

Student and Volunteer Policy

Purpose

Our OSHC Service values the contribution of students and volunteers as part of our commitment to community engagement and professional learning. Students and volunteers provide opportunities for the community to understand the value of OSHC programs while gaining practical experience in early childhood education. The safety and wellbeing of children remain our highest priority, and all participation is carefully managed to ensure children are supported in a secure and positive environment.

Scope

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, students, volunteers, and visitors of the OSHC Service. It provides guidance on the roles, responsibilities, and expectations for students and volunteers within the Service.

Implementation

Our Service encourages students and volunteers to participate in daily routines and activities, providing them with meaningful learning experiences that develop professional skills. Students and volunteers are expected to contribute in accordance with their level of qualification and under the supervision of qualified educators. Management ensures that students and volunteers complete an application form, attend an orientation, and are provided with an induction checklist and handbook before commencing their placement. Families, children, and staff are informed of the presence of students and volunteers, their role, and hours of attendance. The Service ensures that students and volunteers are never left alone with children and are not included in adult-to-child ratios. They are required to follow all policies and procedures and maintain confidentiality at all times. Students and volunteers are supported by a designated educator supervisor, who guides their learning, monitors progress, and provides feedback.

Educator Responsibilities

Educators maintain open communication with students and volunteers, sharing knowledge, supporting practicum requirements, and modeling professional conduct. Educators ensure students and volunteers understand their tasks, are aware of expectations, and are supported in their learning journey. They provide guidance, encourage initiative, and monitor engagement with children, ensuring safety and inclusion at all times. Educators assist students and volunteers to access service policies, routines, and procedures while fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment.

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Supervising Educator Responsibilities

The supervising educator discusses student progress, provides feedback, and addresses any concerns regarding performance. They ensure students and volunteers remain on task, comply with service expectations, and do not have unsupervised access to children. The supervising educator liaises with the student's educational institution as required, providing honest and constructive feedback on the student's performance.

Student and Volunteer Responsibilities

Students and volunteers are expected to actively engage with children, learn practical skills, and develop an understanding of team-based early childhood education. They follow the guidance of educators, complete all required tasks, and maintain up-to-date documentation for their placement. Students and volunteers adhere to service policies and procedures, do not remove children from direct supervision, and provide evidence of immunisation status, including COVID-19 vaccination or medical exemption if required.

Probity Checks

All students and volunteers provide identification, a current Working with Children Check, immunisation records, and sign a confidentiality agreement before commencing their placement. They receive a thorough orientation covering key policies, procedures, service routines, and expectations, ensuring they are fully prepared to engage safely and professionally in the Service environment.

Students at Risk

If a student is identified as at risk of failing their practicum, the supervising educator will inform the student supervisor, discuss concerns with the student, and involve the student's educational institution. The outcome of the practicum is determined collaboratively by the Service and the student's institution.

Termination of Placement

Student or volunteer placements may be terminated if a participant harms or places a child at risk, is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, fails to attend as required, engages in repeated inappropriate behaviour, breaches Service policies, or removes children from direct supervision.

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Child Safe Standards and Paramountcy Principle

The Service is committed to upholding the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and embedding a strong child safe culture across all practices, including the engagement of students and volunteers. In accordance with the Paramountcy Principle, the safety, wellbeing and best interests of the child are the primary and overriding consideration in all decisions, actions and practices undertaken by the Service, including the supervision and participation of students and volunteers.

This requires that all practices involving students and volunteers prioritise the safety, protection and wellbeing of children above all other considerations. Educators, staff and management must exercise sound professional judgement to ensure that students and volunteers are appropriately supervised at all times, are never left alone with children, and do not undertake responsibilities beyond their level of training or experience.

The Service will ensure that all students and volunteers are carefully inducted, supported and monitored to maintain a safe and respectful environment for children. Clear expectations, supervision arrangements and compliance requirements, including Working With Children Checks and confidentiality obligations, will be strictly enforced to protect children from harm.

All practices relating to students and volunteers must prioritise the protection of children from harm, uphold their dignity and wellbeing, and ensure that every child is safe, supported and cared for at all times.



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Review

Date:	Changes:	Reviewed by:
02/062023	New policy (All updated)	Charmayne Nathan
07/08/2024	Reviewed, No changes	Charmayne Nathan
17/09/25	Policy was updated, information was condensed.	Charmayne Nathan
30/04/2026	Child Safe Standards & Paramountcy Principle was implemented in align with new laws and regulations	Charmayne Nathan