

# Acorn Child Care Centres

## Policies and Procedures



### 4.6 Students, Volunteers and Visitors

#### Background

Students from universities, TAFEs and RTOs need to spend time working in childcare Services in order to complete the practicum requirements of their courses. Accommodating these students is important because they are the next generation of professionals in early childhood education and care. Students benefit Services by introducing current information and new ideas, inducing educators to question their own practices and beliefs about teaching and learning. The institutions benefit through the students' recounts of their practical experience.

Members of the local community and services such as the fire brigade, police and ambulance may also contribute to the Service's program, and the same applies to volunteers.

However, because the safety of children is paramount, much legislation surrounds the acceptance of students, volunteers and visitors into Services.

#### Policy statement

This Policy sets out the specific conditions under which the Service accommodates students, volunteers and visitors so that the safety, education and care of children are never compromised.

#### Strategies and practices

Acorn Child Care Centre is committed to giving opportunities to work experience students and volunteers and seeks to present childcare as vocationally satisfying. Where students and volunteers do not have the requisite training and qualifications to work in a child care centre the following provisions will apply:

- The student/volunteer will not form part of the formal care team.
- The student/volunteer is given no responsibility for care of children.
- The director is satisfied that normal care and supervision is not compromised.
- For the benefit of child programs each student/volunteer's visit will be for a minimum of two hours.
- The student/volunteer will not be left alone with children at any time.
- Students who are involved with the centre for more than 1 day will be provided with the centre policy.
- Students and volunteers are required to follow the Service's Policies and Procedures at all times. The Policies and Procedures are readily accessible, and students and volunteers are to ask the Nominated Supervisor or their appointed mentor if they are not clear on any matter. QA 7.3.5
- The Nominated Supervisor interviews all students and volunteers before they commence at the Service, and completes an induction covering all items in the Student and Volunteer Induction Checklist. The induction places special emphasis on confidentiality, health and safety, and respectful relationships with others. It concludes with a walk through the Service and an introduction to all available staff. QA 7.1.2

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- Students and volunteers sign that they have received an induction, understand what is required of them, have been given the opportunity to clarify and discuss all the information provided, and that they agree to adhere to the Service's Policies and Procedures at all times. In addition they are required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement and a Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy. Refer to the Service's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy and to its Child Protection and Risk Management Policy. QA 2.3.4
- Students and volunteers do not commence at the Service until they have provided all required documentation including:
  - Current Working with Children Card – either “V” for volunteer or “P” for paid;
  - Immunisation status;
  - A written statement on what is expected of them by their university, school or training organisation; and,
  - A poster for display which has their name, photograph, brief background including any special interests, course of study, and the period they will be at the Service. QA 7.3.1
- Students and volunteers are assigned a mentor for the duration of their attendance at the Service. The mentor meets with them each visit to ensure they are fulfilling their course requirements, and provides them with professional support and feedback. QA 4.2.2, 7.2.2
- Students and volunteers must inform their mentor or the Nominated Supervisor of any incident, injury, trauma and illness that they may have witnessed over the course of the day before leaving the Service. QA 2.3.3
- From time to time, the Service may need to reschedule the attendance of students and volunteers at the Service. In addition, students may be required to work a range of shifts to gain insight into the daily workings of the Service and to meet their course requirements. QA 4.2.3
- As part of maintaining a safe and secure environment for children, educators closely supervise students and volunteers while imparting relevant skills and knowledge. QA 2.3.2
- All students, volunteers and visitors are to complete the Visitors Sign-in Sheet. Details to be provided in the book are the date, printed name, time in and time out, and signature. QA 2.3.2, 7.3.1
- Students and volunteers are to remain within sight and sound of an educator at all times – including excursions – when in the presence of children (i.e. they are not to be left alone with a child). QA 2.3.2
- The placement of students or visitors at the Service will be terminated if they do not adhere to the Service's Policies and Procedures or for conduct deemed by the Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider as inappropriate. QA 4.2.1, 7.2.2

### Visitors

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- Visitors can only enter the Service with the permission of the Nominated Supervisor, and are accompanied by a staff member at all times they are in the Service. QA 2.3.2
- Visitors are asked to contact the Service prior to their visit. The Nominated Supervisor will arrange the day, date, time and duration of the visit. QA 2.3.2
- As part of maintaining a safe and secure environment for children, educators question anyone in the Service who is not known to them to ascertain who they are and why they are in the Service. The educator or another staff member stays with the visitor until that person leaves the Service. QA 2.3.2

### Additional safe practices for babies

- To ensure students understand and adhere to the Service's Policies and Procedures with particular reference to the care of babies.

### Responsibilities of parents

- To understand the role of students and volunteers in the Service, as detailed in the Service's Policies and Procedures.
- To direct questions and communications about their children to staff other than students and volunteers.

### Links to other policies

- Child Protection and Risk Management Policy
- Excursion Policy
- Incidents, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Free Environment Policy

### Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Regs	85	Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
	90	Medical conditions policy
	97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
	145	Staff record

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	149	Volunteers and students
	171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
	168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
	185	Law and regulations available

QA	2.3.2	Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury
	2.3.3	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented
	2.3.4	Educators, co-ordinators and staff members are aware of their roles and responsibilities to respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect
	4.2.1	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships
	4.2.2	Educators coordinators and staff members work collaboratively and affirm, challenge, support and learn from each other to further develop their skills and to improve practice and relationships
	4.2.3	Interactions convey mutual respect, equality and recognition of each other's strengths and skills
	7.1.2	The induction of educators, co-ordinators and staff members is comprehensive
	7.2.2	The performance of educators, co-ordinators and staff members is evaluated and individual development plans are in place to support performance improvement
	7.3.1	Records and information are stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality, are available from the service and are maintained in accordance with legislative requirements
	7.3.5	Service practices are based on effectively documented policies and procedures that are available at the service and are reviewed regularly

### Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011.

### Further reading and useful websites

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority. (2011). *Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations.*

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