

## **Mandatory – Quality Area 4**

### **PURPOSE**

This policy will provide guidelines for the engagement and participation of volunteers and students at Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc, while ensuring that children's health, safety and wellbeing is protected at all times.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

#### **1. VALUES**

Goulburn Region Preschool Association 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 centre
- ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of each child at the centre through consistent compliance with this policy and procedures when engaging volunteers and students.

#### **2. SCOPE**

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc.

Volunteers and students may participate in programs and activities at GRPSA Centres from time to time to observe and experience the provision of centre-based education and care. The role that volunteers play in education and care centres varies and can include working with groups of children, preparing materials, assisting with administrative tasks or working one-on-one with individual children. Volunteers and students may also be placed at the GRPSA office.

GRPSA 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).

Parents/guardians do not require a Working with Children Check to volunteer in the kindergarten program as it is the same activity their child usually participates in.

Parents/guardians of a child attending the centre can enter the centre premises at any time that 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 GRPSA, the Nominated Supervisor or educators under the law.

### 3. PROCEDURES

#### **The Approved Provider is responsible for:**

- ensuring that all staff and volunteers have access to this policy and have a clear understanding of the procedures and practices outlined within
- developing guidelines in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators for accepting applications from volunteers/students to work at the centre
- Due diligence checking is undertaken prior to accepting a volunteer which may include, reference check, police check, application letter, resume. Other relevant and appropriate background checks may also be undertaken.
- Due diligence checking may be undertaken for students
- Volunteers, students or registered training organisations contact the centre where they wish to undertake the placement to discuss their placement needs, or GRPSA office.
- The preliminary acceptance of a volunteer or student at a centre will be based on the circumstances of the centre at the time. If after team discussion, a centre feels they are in the position to accept a volunteer, they can do so.
- Applications from volunteers or students who wish to be placed at the GRPSA office are considered on a case by case basis.
- The completed placement agreement form (provided by the student's registered training organisation) is to be held at the centre / office where the student is working.
- A Volunteer/Student Record Form is completed and filed in the staff record folder at the centre prior to commencement.
- The volunteer/student induction checklist is completed by the relevant supervisor whom they will be working with, prior to commencement. This employee will also be responsible for the overall supervision and support of the volunteer/student whilst they are undertaking their placement, with assistance from other staff.
- Any persons participating in the program- other than parents/ guardians- (such as a helper on duty or assisting on an excursion) are required to hold a current and valid Working with Children Check.
- ensuring that children being educated and cared for by the centre 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 (WWCC) Check has been read/sighted prior to the volunteer's / student's commencement at the centre and is current throughout the duration of placement / work at the centre.
- ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are adequately supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the centre 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 centre can enter the centre 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 educators under the law (Regulation 157)
- developing a range of strategies to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the centre
- providing volunteers/students and parents/guardians with access to all centre policies and procedures, and the Education and Care Centres National Regulations 2011

- ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians comply with the National Regulations and all centre policies and procedures, including the Code of Conduct Policy, while attending the centre
- developing an induction checklist for volunteers/students attending the centre (refer to Attachment 1 – Sample induction checklist for volunteers/students) in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators.

**All Early Childhood Staff are responsible for:**

- assisting the Approved Provider to develop guidelines for applications from volunteers/students to work at the centre
- assisting the Approved Provider with decisions in relation to accepting/rejecting/continuing/ceasing a volunteer/student based on the circumstances of the centre at the time
- ensuring that children being educated and cared for by the centre 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 (WWCC) Check has been read/sighted prior to the volunteer's commencement at the centre, and that details are included on the staff record
- ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are adequately supervised at all times.
- 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 centre can enter the centre 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 educators under the law (Regulation 157)
- ensuring strategies are in place to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the centre
- assisting the Approved Provider to develop an induction checklist for volunteers/students at the centre (refer to Attachment 1 – Sample induction checklist for volunteers/students)
- ensuring that volunteers/students have completed the induction checklist (refer to Attachment 1) and have been provided with a copy of the staff handbook, if applicable.
- assisting volunteers/students to understand the requirements of this policy and the expectations of the centre.
- ensuring that volunteers/students have provided all details required to complete the student/volunteer staff record
- ensuring that volunteers/students understand and acknowledge the requirement for confidentiality of all information relating to educators and families within the centre (refer to *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*)
- ensuring that volunteers/students comply with the requirements of the *Education and Care Centres National Regulations 2011* and with all centre policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while at the centre
- ensuring that volunteers/students follow the directions of staff at the centre at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.
- treating volunteers/students with respect and dignity
- providing a wide range of opportunities to enable and encourage participation
- providing guidance and assistance where necessary
- providing volunteers/students with opportunities to meet their learning outcomes

- ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers/students is protected by maintaining a safe environment
- ensuring tasks assigned to volunteers/students are relevant and do not exceed their capabilities or understanding
- ensuring volunteers/students understand the expectations of their position and provide any required clarification
- facilitating a positive placement experience for volunteers/students
- providing information to children and parents/guardians about the placement of a volunteer/student within the centre

**The responsibilities of volunteers/students whilst undertaking placement within GRPSA include:**

- treating GRPSA employees, children, parents and families with respect and dignity
- actively participating in a wide range of activities and tasks
- seeking guidance, assistance and clarification on anything relevant to their placement or environment
- ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of everyone is being protected by engaging in safe practices
- complying with the Education and Care Centres National legislation and GRPSA policies
- undertaking assigned tasks within their capabilities and understanding (and advising staff where tasks cannot be completed)
- avoiding situations where they may be left unsupervised with children, and alerting educators to these situations
- adhering to the privacy and confidentiality of all information relating to educators, children and families with the organisation
- adhering to agreed attendance times and advising in advance if they are unable to attend

**Cancellation of Placement:**

- A placement may be cancelled by the volunteer or student at any time. In the case of a breach of the GRPSA Code of Conduct by a volunteer or student, the placement may be cancelled immediately.
- GRPSA may also cancel the placement of a volunteer or student at any time at the discretion of the supervisor at the centre.

**Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- complying with the requirements of the Education and Care Centres National Regulations 2011 and with all centre policies and procedures, including the Code of Conduct Policy, while attending the centre
- following the directions of staff at the centre at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.
- understanding and acknowledging the requirement for confidentiality of all information relating to educators and families within the centre (refer to Privacy and Confidentiality Policy)

## **EVALUATION**

IN ORDER TO ASSESS WHETHER THE VALUES AND PURPOSES OF THE POLICY HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED, THE APPROVED PROVIDER, OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVE 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 GRPSA 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: Sample induction checklist for volunteers/students

## **AUTHORISATION**

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2012

Reviewed and Updated: 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017

Reviewed and Adopted: June 2020

**REVIEW DATE:** JUNE 2023

## ATTACHMENT 1

### Induction checklist for volunteers/students

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To be completed with all volunteers/students participating at Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc

|  | <b>Please tick</b> |
|--|--------------------|
| Introduce all staff  |                    |
| Volunteers staff record completed fully  |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Location of policy book, National Law and Regulations.</li></ul>   |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emergency management plan and evacuation procedure</li></ul>   |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Routine of the day</li></ul>   |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Any children with medical conditions that you need to be aware of.</li></ul>   |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Importance of good hygiene practices</li></ul>   |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The location of the nearest first aid kit and medication protocols.</li></ul>  |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reporting hazards in the workplace</li></ul>   |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• OHS and following safe work practices</li></ul>  |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interacting appropriately with children</li></ul>  |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complaints and grievances procedure</li></ul>  |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Child protection, child safe and rights of the child</li></ul>   |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mobile phone policy</li></ul>  |                    |
| Non-smoking policy of the centre   |                    |
| 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/student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated Supervisor's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_