



Educator/Staff and Volunteer Orientation Policy

Policy Number: 9

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Rationale and Policy Considerations

The education and care service understands that an effective orientation process promotes retention of child care professionals by the service, which improves quality outcomes for all stakeholders and supports continuing improvement. It is acknowledged that high staff turnover disrupts the continuity of care, and the cohesiveness and morale of the educator/staff team.

Effective orientation to the service's practices and standards supports continuity of quality standards and clarifies individual roles and responsibilities for newly appointed educators/staff or volunteers.

The service understands its responsibilities under Occupational Safety & Health law to ensure workers are informed of their own responsibilities for occupational safety and health within the workplace and given adequate supervision and on the job training to enable them to work safely.

Legislation and Government Requirements

- Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012.
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012.
- Federal and State Occupational Safety & Health Legislation

Needs

Children's

Continuity of care; opportunities to build relationships with new educators; continuity of routines and learning experiences.

Families'

Introductions to new educators/employees; opportunities to build relationships with new educators; continuity of service's policies and practices during staffing changes.

Educators

Existing educator/staff need to feel confident that new team members are given adequate support to perform required tasks and familiarise themselves with the operations of the service; new educators/staff need to feel welcome; to be given introductions to children, families and colleagues; clear expectations about their working arrangements; opportunities to ask questions before and after commencing employment.

Management

New employees will be able to perform their tasks at the service competently and will be welcomed by the staff team and assisted to settle and adapt to their position within the service.

Scope

This policy is written for staff and volunteers of Merino Court Childcare Centre

Policy Statement

All new educators/staff or volunteers will receive an orientation to the service and their position, that will provide them with introductions to children, families and colleagues, clear expectations about their working arrangements and explanations about the operations, philosophy, policies and procedures of the service where possible before commencement of their duties.

The aim of the orientation program is to:

- assist the employee to settle in and become familiar with the new workplace and therefore adapt to the job more quickly;
- assure the new employee receives accurate information about service policies and procedures, their role and the expectations of the employer;
- provide opportunities to answer any questions and allay any concerns the new employee may have;
- assist the new employee to carry out their tasks effectively;
- build the employee's confidence and commitment to the service;
- provide introductions to the staff team which help to foster positive relations between new and existing employees;
- give the employee a favourable impression of the service; and
- lower recruitment and selection costs due to reduced staff turnover.

Policy Principles

Prior to commencement

- Before commencement all new educators/staff will meet with the nominated supervisor/coordinator who will:
 - complete an orientation checklist;
 - ensure the inductee has a copy of their employment contract and job description and address any questions they may have in regard to these documents, their working arrangements and the centres expectations of them;
 - clarify any details in regard to probationary periods and provide information about the service's performance management system;
 - discuss employment procedures such as timesheets; method of wages payments; superannuation; taxation forms etc.;
 - provide the new person with a copy of the service's handbooks; statement of philosophy; staff code of conduct; and any other work guidelines;
 - discuss and highlight important policies and procedures including occupational safety and health; grievance procedures; supervision; child protection and ensuring a safe environment for children; confidentiality and privacy;
 - require that the new person reads and signs the service's Confidentiality Agreement;
 - show the new person the location of the service's policy and procedures manual, a copy of the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010; the Education and Care Services National Regulations; and the Award/Industrial Agreement;
 - discuss the person's understanding of the National Quality Standard; Early Years Learning Framework and/or Framework for School Age Care in Australia;
 - advise the new person about the service's management structure and their lines of responsibility and communication with management;
 - show the person around the service and highlight key safety and health features such as fire extinguishers; evacuation plans; fire exits; and first aid kit storage;
 - show the new person where they may store personal items and the location of the staff room; toilets; kitchen; parking etc. and provide introductions to the other team members;
 - allow the new person to spend some time in their designated work area so they may be introduced to the children, parents and other educators.

First week

- On the first day of employment the service will process relevant staff employment forms including tax forms, superannuation, and ensure the contract of employment is signed.
- A mentor will be assigned to the new person to provide guidance and answer any questions that arises in the course of their work. The appointed mentor will have a good working knowledge of the organisation, the position, must be friendly and approachable and have adequate time to spend with the new person as required.
- New educators under the age of 18 years will always be supervised by an educator that has attained the age of 18 years and holds or is working towards an approved diploma level education and care qualification, and will never work alone at the service.

- A short welcoming description of the new person with their qualifications, experience and a photo will be displayed in the foyer and during the course of the week they will be introduced to families.
- At the end of each of their first three weeks of work the nominated supervisor/coordinator will meet with the new person to get feedback about their impressions of the week and address any questions they may have.

On-going communication and support

- The nominated supervisor/coordinator will follow up with new employee/volunteer one month after the original induction to address any further questions and check the new person is settling happily into the workplace.
- The appointed mentor will continue to provide support and ensure the maintenance and continuity of the service's practices and standards until the new person has completed their probationary period, or the nominated supervisor/coordinator considers they are fully settled into their position at the service.
- The new employee will be encouraged to keep a journal and write down any questions they would like to discuss, which will be addressed by their mentor or the nominated supervisor/coordinator at regular meetings.
- At the end of the probationary period the nominated supervisor/coordinator will hold an appraisal meeting with the new person to identify their strengths and plan for professional development opportunities.

Inducting relief or casual educators

- Relief educators are often required to care for children as soon as they arrive at the service with limited time to familiarise themselves with the service's environment, policies and procedures. The service will therefore develop a relief educator orientation checklist that provides information on the important information, procedures and practices that the relief educator needs to be immediately aware of i.e. evacuation procedures, location of dangerous products, hazards etc.
- Where relief educators are unfamiliar with the service, wherever possible they will be asked to attend an orientation meeting before undertaking relief work at the service, or a qualified educator will be assigned to provide supervision and support.
- Where possible the service will maintain a list of permanent relief and casual educators that have undertaken the full orientation process.

Students and volunteers

- An orientation checklist will be developed to assist in the orientation of students and volunteers.
- The nominated supervisor/coordinator or appointed educator will induct the student or volunteer prior to their contact with children at the service and will act as mentor to provide on-going guidance and support.
- Students and volunteers will always be supervised by an educator that has attained the age of 18 years and holds or is working towards an approved diploma level education and care qualification, whenever they are educating or caring for children.

Related Documents

- **Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010(Vic)** - Section 169, 301 (h) (m) (i)
- **Education and Care Services National Regulations:** 168-171, 185
- **National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care** - Standard 7.1.2
- **Early Years Learning Framework for Australia** - Principles - Ongoing learning and reflective practice
- **Framework for School Age Care in Australia** - Principles - Ongoing learning and reflective practice
- Confidentiality agreement
- Educator/staff Code of Ethics
- Educator/Staff Orientation checklist
- Job descriptions
- Grievance procedures

- Relief/Casual Employee Orientation checklist
- Student/Volunteer Orientation checklist
- Timesheets

Links to other policies

- Confidentiality and Privacy
- Educational Programs
- Educator/Staff Appraisal Training and Development
- Educator/Staff Dress Code
- Educator/Staff Grievances and Disputes
- Educator/Staff Immunisation and Exclusion
- Equal Opportunity
- Establishing a Protective Environment
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Guiding Children's Behaviour
- Interactions with Children
- Maintenance of a Safe Environment
- Medications and Medical Conditions
- Occupational Safety and Health
- Recruitment of Educators, Staff and Volunteers
- Sun Protection
- Supervision

Sources

www.pscalliance.org.au

Further Sources

Australian Human Rights Commission - Federal Discrimination Law - Retrieved 16 May 2011, from www.hreoc.gov.au/legal/FDL/index.html

Cross, C. & Morton, S. - Human Resources Management Checklist - Retrieved 16 May 2011, from <http://www.pscwa.org.au/getdoc/d4f3ca91-a179-4de0-bbf1-42e01bf9d608/HumanResourceManagementChecklist.aspx>

DEEWR Child Care Service Handbook 2011 - 2012; Section 6.6 What are my service's responsibilities to educators? - Retrieved 9 May 2012, from www.deewr.gov.au

Denny, C. Morton, S. & Thompson, R. - Staff Recruitment and Evaluation for Child Care Centres (2007) - Retrieved 16 May 2011, from PSCWA member page - www.pscwa.org.au

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Flemming, I & Morton, S -- Staff Recruitment and Evaluation for Outside School Hours Care Centres (2007) - Retrieved 16 May 2011, from PSCWA member page - www.pscwa.org.au

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Worksafe ACT - Links to national health and safety sites, and national worker's compensation sites -
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Document History

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<u>Educator/Staff and Volunteer Orientation Policy</u>	16 October 2014
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