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Early Years – Procedure

Participation of Students and Volunteers

Council Early Years Services

Procedure Number:	D21-103674	Directorate:	Connected Communities
Approval by:	Manager Early Years	Responsible Officer:	Early Years Excellence Lead
Approval Date:	17/09/2025	Version Number:	3.0
Review Date:	3 years from approval date	Service Type:	PSFO K M PG LDC
Related Quality Area:	Quality Area 4 – Staffing Arrangeme Child Safe Standards National Model Code	ents	

Purpose

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

Policy Statement

This procedure provides direction to staff at Knox City Council (KCC) Early Years Services to enable:

- Staff to support the safe and positive participation of students and volunteers in services as they gain experience working with young children and their families
- Building relationships with community members and providing suitable opportunities to engage volunteers to contribute to the programs and activities of the service
- Encourage the participation of volunteers and of children and families in services.
- Ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of each child at the service through consistent compliance with policy and procedures when engaging students.
- Supporting connections with educational institutions to provide opportunities for students to undertake practicum placements as part of their studies and provide valuable learning opportunities and experiences.
- Comply and follow the regulatory updates regarding 'Use of Personal Devices' and 'The National Model Code'.
 Using only service devices to capture images or video recordings of children. This may include making
 provisions with the training organisation to complete the course work without images or recordings of
 children.

Scope

This procedure applies to the approved provider, persons with management control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, coordinators, team leaders, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Knox City Council, including during offsite excursions and activities.



Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge, Coordinators and Team Leaders	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Relief staff, additional assistants, volunteers and students	Parents/guardians
R - indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Developing guidelines for accepting and rejecting applications from volunteers and students to work at the service in consultation with Volunteer Manager (VM) and which are aligned with the Council's <i>Child Safe Policy</i> .	√	√			
Developing a range of strategies to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service	✓	✓			
Ensuring services operate in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations including requirements supporting the participation of volunteers and students	R	✓	✓	√	
Developing an induction checklist for volunteers and students attending the service (refer to Attachment 1) in consultation with the nominated supervisor and educators	R	✓	✓		
Providing volunteers, students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures. (Regulation 171) and access to the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and Education and Care Services National Law (Regulation 185)	R	✓			
Ensuring all volunteers and students complete Child Safe Training prior to or at commencement at a service	R	✓			
Checking the status of the Working with Children (WWCC) Check of volunteers and students where required, and ensuring that the details, including identification number and expiry date are recorded in the personal record (refer to Attachment 2	R	√	✓		
Ensuring that the Personal record (refer to Attachment 2) contains the full name address and date of birth of the volunteers and students attending the service (Regulations 145, 149(1))	R	✓	✓		



Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge, Coordinators and Team Leaders	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Relief staff, additional assistants, volunteers and students	Parents/guardians
Requesting additional information on the Personal Records form ((refer to Attachment 2) such as emergency contact/next of kin and medical conditions	✓	√	✓		
Keeping an accurate record for each day on which each student or volunteer participates with the date and the hours of participation (Regulation 149(2)). Storing this documentation in an accessible and secure location.	R	√	✓		
Ensuring 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) (refer to Tobacco, Alcohol and other Drugs Policy)	R	✓	✓	√	
Check Personal Records on a regular basis to ensure details of students and volunteers are maintained in line with all legislative requirements as outlined in the procedure	R	√			
Maintaining that all volunteers, students and parents/guardians are actively supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected. (National Law, Section: 167)	R	√	√		
Ensuring volunteers and students understand the need to maintain confidentiality of all families, children and staff at all times.	R	√	✓	✓	
Maintaining educator to child ratios at all times. Note: Volunteers and students must not be counted as part of the educator to child ratios at any time	R	√	✓		
Informing staff, children, parents/guardians of the presence of any volunteers or students participating in the service	✓	√	✓		
Ensuring volunteers and students can identify children with medical conditions, the child's medical management plan and the location of the child's medication (Regulations 90, 168(2)(d), 170, 171)	R	✓	✓		



Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge, Coordinators and Team Leaders	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Relief staff, additional assistants, volunteers and students	Parents/guardians
Completing induction with volunteers and students of the services emergency and evacuation procedures (Regulations 97, 168 (2)(e))	R	✓	✓	✓	
Adhering to the regulatory and ethical guidelines relating to volunteers, students and parents/guardians participating in the service	R	√	✓	√	√
Ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians comply with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and Education and Care Services National Law and all service policies and procedures (Regulations 170) including the Code of Conduct Policy, Child Safe Policy, Interactions with Children, eSafety, Digital Technology and Use of Personal Devices in Early Years, Privacy and Confidentiality Policy while attending the service	R	✓	✓	√	✓
Ensuring that volunteers and students have completed the induction checklist and have been provided with service information, if applicable	R	√	✓	√	
Working collaboratively with students and volunteers, providing professional development opportunities and resources for students to demonstrate and improve their skills and competencies	√	√	✓	√	
Acknowledging and supporting the personal strengths, professional knowledge, diversity and experience which students and/or volunteers bring to the service	√	√	✓	√	
Modelling high quality professional practices and behaviours and providing constructive feedback for students as aspiring professionals	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Being aware of requirements of the student's individual institutions and communicating openly and effectively with the representative(s) of that institution	√	√	✓	√	
Implementing strategies that empower students to make positive contributions to the workplace	✓	✓	✓	✓	



Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge, Coordinators and Team Leaders	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Relief staff, additional assistants, volunteers and students	Parents/guardians
Maintaining confidentiality in relation to all matters involving the participation of students and volunteers while at the service	R	✓	✓	✓	
Reading and understanding the Volunteer Role Description				✓	
Completing the induction checklist Attachment 1	R	R		✓	
Completing Volunteer/Student Record Form, listing all information requested and pertaining to your position <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations: 145, 149) Attachment 2</i>	R	R		✓	
Obtaining a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) and providing details to the service prior to commencement and ensuring WWCC is always available whilst participating at the service	R	R		✓	
Signing in to and out of the service on a daily basis via the service Visitors Book				✓	
Following directions provided by staff to maintain and protect the health, safety and wellbeing of children.				√	
Follow and comply with the eSafety, Digital Technology and Use of Personal Devices Procedure along with The National Model Code.	R	R	R	✓	✓
In following the eSafety, Digital Technology and Use of Personal Devices Procedure along with The National Model Code - Personal devices that can capture images or video recordings to be stored securely away from children.	R	R	R	✓	
Volunteers and students are not permitted to have or use their own personal device whilst working directly with children, or take or store photos or videos of any child attending a KCC Early Years' Service.	R	R	R	✓	
Where necessary for student training purposes images or recordings of children can be captured using a service issued device, and where it does not identify a child's face. *Note: Students must make provisions with their training provider to complete their course work without the use of images or recordings.	R	R	R	✓	✓



Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge, Coordinators and Team Leaders	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Relief staff, additional assistants, volunteers and students	Parents/guardians
Parent's permission must be given to capture the images or recordings, and for sharing the images/recordings with the student.	R	R	R	✓	√
Reading, understanding and adhering to all relevant Early Years Policies and Procedures including but not limited to Child Protection, Providing a Safe Environment and Code of Conduct Procedures	R	R		√	
Volunteers to complete the KCC Volunteer Induction Training	R	R		✓	
Complying with the Staff Code of Conduct, Volunteer Code of Conduct Procedure	R	R		✓	
Complying with and understanding <i>Tobacco</i> , <i>Alcohol and other Drugs</i> Policy on placement at the service. (Regulation 83) (refer to Tobacco, Alcohol and other Drugs Policy	R	√	✓	√	√
Reading and understanding the Participation of Volunteers and Students Procedure	R	R	✓	✓	✓

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 Knox City Council wherever appropriate and possible.

Knox City Council 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*).

Knox City Council 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 and students play in education and care services varies and can include working with groups of children, preparing materials or assisting with administrative tasks or working one-on-one with individual children. The service is responsible for ensuring that volunteers and students 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 (WWCC) Check (refer to Definitions).

All students or volunteers must follow and comply with the *eSafety, Digital Technology and Use of Personal Devices in Early Years Procedure* and *The National Model Code*. Students and Volunteers are not permitted to have a personal digital device whilst working directly with children. Personal digital devices cannot be used to capture images or video recordings of children. Personal digital technology that is prohibited whilst working directly with children include mobile phones, tablets, digital camera, smart watches, smart glass, SD cards, USB drives, hard drives and cloud storage. For more information regarding prohibited devices please see *eSafety, Digital Technology and Use of Personal Devices in Early Years Procedure*.

Enquiries received for volunteer and student placements

- The needs of the services will be considered prior to engaging volunteers and students in KCC Early Years Services.
- All enquiries from potential volunteers are referred to the HR@knox.vic.gov.au">HR@knox.vic.gov.au for the initial contact and will then be directed to use Better Impact.
- In line with Child Safe Standards, Council's Child Safe Policy and the Volunteer Management Handbook a volunteer role description is provided and reference checks undertaken prior to engaging volunteers.
- Students to source their own placements in collaboration with Hubs, Kindergarten or MCH Team Leaders. Educators and other staff will work with their Team Leader to support a student.
- All students to comply with policies and/or procedures issued by their governing institution and agreed to by the Senior Team Leader/Team Leader overseeing their placement.

Related References

Community Plan (2021–31) Council Plan (2021–25) The Child Youth and Seniors Plan (2021–25)

Related Policies, Procedures and Standard Work Practices

- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- Child Safe Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Determining Responsible Person
- eSafety, Digital Devices and Use of Personal Devices in Early Years Procedure
- Inclusion and Equity
- Induction Agency Staff, Volunteers, Student Induction Checklist (Attachment 1)
- Interactions with Children
- Medical Conditions including Allergies



- Occupational Health and Safety
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Staffing Arrangements Policy
- Supervision of Children
- Volunteer Management Policy
- Volunteer Handbook
- Volunteer Management Handbook
- Volunteers Role Description Template D18-268632
- Volunteer Engagement Agreement D23-34079
- Agency Staff/Volunteers/Students Induction Form D23-351223
- Volunteer/Student Personal Record Form D19-277
- Agency Staff Personal Record Form D23-258365

Relevant legislation and Standards

Included but are not limited to:

- Child Safe Standards
- Educational and Care Service National Law 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Fair Work Act 2009
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Reportable Conduct Scheme
- The National Model Code
- Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)
- Worker Screening Regulation 2021 (vic)

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Approved Provider	Individual, organisation or company with management or control to operate the education and care service/s, through the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations.
Better Impact	MylmpactPage - Login (betterimpact.com) Platform used to coordinate and train volunteers.
Child-related work	In relation to the WWC Check (refer to Definitions), child-related work includes work with children which may involve physical contact, face-to-face contact, oral, written or electronic communication.
Early Years' Service	Refers to Long Day Care, Kindergarten, Supported Playgroup, Preschool Field Officer Program, and the Maternal Child Health service (unless otherwise specified).
Educational Leader	This person has in-depth knowledge of the Early Years Learning Framework and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, to be able to guide other educators in their planning and reflection and mentor team members.
Educator	A broad term to describe an individual who is employed to provide education and care for children as part of an education and care service. This term encompasses all roles and qualifications.



Nominated Supervisor	A person designated by the service as overseeing staff and activities as per the requirements of the Education and Care National Act and Regulations.
The National Model Code	The National Model Code and Guidelines are intended to support early childhood educators, as champions of child safety, and complement relevant child safety activities and strategies already in place across the early childhood education and care sector.
Parent	The term 'parent' includes a child's legal guardian. It does not include a parent who is prohibited by a court order from having contact with the child.
Personal Device	A digital device that that is purchased or owned by an individual rather than an organisation. This is a device that is not issued by an employer.
Service Issued Device	A device that is the property of Knox City Council for the purposes of completing work for Knox City Council, and not for any personal use. This device will remain the property of Knox City Council and be part of ongoing security checks, safety filtering and required upgrades.
Responsible Person	Must be present at all times at a centre based service who is educating and caring for children. A responsible person can be one of the following (section 162): • The approved provider or a person with management or control • The nominated supervisor of the service • A person who has been placed in day-to-day charge of the service.
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.
Volunteer	A person or parent (who's 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. For more information, please see Knox Council Volunteer Procedure.

For further glossary and definitions please see: <u>Early Years Quality Document System</u> and <u>Glossary and Definitions</u>.

Charter of Human Rights

This policy has been assessed against and complies with the <u>Charter of Human Rights & responsibilities Act 2006</u>. The <u>Simplified Version of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child has also been considered.</u>

Equity Impact Assessment Statement

This Procedure has been assessed through the Equity Impact Assessment Checklist & Inclusive Language Guide. The following groups have been considered in how their lived experience is considered and respected in the creation of documents for the Quality document system (Woman, Men, Young people/children, LGBTQI+ Communities and Gender Diverse People, First Nations People, People with Disabilities including Mental Health, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse People, low-income households & Senior Communities).

Staff: For all related Early Years Policies and Procedures, please refer to **Early Years Team Site and Quality Documents Page**. All staff working for Knox City Council Early Years Services are required to read and understand all Knox City Council Early Years Policies and Procedures.

Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this procedure. Where an update does not materially alter this policy, such a change may be made administratively.



Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this policy, it must be considered by Council.

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at: Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation:

Version Updates

<u>v#</u>	<u>Date</u>	Section	Changes (Brief)
V 2.0	10/09/2025	Whole document	Updated to include provisions for The National Model Code and outline Use of Personal devices whilst working directly with children and reporting information to the Workforce Register if applicable.



Attachment 1 - Early Years Service Site Induction Form Agency, Volunteers and Students

The Early Years team delivers services which include Integrated Hubs, Sessional Kindergarten, Community and Supported Playgroups, Maternal Child Health Services and the Preschool Field Officer Program

Activity	Required Action	Completed Yes/No/NA	Initial
Team Communication	Introduction to other team members.		
Sign in and Out Process	Explain sign in process for staff / visitors / relief educators / Students /children and families including attestation book.		
Educator Information	 Agency Staff have provided Personal Educator Record from their employment agency (if not, complete the Agency Staff Personal Record Form) 		
	 Students/Volunteers complete Vol/Student Personal Record form 		
	Take copies of qualifications		
	Inform who is the supervising Team Leader		
	(name)		
Workplace Register	If required by the Department of Education, add the Agency staff members detail's to the Workforce Register		
Early Years Policies and	Ensure staff member is aware of the following policies and procedures and the location of hard copies.		
Procedures	Child Safe Policy		
	Code of Conduct Procedure		
	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Procedure		
	 eSafety, Digital Technology and use of Personal Devices in Early Years Procedure 		
	 Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Procedure 		
	Medical (Allergy) Conditions Procedure		
	 Relationships and Interactions with Children Policy and Procedure 		
	Supervision of Children Procedure		
	Sleep and Rest Procedure		
Supervision of	Explain supervision of children near doorways/hallways		
children	Child Safety – all responsible		
	Supervision Plan if applicable		
	Shared outdoor classroom		



Activity	Required Action	Completed Yes/No/NA	Initial
	Communication with team including when not working directly with children, bathroom breaks etc		
Child Safe Standards	Commitment to create and maintain a child safe environment that meets the Child Safe Standards		
	 Personal Digital Devices are not permitted: 		
	-Whilst working directly with children		
	-to capture images, video or recordings of children.		
	*Prohibited Personal digital devices include mobile phones, tablets, digital camera, smart watches, smart glass, SD cards, USB drives, hard drives and cloud storage		
	Reporting Child Safe Concerns		
	Reportable Conduct Scheme		
Child Safe Training	 Volunteers and students complete Child Safe Training prior to or at commencement at a service date completed: 		
Work Practices and	 Confirm that they understand expectations around work practices and their obligations below: 		
Expectations	• Security		
	Interactions with children		
	 Programs 		
	Mealtimes		
	Incidents, injuries, Illnesses and Accidents		
	Workplace Health and Safety		
	Personal belongings and prohibited personal devices		
Tour of Early	Conduct tour of primary workplace location including:		
Years Service	• Amenities		
	 Emergency Management Plan / Procedures / Emergency Exits, Evacuation & assembly areas 		
	Evacuation Bag Location		
	Location of Service Mobile Phone and Landline		
	Duress button locations		
	 Location of Fire Extinguisher(s) 		
	Children's Education Rooms		
	 Meal areas and Staff Rooms (provide advice on lunch breaks) 		
	Storerooms / Sheds and location of step ladder		
	Grounds tours and location of daily check list		



Activity	Required Action	Completed Yes/No/NA	Initial
	 Kitchen Areas Identify other areas (i.e. MCH, Playgroups, other providers) Car Parking Facilities 		
Security (keys /fobs)	 Arrange and provide with keys/fobs (if appropriate), noting requirement to return at end of shift Explain Security Early Warning System Provide Action and Response Process <u>Link to Security Page - FCS Team Site</u> 		
First Aid / Health, Safety and Wellbeing for Children	 Supervision Explain where First Aid Equipment is kept (inside/outside). Identify children with Medical Conditions, allergies, anaphylaxis or any other special considerations i.e. cultural or additional needs, and where information is displayed/stored. Epi Pen and Ventolin / Medication Locations. Location of Incident, Injury Forms and Medication Book (inside/outside). Explanation to notify Knox educators of all incidents and injuries – even injuries that are noticed without an incident taking place Emergency Contacts Lists Inform all educator/s & record accidents/incidents/injury for parent signature (if appliable) Accidents that involve injury to a child's head/groin area, are required to be communicated to parents as soon as possible via Knox Staff Permanent educator /Team Leader to discuss administration of medication for specific children as required 		
Health & Safety & Wellbeing for Staff	 Identify the OHS noticeboard including the WorkSafe "if you are injured" poster and review Council OHS Policy and Statement of Commitment and affirmative workplace injury Rehabilitation and Return to Work Policy Outline zero tolerance for drugs and alcohol at work Explain the importance of reporting all injuries and near misses and where the Incident Report Form is kept 		



Activity	Required Action	Completed Yes/No/NA	Initial
	 Explain safe decanting of chemicals (if applicable) Provide information on the location of relevant SDS's Explain any Safe Work Practice (i.e. Glass) Explain Reporting Maintenance requests if appliable 		
Food Safety Induction (Integrated Hubs Only)	 Explain Food Allergy, Intolerance and Preferences process Explain children's food lists, updating weekly process Explain service of food handover of information. Agency staff, student sand volunteers are not to serve food. 		
Additional Note	es:		
Name:	Name of Person Inducting:		
Signature:	Signature:		
Date:	Date:		

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Attachment 2 - Student and Volunteer Record

Located at Edit - D25-284857 - Draft - Form - Student and Volunteer Record - Early Childhood Educators - Early Years Hubs - LDC - September 2025