

# **PARTICIPATION OF VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS POLICY**

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**Mandatory – Quality Area 4**

## **AUTHORISATION**

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Greenbrook Kindergarten on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Amended on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021 to reflect new Working with Children Clearance / Worker Screening Act 2020 / Worker Screening Regulations 2021 (Vic)

**REVIEW DATE: APRIL 2024**

## **PURPOSE**

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

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

### **1. VALUES**

Greenbrook Kindergarten 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.

### **2. SCOPE**

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Persons with Management or Control, Nominated Supervisor, Persons in day-to-day Charge, educators, staff, students (refer to *Definitions*), volunteers (refer to *Definitions*), parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Greenbrook Kindergarten.

### **3. 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 Greenbrook Kindergarten wherever appropriate and possible.

Greenbrook Kindergarten 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*).

Greenbrook Kindergarten 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 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 (under the supervision of staff). The service is responsible for ensuring that volunteers 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) Check.

Parents/guardians whose children usually attend the service are exempt from needing a WWC Check. However a service may decide, as a demonstration of duty of care, that all parents/guardians who volunteer at the service are required to undergo a WWC Check.

In line with Child Safe Standard 4 and the *Child Safe Environment 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.

### **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
- *Worker Screening Regulations 2021* (VIC)

## **4. DEFINITIONS**

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

**Child-related work:** In relation to the WWC Check, 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, family members of a child attending the kindergarten or business associates.

**Staff record:** A record which the Approved Provider of a centre-based service must keep containing information about the Nominated Supervisor, the Educational Leader, staff, volunteers, students and the Responsible Person at a service (Regulations 146–149). A sample staff record is available on the ACECQA website: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

**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. Students may alternatively be called “Teaching Candidates” or “Pre Service Teachers”

**Volunteer:** A person who willingly undertakes defined activities to support the education and care programs at a service in an unpaid or honorary capacity. (Parents of children enrolled who spend time in the program with their children **are not** considered as volunteers.) These activities may include child-related work (refer to *Definitions*), administrative tasks, or preparing materials or food under the supervision of staff.

**Working with Children (WWC) Check:** The clearance is a legal requirement under the Worker Screening Act 2020 for those undertaking paid or voluntary child-related work in Victoria. 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.

## 5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

### Sources

- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- *The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: Belonging, Being, Becoming:* [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation (The Commission for Children and Young People) [www.ccyp.vic.gov.au](http://www.ccyp.vic.gov.au)
- Working with Children Check unit, Department of Justice & Regulation – provides details of how to obtain a WWC Check: [www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au)

### Service policies

- *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- *Code of Conduct Policy*
- *Complaints and Grievances Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Determining Responsible Person Policy*
- *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*

- *Staffing Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

## PROCEDURES

### **The Approved Provider and Persons with Management or Control are responsible for:**

- developing guidelines for accepting applications from volunteers and students to work at the service in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators and which are aligned with the *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- accepting or rejecting a potential volunteer or student based on the circumstances of the service at the time, in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor
- ensuring that children being educated and cared for by the service 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*)
- checking the status of the Working with Children (WWC) Clearance of volunteers and students where required, and ensuring that the details are recorded in the service register
- ensuring that the staff record contains the name, address and date of birth of volunteers and students attending the service (Regulations 145, 149(1))
- keeping a record for each day on which each student or volunteer participates with the date and the hours of participation (Regulation 149(2))
- 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
- ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children
- ensuring that the Nominated Supervisor, educators and other staff, 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 (Regulation 83)
- ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service 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, (i.e. when there is a directive from DET & DHHS during a pandemic. e.g. During Covid Lockdown) 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 service
- providing volunteers, students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures, and a copy of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while attending the service
- developing an induction checklist for volunteers and students attending the service (refer to Attachment 1 – Sample induction checklist for volunteers and students) in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators.

### **The Nominated Supervisor and Persons in Day to Day Charge are responsible for:**

- assisting the Approved Provider to develop guidelines for applications from volunteers and students to work at the service and which are aligned with the *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- assisting the Approved Provider with decisions in relation to accepting/rejecting a potential volunteer or student based on the circumstances of the service at the time
- ensuring that children being educated and cared for by the service 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, that volunteers/students only commence at the service with a Working with Children's Clearance, and that details are included on the staff record
- ensuring that online WWC checks are performed at regular intervals i.e. monthly or weekly
- ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians are adequately supervised at all times when participating at the service, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service 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 service can enter the service 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, ,(i.e. when there is a directive from DET & DHHS during a pandemic. e.g. During Covid Lockdown) 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 service
- providing volunteers, students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures, and a copy of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while attending the service
- assisting the Approved Provider to develop an induction checklist for volunteers and students at the service (refer to Attachment 1 – Sample induction checklist for volunteers and students)
- ensuring that volunteers and students have completed the induction checklist (refer to Attachment 1) and have been provided with a copy of the staff handbook, if applicable.

**All other educators are responsible for:**

- assisting the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor to develop guidelines for applications from volunteers and students to participate at the service and are aligned with the *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- ensuring that children being educated and cared for by the service are adequately supervised, and the legislated educator-to-child ratios are complied with at all times (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*)
- providing volunteers, students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures, and a copy of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while attending the service
- ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians are adequately supervised at all times, and that the safety, health and wellbeing of children at the service is protected
- ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children
- enabling parents/guardians of children attending the service access the service premises at any time the child is being educated and cared for except where this poses a risk to the safety of children and/or staff ,(i.e. when there is a directive from DET & DHHS during a pandemic. e.g. During Covid Lockdown)
- encouraging the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service
- assisting the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor to develop an induction checklist for volunteers and students at the service (refer to Attachment 1 – Sample induction checklist for volunteers and students)
- assisting volunteers and students to understand the requirements of this policy and the expectations of the service.

- ensuring that online WWC checks are performed and filed in register and recording checks in foyer register

**Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for:**

- ensuring they have provided all details required to complete the staff record
- undertaking a WWC Check
- having the working with children check card on them at all times while on the premises
- understanding and acknowledging the requirement for confidentiality of all information relating to educators and families within the service (refer to *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*)
- complying with the requirements of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and with all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while at the service
- undertaking the induction process and completing the induction checklist (refer to Attachment 1) prior to commencement at the service
- following the directions of staff at the service at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.

**Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- providing information for the staff record as required
- complying with the requirements of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and with all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy* and *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* while attending the service
- following the directions of staff at the service at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.
- following hygiene / infectious disease requirements as per relevant / current DET & DHHS Guidelines.

## 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
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures unless a lesser period is necessary because of a risk.

## ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Greenbrook Kindergarten induction checklist for volunteers and students

## ATTACHMENT 1

# GREENBROOK KINDERGARTEN VOLUNTEER/ STUDENT INDUCTION CHECKLIST

Position:  Student Teacher

Volunteer

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

Educational Institution (Student Teacher): \_\_\_\_\_

**Welcome to Greenbrook Kindergarten! We look forward to working with you and appreciate the contribution you are making to our service.**

**As per our “Participation of Volunteers and Students” policy that was emailed to you, please indicate that you:**

- have provided all details required to complete the volunteer or student staff record
- have undertaken a WWC Clearance and have presented a current WWC Clearance card or other notification, as applicable
- have the working with children clearance card on you at all times while on the premises
- understand and acknowledge the requirement for confidentiality of all information relating to educators and families within the service (refer to *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* that was emailed to you)
- comply with the requirements of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and with all service policies and procedures (found on the kindergarten’s website), including the *Code of Conduct Policy* that was emailed to you, while at the service.
- will undertake the induction process and complete this induction checklist prior to commencement at our service
- will follow the directions of staff, at the service at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.

Yes I understand and / or acknowledge the above points and their completion

**As per our “Child Safe Environment” Policy that was emailed to you, please indicate:**

- that you understand that you must never be alone with children in the kindergarten room, playground or bathroom
- that you have had a conversation with the Early Childhood Teacher about child safety and wellbeing and how the service maintains and responds to issues of safety, including the reportable conduct scheme – further information can be found at [www.ccyp.vic.gov.au](http://www.ccyp.vic.gov.au)

Yes I understand and / or acknowledge the above points and their completion

### **Hygiene and Infection Control Procedures**

In relation to the Covid – 19 pandemic:

Current infection control procedures that are in place, including social distancing and hygiene procedures have been explained to me.

A copy of the hygiene policy / infectious diseases policy attachment “ Procedures for infection control relating to airborne illnesses” have been emailed to me.

**I am aware of the location of:**

Sign in / Sign out attendance books

First Aid Kit in top, far right cupboard (First Aid sign on door) in bag area

Staff Office (where personal belongings can be left)

Telephones

Kitchen facilities / procedures for hot drinks in the playroom

Adult toilet

Parent / Carer Communication folders / Children’s work in group tubs



- Indoor storeroom
- Noticeboards
- Outdoor storage garage / remote control
- Emergency exits (also see emergency evacuation procedure attached)
- Individual anaphylaxis/asthma / other medical management plan
- EpiPens
- Asthma / other medication
- Folder containing the pre-school's full suite of operational policies (on shelf, in entrance foyer)

**I have been informed of:**

- Any children with additional/special needs
- Any children with Anaphylaxis/ Asthma or other medical needs
- Any court orders relating to access
- Any cultural / medical /dietary requirements
- The role and names of all staff present including the Responsible Person / Persons in Day to Day Charge
- The names of parents/carers on Kinder Duty
- The daily routine / running of the kinder session
- The location of program information

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Sign: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Name of staff member conducting induction: \_\_\_\_\_

Sign: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_