other Drugs Policy</i>)	R	√	√	√	√
Providing volunteers, students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures (<i>Regulation 171</i>), and access to the <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and Education and Care Services National Law (Regulation 185)</i>	R	√			
Ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians comply with the <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and Education and Care Services National Law</i> and all service policies and procedures (<i>Regulations 170</i>)	R	√	√	√	√
Complying with the requirements of the <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Education and Care Services National Law (Regulation 185)</i> and with all service policies and procedures, including the <i>Code of Conduct Policy, Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy, Interactions with Children and Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> while attending the service				√	√
Ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians are aware of how to comply with child protection law and Child Safe Standards obligations	R	√		√	

Ensuring volunteers, students and parents/guardians can identify children with medical conditions, the child's medical management plan and the location of the child's medication <i>(Regulations 90, 168(2)(d), 170, 171)</i>	R	√	√		
Informing volunteers, students and parents/guardians of the services <i>Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy (Regulations 90, 168(2)(d), 170, 171)</i>	R	√			
Informing volunteers, students and parents/guardians of the services emergency and evacuation procedures <i>(Regulations 97, 168 (2)(e))</i>	R	√	√		
Developing an induction checklist for volunteers and students attending the service <i>(refer to Attachment 1)</i> in consultation with the nominated supervisor and educators.	R	√	√		
Ensuring that volunteers and students have completed the induction checklist <i>(refer to Attachment 1)</i> and have been provided with a copy of the staff handbook, if applicable.	R	√	√		√
Developing a range of strategies to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service	√	√			



BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

Students may participate in programs and activities at the service from time to time including observing and experiencing the provision of centre-based education and care. This will be encouraged and facilitated by Leslie Moorhead Pre-School Centre Inc wherever appropriate and possible.

Leslie Moorhead Pre-School Centre Inc 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 – *refer to Sources*).

Leslie Moorhead Pre-School Centre Inc 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*).

The role that volunteers and students play in education and care 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. The service is responsible for ensuring that volunteers and students are suitable to work with children, and that children's health, safety and wellbeing is protected at all times.

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.

Prior to participation at the service, a volunteer or student (aged 18 years or over) must be in possession of a Working with Children (WWC) Clearance (*refer to Definitions*).

In line with Child Safe Standards and the *Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy*, prior to engaging a volunteer or student an assessment should be undertaken of the nature of the responsibility to determine whether a position description is required and based on that whether an interview and referee checks are required.

We prefer and encourage Parents / Guardians and family members closely related to children attending the service when working with their child's group (i.e. Kinder duty, assisting in special events within the group) to hold a WWCC. Where Parents / Guardians and family members closely related to children attending the service, who assist with excursions MUST hold a valid WWCC

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Child Safe Standards
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)
- Worker Screening Regulation 2021 (Vic)

DEFINITIONS



The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g. Approved provider, Nominated supervisor, Notifiable complaints, Serious incidents, Duty of care, etc. refer to the Definitions file of the PolicyWorks catalogue.

Child-related work: In relation to the WWC Check (*refer to Definitions*), child-related work includes work with children which may involve physical contact, face-to-face contact, oral, written or electronic communication.

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 or parent (who's child attends the service) who willingly undertakes defined activities to support the education and care programs at a service in an unpaid or honorary capacity. These activities may include child-related work (*refer to Definitions*), administrative tasks, or preparing materials or food.

Working with Children (WWC) Check: The check is a legal requirement for those undertaking paid or voluntary child-related work (refer to Definitions) 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.

Working with Children (WWC) Clearance: A WWC Clearance is granted to a person under Worker Screening 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
- *The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: Belonging, Being, Becoming*: www.acecqa.gov.au
- A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation (The Commission for Children and Young People) www.cyp.vic.gov.au
- Working with Children Check; www.service.vic.gov.au

RELATED POLICIES

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

EVALUATION



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

- check staff records on a regular basis to ensure details of students, volunteers and where appropriate parents/guardians 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
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (*Regulation 172 (2)*).



ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Sample induction checklist for volunteers and students
- Attachment 2: Relevant legislation and standards

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Leslie Moorhead Pre-School Centre Inc on 22nd May 2017.



Reviewed by: Sallie McCarthy
REVIEW DATE: July 2026

Ratified Date: 16th August 2023

ATTACHMENT 1. SAMPLE INDUCTION CHECKLIST FOR VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS

Name: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by all volunteers and students participating at Leslie Moorhead Pre-School Centre Inc and returned to the nominated supervisor prior to commencing at the service.

Volunteer/Student	Please tick
I have been given access to all the policies and procedures of Leslie Moorhead Pre-School Centre Inc,	
I understand the content of service policies and procedures, including those relating to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conduct while at the service (<i>Code of Conduct Policy</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emergency, evacuation, fire and safety, including locations of fire extinguishers and emergency exits (<i>Emergency and Evacuation Policy</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accidents at the service (<i>Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dealing with medical conditions (<i>Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy, Asthma Policy, Anaphylaxis and Allergic Reactions Policy, Diabetes Policy, Epilepsy and Seizures Policy and Administration of Medication Policy</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good hygiene practices (<i>Hygiene Policy and Food Safety Policy</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dealing with infectious diseases (<i>Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first aid arrangements for children and adults, including the location of the nearest first aid kit (<i>Administration of First Aid Policy</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • daily routines 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of OHS and following safe work practices (<i>Occupational Health and Safety Policy</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interacting appropriately with children (<i>Interactions with Children Policy</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reporting of serious incidents and notifiable incidents at the service (<i>Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy, Compliments and Complaints Policy and Occupational Health and Safety Policy</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reporting hazards in the workplace (<i>Occupational Health and Safety Policy</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • handling complaints and grievances (<i>Compliments and Complaints Policy</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child safety and wellbeing and child protection including how to respond to concerns (<i>Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • privacy and confidentiality of information (<i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i>) 	

Volunteer/Student	Please tick
I am aware of the non-smoking policy of the service and not be affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication) that would impair my capacity to complete my tasks (<i>Tobacco, E-Cigarettes, Alcohol, and other Drugs Policy</i>)	
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 that I am expected to participate in general tasks, including maintaining the environment in a clean, safe and tidy condition	

Volunteer or student name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Nominated Supervisor's name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ATTACHMENT 2: RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Section. 169	<p>Offence relating to staffing arrangements</p> <p>(1) An approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that, whenever children are being educated and cared for by the service, the relevant number of educators educating and caring for the children is no less than the number prescribed for this purpose.</p> <p>(2) An approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that each educator educating and caring for children for the service meets the qualification requirements relevant to the educator's role as prescribed by the national regulations.</p> <p>(3) A nominated supervisor of an education and care service must ensure that, whenever children are being educated and cared for by the service, the relevant number of educators educating and caring for the children is no less than the number prescribed for this purpose.</p> <p>(4) A nominated supervisor of an education and care service must ensure that each educator educating and caring for children for the service meets the qualification requirements relevant to the educator's role as prescribed by the national regulations.</p> <p>(5) Refers to family day care</p> <p>(6) Subsections (1), (2), (3), (4) and (5) do not apply in respect of an education and care service—</p> <p>(a) to the extent that it holds a temporary waiver under Division 6 of Part 3 in respect of this requirement; or</p> <p>(b) to the extent that it holds a service waiver under Division 5 of Part 3 in respect of this requirement.</p> <p>(7) The National Authority may, on application, determine qualifications, including foreign qualifications, to be equivalent to the qualifications required by the national regulations.</p> <p>(8) If a determination is made under subsection (7), any person holding the qualification is to be taken to be qualified in accordance with the national regulations.</p>
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Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011:

Reg.	123,	<p>Educator to child ratios—centre-based services</p> <p>(1) The minimum number of educators required to educate and care for children at a centre-based service is to be calculated in accordance with the following ratios—</p> <p>(a) for children from birth to 24 months of age—1 educator to 4 children;</p> <p>(b) for children over 24 months and less than 36 months of age—1 educator to 5 children;</p> <p>(c) for children aged 36 months of age or over (not including children over preschool age)—1 educator to 11 children;</p> <p>(d) for children over preschool age in a jurisdiction, the relevant ratio (if any) set out in Chapter 7 for that jurisdiction.</p> <p>(2) If children being educated and cared for at a centre-based service are of mixed ages the minimum number of educators for the children must meet the requirements of subregulation (1) at all times.</p> <p>(3) If an early childhood teacher is required under Division 5 to be in attendance at a centre-based service, subject to regulation 122 that teacher is counted as an educator at the service for the purposes of this regulation.</p> <p>(4) If a centre-based service is required under regulation 130 or 131 to have access to an early childhood teacher for a period, subject to regulation 122 that teacher is counted as an educator at the service for the purposes of this regulation.</p>
	145	<p>Staff record</p> <p>(1) The approved provider of a centre-based service must ensure that a staff record is kept for that service in accordance with this Division.</p> <p>(2) The staff record must include—</p> <p>(a) the information about nominated supervisors set out in regulation 146; and</p> <p>(b) the information about staff members set out in regulation 147; and</p> <p>(c) the information about the educational leader set out in regulation 148; and(d) the information about volunteers set out in regulation 149(1).</p> <p>Note: Other records are also required to be kept by the approved provider under this Division.</p>
	149	<p>Nominated supervisor</p> <p>The staff record must include the following information in relation to the nominated supervisor—</p> <p>(a) the full name, address and date of birth of the nominated supervisor;</p> <p>(b) evidence—</p> <p>(i) of any relevant qualifications held by the supervisor; or</p> <p>(ii) if applicable, that the supervisor is actively working towards that qualification as provided under regulation 10;</p> <p>(c) evidence of any approved training (including first aid training) completed by the supervisor;</p> <p>(d) if the education and care service is located in a jurisdiction with a working with children law or a working with vulnerable people law, a record of the identifying number of the current check conducted under that law and the expiry date of that check (if applicable).</p>
	157	<p>Access for parents</p> <p>(1) The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that a parent of a child being educated and cared for by the service may enter the education and care service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for by the service.</p> <p>(2) The nominated supervisor of an education and care service must ensure that a parent of a child being educated and cared for by the service may enter the education and care service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for by the service.</p> <p>(3) Refers to family day care</p>

	<p>(4) Despite subregulations (1) to (3), the approved provider, nominated supervisor or family day care educator is not required to allow a parent to enter the education and care service premises if—</p> <p>(a) permitting the parent's entry would—</p> <p>(i) pose a risk to the safety of the children and staff of the education and care service; or</p> <p>(ii) conflict with any duty of the provider, supervisor or educator under the Law; or</p> <p>(b) the provider, supervisor or family day care educator is aware that the parent is prohibited by a court order from having contact with the child.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>1 A compliance direction may be issued for failure to comply with subregulation (1).</p> <p>2 Other regulations also relate to collaboration with families including requirements to give information about educational programs to parents, for parents to provide enrolment information, for information to be provided or displayed to parents and for administration areas to have adequate space for consulting with parents.</p>
	<p>Educator to child ratio—children over preschool age</p> <p>For the purposes of regulation 123(1)(d), the educator to child ratio for children over preschool age is 1 educator to 15 children</p>
	<p>Working with children check to be read</p> <p>(1) The approved provider of an education and care service must read, or ensure that the nominated supervisor of, or the certified supervisor in day to day charge of, the service has read, a person's working with children check before the person is—</p> <p>(a) engaged as an educator at the service; or</p> <p>(b) family day care educator; or</p> <p>(c) permitted to be a volunteer at the service.</p> <p>(2) Subregulation (1) does not apply in respect of a person if—</p> <p>(a) a working with children check cannot be issued for the person because of the person's age; and</p> <p>(b) the person cares for or educates children at the education and care service only under the immediate supervision of an educator who—</p> <p>(i) has attained the age of 18 years; and</p> <p>(ii) holds or is actively working towards an approved diploma level education and care qualification.</p> <p>(3) Subregulation (1) does not apply to a person who is a volunteer and who provides education and care at the service only under the immediate supervision of an educator who—</p> <p>(a) has attained the age of 18 years; and</p> <p>(b) holds or is actively working towards an approved diploma level education and care qualification.</p> <p>(4) Subregulation (1) does not apply in relation to a person who is registered as a teacher under the <i>Education and Training Reform Act 2006</i> of Victoria and the approved provider, nominated supervisor or certified supervisor in day to day charge of the education and care service has checked the relevant register kept under that Act to ensure that the person is registered.</p>
	<p>Educator to child ratios—children aged 36 months to preschool age</p> <p>(1) This regulation applies to a centre-based service in place of regulation 123(1)(c) until 31 December 2015.</p> <p>(2) The educator to child ratio at a centre-based service for children preschool age or under who are aged 36 months or over is 1 educator to 15 children.</p>

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.	
	Element 4.1.1	Educator-to-child ratios and qualification requirements are maintained at all times.