

Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy

Policy Statement

Uniting Early Learning 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, family day care residence/venue through consistent compliance with this policy and procedures when engaging volunteers and students;

Executive Summary

Volunteers and students may participate in programs and activities at the service from time to time in order to observe and experience the provision of education and care. This will be encouraged and facilitated by the service wherever appropriate and possible

Uniting Early Learning values the participation of parents and other family members, and the voluntary contribution they make to the education and care of their own and other children.

Uniting Early Learning 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*)

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

Current Environmental Context

In line with Child Safe Standard 4 and the Child Safety policy, prior to engaging a volunteer or student, a risk assessment in line with the nature of the role should be undertaken. A position description is required, for all volunteer roles.

The recruitment and selection of volunteers and students is to be conducted in line with the Recruitment and Selection Policy, People and Culture Policy and Pre-employment/engagement policy. Prior to commencement the following are to be undertaken.

- A completed application form (online or manual)
- An interview with the potential volunteer/student
- 2 reference checks
- A National Police check
- An International Police check (if the person has lived in a country other than Australia for a period of 12 months or more)
- The person must hold a Working with Children Check (VIC) or Working with Vulnerable People Check (TAS)

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Volunteers and students are also excepted to

- Review and agree to the Volunteer / student Agreement
- Agree and sign the position description
- Read and agree to the Code of Conduct

The most up to date forms and templates can be found on the People and Culture Hub.

Volunteer and student personal records are held electronically and centrally by Volunteer Services, People and Culture. The records are also to be held at the service and will adhere to the Privacy Policy and any relevant funding or legislative requirements.

In addition to this, students and volunteers are to undertake induction to the service and online organisational orientation. complete an induction checklist (refer to *Form 34.1*)

The role that volunteers play at the education and care service will vary and can include working with groups of children, preparing materials or food, assisting with the laundry, participating in excursions, assisting with administrative tasks or working one-on-one with individual children. The education and care service is responsible for ensuring that volunteers and students are suitable to undertake the designated role, and work with children, and that children's health, safety and wellbeing is always protected.

Uniting values volunteers and we will endeavour to provide:

- a written position description so people can understand the role, and the tasks they are authorised to perform
- a full induction, orientation and training relating to the volunteer role
- a safe environment in which to perform their role
- respect for privacy, including keeping private information confidential
- a dedicated supervisor, for support, and so that there is the opportunity to ask questions and get feedback
- reimbursement for reasonable pre-approved expenses so volunteers are not out-of-pocket as a result of volunteering for us
- insurance to cover the volunteer duties we have authorised someone to perform

Uniting asks volunteers to:

- Support Uniting's purpose and values
- participate in all relevant induction and training sessions
- only perform duties authorised to perform and always operate under the direction and supervision of Uniting employees and follow reasonable directions and instructions
- understand and comply with the organisation's policies and procedures including;
 - Child Safety policy
 - Reportable conduct & mandatory reporting policy
 - Work Health Safety & Wellbeing policy
 - Code of conduct
- notify a supervisor or another member of employee of any health and safety issues or potentially hazardous situations that may pose a risk to themselves or others and report any accidents or incidents relating to employees, volunteers, or the workplace
- behave appropriately and courteously to all people and the public in the course of your role
- use any property or equipment safely and only for purpose of the role
- let us know if they wish to change the nature of your contribution (for example, hours, role) to Uniting at any time

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- let us know immediately if there is anything, or anything arises, that makes them unsuitable or unable to legally carry out their volunteer role
- be open and honest in their dealings with us and let us know if we can improve our volunteer program and the support that you receive.

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

Attachment 34a – Responsibilities relating to the Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy

Attachment 34b – Volunteers/Student flowchart procedures

Form 34.1: - Participation of Volunteers and Students-Induction checklist form

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Reference/Sources

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Uniting Child Safety Policy – Uniting adopts the Uniting Church Australia National Child Safety Policy Framework, 2019 and the principles of this Policy Framework.

- *Code of Conduct Policy*
- *Complaints and Grievances Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Determining Responsible Person Policy*
- *Excursions, Regular Outings & Service Events Policy*
- *Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Child Safety Policy*
- *Privacy Policy*
- *Staffing Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*
- *Workplace Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy*
- Children’s Services Regulations 2009: Regulation 58
- Child Safe Standards
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Cth)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 169
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 123, 145, 149, 157, 355, 358, 360
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements
- *Tasmanian Licensing Standards for Centre Based Child Care Class 4 2014: Standard 4.4*
- *Conflict of interest policy*
- *Issues resolution policy*
- *People & culture policy*
- *Pre-employment check policy*
- *Recruitment & selection policy*
- *Spiritual & pastoral care policy*
- *Drug & Alcohol Protocol*
- *Discrimination, Harassment & Workplace Bullying (Workplace Treatment) Protocol*
- *Induction & Orientation Protocol & Procedure*
- *Supervision Protocol*
- *Training & Development Protocol*

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by Uniting Early Learning on: 09 September, 2020

Review

This policy is to be reviewed by 04 October, 2021

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Attachment 34a - Responsibilities relating to the Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- developing guidelines for accepting applications from volunteers and students to work at the service in consultation with the Responsible Person and educators and which are aligned with the *Child Safe Policy*
- accepting or declining a potential volunteer or student based on the circumstances of the service at the time, in consultation with the Responsible Person
- 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*)
- reading the Working with Children (WWC) Check 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
- keeping a record for each day on which each student or volunteer participates with the date and the hours of participation
- 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 Responsible Person, 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
- ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service, family day care residence/venue can enter the 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, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Responsible Person or educators under the law
- developing a range of strategies to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians
- providing volunteers, students and parents/guardians with access to all Uniting policies and procedures, and the relevant law and regulations
- ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians comply with the relevant law and regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy* while attending the service
- an induction checklist for volunteers and students attending the service (refer to Form 34.1 – induction checklist for volunteers and students) in consultation with the Responsible Person and educators

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The Responsible Person is 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 Safety 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
- ensuring that, where required, the WWC Check or WWVP check has been read prior to the volunteer/student's commencement at the service, and that details are included on the staff record
- 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 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 relevant regulations
- ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians comply with the relevant regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while attending the service
- ensuring that the *Code of Conduct Acknowledgement* is attached to the *Early Learning Staff Record*
- ensuring that volunteers and students have completed the induction checklist (refer to form 34.1) and have been provided with a copy of the staff handbook, if applicable

All other educators are responsible for:

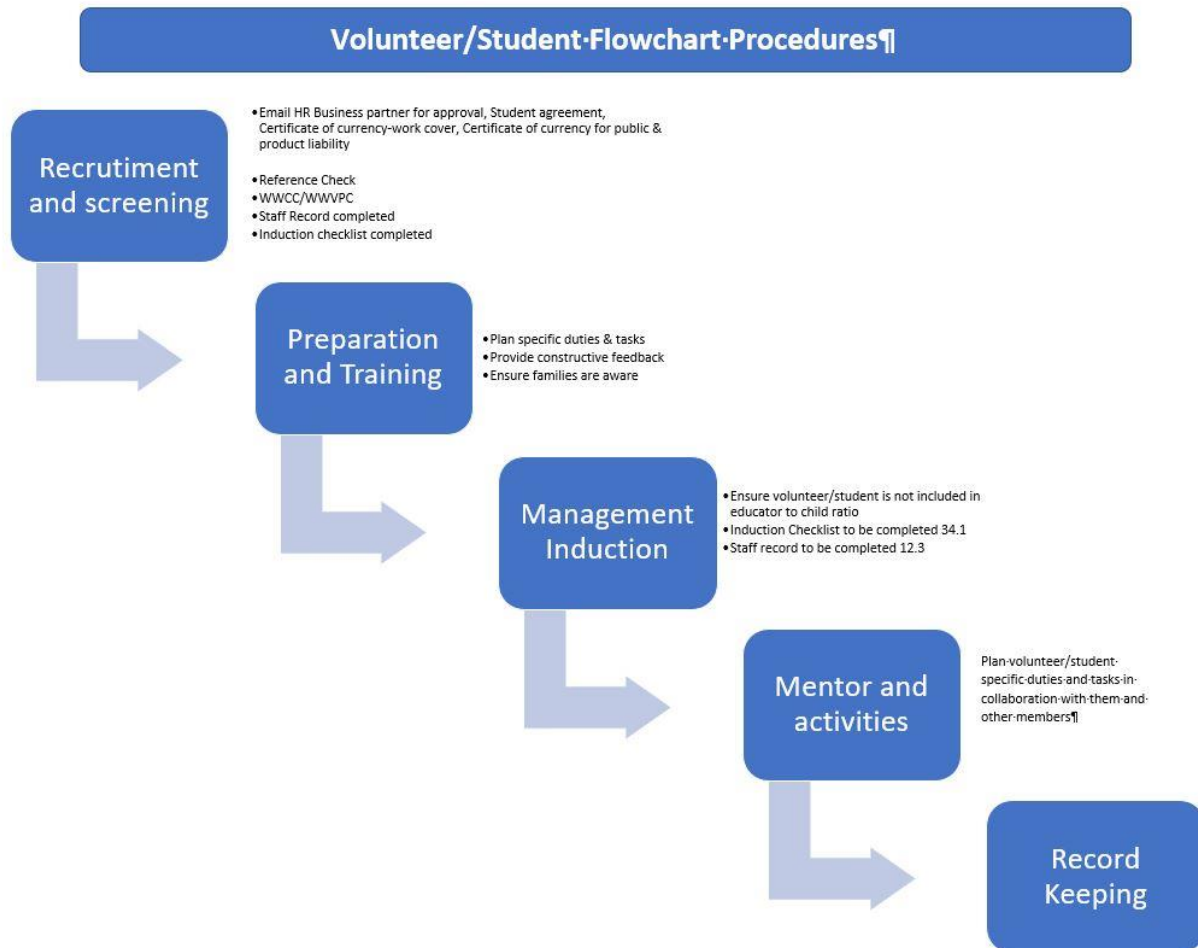
- ensuring that children being educated and cared for by the service are adequately supervised, and the legislated educator-to-child ratios are complied with at all times (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*)
- ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians comply with the relevant regulations 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
- encouraging the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service
- assisting volunteers and students to understand the requirements of this policy and the expectations of the service

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 (Vic) WWVP check (Tas) and presenting a current WWC Check card or other notification, as applicable
- understanding and acknowledging the requirement for confidentiality of all information relating to educators and families within the service (refer to *Privacy Policy*)
- complying with the requirements of the relevant regulations 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 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

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34a - Volunteers/Student flowchart procedures



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