PARTICIPATION OF VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS

QUALITY AREA 4 | ELAA VERSION 1.5

PURPOSE

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

POLICY STATEMENT

The safety, health, wellbeing, rights and best interests of every child are the paramount consideration and must guide all decisions, actions and practices of educators within the education and care service.

VALUES

Emma McLean Kindergarten and Daycare 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.

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, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Emma McLean Kindergarten and Daycare, including during offsite excursions and activities.

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RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
1. Developing guidelines for accepting applications from volunteers and students to work at the service in consultation with the nominated supervisor, ECT and educators and which are aligned with the *Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy (Child Safe Standards 2 – 2.2)*	√	√	√		
2. Accepting or rejecting a potential volunteer or student based on the circumstances of the service at the time, in consultation with the nominated supervisor	√	√			
3. Obtaining a valid WWCC Clearance *(refer to Definitions)* and providing details to the service prior to commencement *(Child Safe Standards 6 – 6.2)*					√
4. Checking the status of the Working with Children (WWC) Clearance *(refer to Definitions)* prior to commencement, and ensuring that the details, including identification number and expiry date are recorded in the staff record *(Child Safe Standards 6 – 6.2)*	**R**	√			
5. Immediately declaring to the nominated supervisor any changes that mean they do not meet the requirements relating to being a volunteer or student, such as ceasing their studies or if their WWCC has been revoked *(Child Safe Standards 6 – 6.2)*					R
6. Ensuring that the identifying number and the expiry date of a students or volunteers' current teacher registration is recorded in the staff record *(Child Safe Standards 6 – 6.2)*	**R**	√			
7. Ensuring that the staff record contains the full name, address and date of birth of volunteers and students attending the service *(Regulations 145, 149(1)).*	**R**	√			
8. Requesting additional information on the staff records such as emergency contact/next of kin and medical conditions	√	√			
9. Keeping a record for each day on which each student or volunteer participates with the date and the hours of participation *(Regulation 149(2))*	**R**	√			
10. Completing and maintaining the National Educator Register *(refer to Sources)* in the National Quality Agenda IT System for all educators, volunteers and students, non-educator staff, teachers (regardless of whether or not they are	**R**	**R**			

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registered or accredited with a teacher registration body), nominated supervisors and directors/co-ordinators *(Child Safe Standards 6 – 6.2)*					
11. 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 *(National Law, Section: 167, Child Safe Standards 6 – 6.4)*	**R**	√	√		
12. Following the directions of staff at the service at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected *(Child Safe Standards 6 – 6.4)*				√	√
13. Informing the room leader in writing about training requirements, including timesheets and evaluation forms				√	
14. Staying up to date with all written work requirements				√	
15. Maintaining open communication with work experience and placement students, as well as with the students' course supervisor, about their performance		√	√		√
16. 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**	√	√	√	√
17. 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) (Child Safe Standards 11 – 11.5)*	**R**	√			
18. 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) (Child Safe Standards 11 – 11.5)*	**R**	√	√	√	√
19. Complying with the requirements of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Education and Care Services National Law (Regulation 185)* and with all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, *Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy, Interactions with Children, Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environment* and *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* while attending the service *(Child Safe Standards 11 – 11.1, 11.5)*	**R**	**R**	**R**		**R**
20. Identifying, responding to and reporting inappropriate conduct *(refer to Definitions)* in accordance with the *Education and Care Services National Law* and the *Reportable Conduct Scheme*, including notifying the Social Services Regulator within required timeframes where a reportable allegation is formed *(refer to Code of Conduct Policy)*	**R**	**R**	R	R	R

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21. Ensuring that volunteers and students and do not carry their personal electronic devices *(refer to Definitions)* while providing education and care to children, except for authorised essential purposes *(refer to Definitions)* *(Child Safe Standards 6 – 6.4)*	**R**	**R**	**R**		**R**
22. Ensuring that volunteers, including students complete prescribed child protection training within the timeframes in the National Regulations *(Child Safe Standards 8 – 8.1. 8.2, 8.3, 8.4)*	**R**	**R**		**R**	
23. Ensuring that volunteers, including students complete mandatory national child safety training within the timeframes prescribed in the National Regulations *(Child Safe Standards 8 – 8.1. 8.2, 8.3, 8.4)*	**R**	**R**		**R**	
24. Ensuring volunteers/students receive guidance on child-friendly participation and feedback channels, and how to respond to or escalate concerns raised by children *(Child Safe Standards 3 – 3.1, 3.4)*	**R**	√	√		√
25. Ensuring volunteers/students follow child-focused complaints procedures, respond promptly and thoroughly, and report to relevant authorities and cooperate with law enforcement where required *(Child Safe Standards 7 – 7.3, 7.4)*	**R**	√	√		√
26. Ensuring volunteers, students and parents/guardians 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**	√	√		
27. Informing volunteers, students and parents/guardians of the services *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy* *(Regulations 90, 168(2)(d), 170, 171)*	**R**	√			
28. Informing volunteers, students and parents/guardians of the services emergency and evacuation procedures *(Regulations 97, 168 (2)(e))*	**R**	√	√		
29. Developing an induction checklist for volunteers and students attending the service *(refer to Attachment 1)* in consultation with the nominated supervisor and educators *(Child Safe Standards 6 – 6.3)*	**R**	√	√		
30. 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 *(Child Safe Standards 6 – 6.3)*	**R**	√	√		√
31. Developing a range of strategies to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service	√	√			

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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 Emma McLean Kindergarten and Daycare wherever appropriate and possible.

Emma McLean Kindergarten and Daycare 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*).

Emma McLean Kindergarten and Daycare 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 food, 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 (WWC) Clearance *(refer to Definitions)*.

Parents/guardians whose children usually attend the service are exempt from needing a WWC Check *(refer to Definitions)*. 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 *(refer to Definitions)*.

In line with Child Safe Standards and the *Child Safe Environment and 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.

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 (Vic)
- Worker Screening Regulation 2021 (Vic)

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DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g. Approved provider, Nominated supervisor, Notifiable complaints, Serious incidents, Duty of care, etc. refer to the Definitions file of the PolicyWorks catalogue.

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.

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

Essential purposes: The use and / or possession of a personal electronic device may be authorised for purposes other than taking images or recording videos of children include:

- communication in an emergency situation involving a lost child, injury to child or staff member, or other serious incident, or in the case of a lockdown or evacuation of the service premises
- personal health requirements, e.g. heart or blood sugar level monitoring
- disability, e.g. where a personal electronic device is an essential means of communication for an educator or other staff member
- family necessity, e.g. a worker with an ill or dying family member
- technology failure, e.g. when a temporary outage of service-issued electronic devices has occurred
- local emergency event occurring, to receive emergency notifications through government warning systems, for example, bushfire evacuation text notification.

Inappropriate conduct: Conduct that a reasonable person would consider inappropriate in an education and care service, taking into account any of the following circumstances:

- Whether the conduct aligns with generally accepted education and care practice
- The child's age and developmental stage
- Whether the conduct is likely to cause or result in harm (including emotional, psychological or physical harm) or injury to a child or children
- Whether the conduct is sexual, aggressive or violent.

In deciding if the conduct is inappropriate, it does not matter if:

- the child consented (agreed to the conduct, either by directly expressing their consent or implying consent through their actions)
- the person subjecting the child to the conduct believes the child has consented
- the person subjecting the child to the conduct is related to the child.

Subjecting a child to inappropriate conduct can occur in a number of ways including, but not limited to:

- in-person via words or behaviour, including both adult to child or between adults in the presence of a child/ren
- filming and capturing images or recordings
- as a single occasion or as part of a pattern over time
- either directly or indirectly (for example, exposure to inappropriate language or conversations, or leaving inappropriate material accessible to children)
- online
- as an omission (for example, deliberately excluding a child).

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Personal Electronic Device: A device that can take photos, record or store videos refers to any handheld or portable device owned by an individual, such as a smartphone, smart watches with camera/recording functionality, tablet, or digital camera, personal storage and file transfer media (such as SD cards, digital cameras, wearables, such as camera glasses, USB drives, hard drives and cloud storage), which has the capability to capture and store images or video footage. These devices are not issued or controlled by the approved provider.

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 *(refer to Definitions)*, administrative tasks, or preparing materials or food.

SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

SOURCES

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): www.acecqa.gov.au
- ACECQA - New national educator register
- 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.ccyp.vic.gov.au
- Working with Children Check; www.service.vic.gov.au

RELATED POLICIES

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

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

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- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying 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 *(Regulation 172 (2))*.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Induction checklist for volunteers and students
- Attachment 2: Child Safety Declaration for Students and Volunteers
- Attachment 3: WWCC Check Form

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Emma McLean Kindergarten and Daycare October 2026.

REVIEW DATE: October 2029

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ATTACHMENT 1. SAMPLE INDUCTION CHECKLIST FOR VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS

Name: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by all volunteers and students participating at Emma McLean Kindergarten and Daycare and returned to the nominated supervisor prior to commencing at the service.

Volunteer/Student	Please tick
Student/Volunteer Application form completed	
Working with Children Check	
Child Protection Training	
National Child Safe Training	
Sign In/Out Requirements	
Tour of Service / Bathroom facilities / Locker (If supplied)	
Shift times/ Breaks	
Uniform Policy/Dress Code/Hat	
Parking	
Introduced to key people - Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader, Room Leaders and Educators	
I have been given access to all the policies and procedures of Emma McLean Kindergarten and Daycare, [Delete if not applicable]	
I understand the content of service policies and procedures, including those relating to:	
• use of personal devices *(Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments)*	
• conduct while at the service *(Code of Conduct Policy)*	
• emergency, evacuation, fire and safety, including locations of fire extinguishers and emergency exits *(Emergency and Evacuation Policy)*	
• accidents at the service *(Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy)*	
• dealing with medical conditions *(Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy, Asthma Policy, Anaphylaxis and Allergic Reactions Policy, Diabetes Policy, Epilepsy and Seizures Policy and Administration of Medication Policy)*	
• good hygiene practices *(Hygiene Policy and Food Safety Policy)*	
• dealing with infectious diseases *(Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy)*	
• first aid arrangements for children and adults, including the location of the nearest first aid kit *(Administration of First Aid Policy)*	

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Volunteer/Student	Please tick
• daily routines	
• the importance of OHS and following safe work practices *(Occupational Health and Safety Policy)*	
• interacting appropriately with children *(Interactions with Children Policy)*	
• reporting of serious incidents and notifiable incidents at the service *(Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy, Compliments and Complaints Policy and Occupational Health and Safety Policy)*	
• reporting hazards in the workplace *(Occupational Health and Safety Policy)*	
• handling complaints and grievances *(Compliments and Complaints Policy)*	
• child safety and wellbeing and child protection including how to respond to concerns *(Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy)*	
• privacy and confidentiality of information *(Privacy and Confidentiality Policy)*	
I am aware of the non-smoking policy of the service and not be affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication) that would impair my capacity to complete my tasks *(Tobacco, E-Cigarettes, Alcohol, Vapes and other Drugs Policy)*	
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 or student name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Nominated Supervisor's name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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ATTACHMENT 2: CHILD SAFETY STATEMENT AND DECLARATION

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children in our service, the following procedures apply to all students and volunteers.

1. **Sign-In requirements**

- All students and volunteers must sign in at reception upon arrival each day and sign out when leaving the service. This ensures accurate records of staff presence and supports our child safety and supervision procedures. This data will be entered into the National Early Childhood Worker Register.
- All students and volunteers must present their valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) to office staff for sighting and verification prior to commencing at the service. Once verified and recorded on file, the WWCC does not need to be presented again for subsequent visits, unless an updated check is required.

2. **Compliance with the Child Safe Standards**

- All students and volunteers acknowledge that they have read and understand the Child Safe Standards and are aware of their roles and responsibilities in maintaining a safe environment for children.
- All students and volunteers must immediately notify permanent staff of any signs, disclosures, or concerns relating to a child's safety or suspected abuse.

3. **Personal electronic devices**

- All students and volunteers must follow the service's Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct when using personal devices.
- All personal electronic devices must be kept in the staff room, including smart watches.

4. **Supervision**

- All students and volunteers are required to always maintain active supervision of children and follow the direction and guidance of permanent staff members. Students and volunteers must not be left unattended with children at any time and must always work under the supervision of permanent staff.
- All students and volunteers must notify permanent staff immediately if they witness an incident or accident. They may assist permanent staff in administering first aid, provided the child gives consent. Students and volunteers are also required to provide a detailed account of the event to the permanent staff member responsible for completing the incident report.

5. **Child interactions**

- All students and volunteers must ensure all interactions with children are respectful, appropriate, and supportive of children's dignity and wellbeing. Children's voices, rights, and autonomy must be valued and respected at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, refraining from using physical control, harsh or inappropriate language, or ignoring a child's voice or choices.
- Staff must follow the service's Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct and maintain professional boundaries at all times. These policies are obtained on https://www.emmamcleankinder.com.au/centre-policies.

6. **Toileting and nappy changing**

- All students and volunteers are not permitted to change nappies or assist children with toileting or changing clothes. These tasks are to be carried out only by permanent staff members who are familiar with the Service's Child Safe Policy and Procedures.

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Student/Volunteer Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

EMK Staff Member Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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ATTACHMENT 3: CHILD SAFETY CHECKS

Name: _____

Position:

- ☐ Permanent Staff
- ☐ Relief Staff
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Volunteer
- ☐ Allied Health Professional
- ☐ Contractor
- ☐ Visitors

Type of Card:

- ☐ WWWC (Employee)
- ☐ WWWC (Volunteer)

https://service.vic.gov.au/find-services/work-and-volunteering/working-with-children-check

- ☐ VIT

https://www.vit.vic.edu.au/search-the-register

Name on card _____

Card number: _____

Status: _____

Reference number: _____

Date checked: _____

Emma McLean Kindergarten Staff Member conducting status check

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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