

4.03 VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENT EDUCATORS

QUALITY AREA 4 | VERSION 1.23



PURPOSE

This policy provides a clear set of guidelines for the engagement and participation of volunteers and student educators at LEVNT EC Services, while ensuring that children's health, safety and wellbeing is protected at all times.

POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

In order to fulfil our mission, LEVNT EC Services operate to educate children in a Christian environment by providing inspiring education opportunities that enable them to reach their full potential. The foundation of Lutheran Education is the gospel of Jesus Christ which informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships and all activities of LEVNT EC Services.

Therefore, LEVNT EC Services are committed to:

- supporting connections with educational institutions to provide opportunities for student educators 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 student educators.

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, student educators, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of LEVNT EC Services, including during offsite excursions and activities.

BACKGROUND

Student educators 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 LEVNT EC Services wherever appropriate and possible.

LEVNT EC Services 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).

LEVNT EC Services aim to provide a range of opportunities for family members, volunteers and student educators 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 student educators 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 student educators 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, parent or student educator (aged 18 years or over) must be in possession of a Working with Children (WWC) Clearance.

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

DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms refer to the Definitions file of each LEVNT EC policy folder.

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 or business associates.

Student Educator: A person undertaking a practicum placement as part of a recognised early childhood qualification. This student educator will be supported by an educational institution in the completion of their placement.

Volunteer: A person or parent (whose 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, administrative tasks, or preparing materials or food.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Approved Provider, persons with management and control, nominated supervisor and/or persons in day-to-day charge are responsible for meeting requirements set out in the table below. Actions which are legislated requirements of the ECEC sector are indicated with **LR**.

	Approved Provider and/or persons with management and control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teachers, educators and all other staff	Parents, guardians and carers	Contractors, volunteers and those on student educators placement
Developing guidelines for accepting applications from volunteers and student educators to work at the service in consultation with the nominated supervisor, ECT and educators and which are aligned with the Child Safe Environment Policy	✓	✓	✓		
Accepting or rejecting a potential volunteer or student educator based on the circumstances of the service at the time, in consultation with the nominated supervisor	✓	✓			
Obtaining a valid WWC Check and state teaching registration, as applicable, and providing details to the service prior to commencement					✓
Checking the status of the Working with Children (WWC) Clearance a of volunteers and student educators where required, and ensuring that the details, including identification number and expiry date are recorded in the staff record	LR	✓			
Ensuring that the identifying number and the expiry date of a student educators or volunteers' current teacher registration is recorded in the staff record	LR	✓			

	Approved Provider and/or persons with management and control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teachers, educators and all other staff	Parents, guardians and carers	Contractors, volunteers and those on student educators placement
Ensuring that the staff record contains the name, address, and date of birth of volunteers and student educators attending the service (<i>Regulations 145, 149(1)</i>)	LR	✓			
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 educator or volunteer participates with the date and the hours of participation (<i>Regulation 149(2)</i>)	LR	✓			
Keeping a copy of all observations or planning completed by the student educator whilst on placement at the service	✓	✓			✓
Ensuring that volunteers, student educators 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>)	LR	✓	✓		
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 student educators 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>)(refer to Tobacco, Alcohol and other Drugs Policy)	LR	✓	✓	✓	✓
Providing volunteers, student educators and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures (<i>Regulation 171</i>), and access to the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and Education and Care Services National Law	LR	✓			
Ensuring that volunteers, student educators and parents/guardians comply with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and all service policies and procedures (<i>Regulations 170</i>)	LR	✓	✓	✓	✓
Complying with the requirements of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Education and Care Services National Law (<i>Regulation 185</i>) and with all service policies and procedures, including the Code of Conduct Policy, Child Safe Environment and Privacy and Confidentiality Policy while attending the service				✓	✓
Ensuring that volunteers, student educators and parents/guardians are aware of how to comply with child protection law and Child Safe Standards obligations	LR	✓		✓	
Ensuring volunteers, student educators 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>)	LR	✓	✓		
Informing volunteers, student educators and parents/guardians of the services Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy (<i>Regulations 90, 168(2)(d), 170, 171</i>)	LR	✓			
Informing volunteers, student educators and parents/guardians of the services emergency and evacuation procedures (<i>Regulations 97, 168 (2)(e)</i>)	LR	✓	✓		

	Approved Provider and/or persons with management and control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teachers, educators and all other staff	Parents, guardians and carers	Contractors, volunteers and those on student educators placement
Developing an induction checklist for volunteers and student educators attending the service in consultation with the nominated supervisor and educators	LR	✓	✓		
Ensuring that volunteers and student educators have completed the induction checklist and have been provided with a copy of the staff handbook	LR	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that student educators have a been introduced to families via a Storypark post, poster on display within the classroom or some other method	✓	✓			✓
Developing a range of strategies to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service	✓	✓			

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 student educators, 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 a policy review cycle, or as required
- notify 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

AUTHORISATION & REVIEW

This policy was adopted by Lutheran Education VIC, NSW, TAS and ACT Ltd as Approved Provider on 29 September 2023.

REVIEW DATE September 2024 or earlier as required.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT 1: Induction Checklist for Volunteers and Student Educators

To be completed by all volunteers and student educators participating at LEVNT EC Services and returned to the nominated supervisor prior to commencing at the service.

Volunteer/Student Educator	Please tick
I have been given access to all the policies and procedures of LEVNT EC Services.	
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 Policy, Diabetes Policy, Epilepsy 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>) 	
I am aware of the non-smoking policy of the service and requirement not be affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication) that would impair my capacity to complete my tasks (<i>Tobacco, Alcohol, and other Drugs Policy</i>).	

Volunteer/Student Educator	Please tick
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 understand that the service requires a copy of any observations or planning I undertake while attending the service.	
I will provide a poster and/or photograph of myself that can be used by the service to introduce me to families and explain who I am.	
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 educator name:

Signature:

Date:

Nominated Supervisor's name:

Signature:

Date:

REFERENCES

LEGISLATION & STANDARDS

- Child Safe Standards
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)
- Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)
- Worker Screening Regulation 2021 (Vic)
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Worker Checks) Regulation 2020 (NSW)

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
- Guide to the Child Safe Standards www.ocg.nsw.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 <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-for-a-working-with-children-check>

RELATED POLICIES

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