

15. Staffing



Introduction

The quality of any organisation is largely defined by the quality and commitment of its staff. We have a commitment to the employment of early childhood professionals which will create a team reflecting diversity of education, training, life experiences and a sound base of knowledge ensuring quality program planning and evaluation. An environment in which staff are happy, enthusiastic, warm and supportive with children, parents and each other, will best enable the developmental needs and interests of the children to be met.

Purpose

To have a centre that will attract staff and educators, encourage commitment, gain benefits from their skills and experience and provide appropriate compensation for their work. To create a work environment in which staff and educators feel valued and part of a team.

Goals – What are we going to do?

The centre aims to provide staff and educators with:

- **Compassion and caring** – praise for a job well done, support when things are not going so well, consideration when a situation outside work is worrying them.
- **Security** – to know what is expected of them, security in knowing their job will be secure.
- **Freedom** – to make decisions appropriate to their own experiences and skills, and to have some autonomy, to grow, experiment and be oneself.
- **Chances** – to build self-esteem through being encouraged to try new things. Staff and educators who are especially skilled or knowledgeable in an area will have opportunities to teach other staff and educators.

Strategies – How will it be done?

Determining Responsible People

A Responsible person will be present whenever there are children being educated and cared for by the centre. These responsible people are listed below.

Please see centre foyer or locker area for list of **Responsible People**.

- **Approved Provider** – Donna & Ronald MacIntyre have management and control of the service.
- **Nominated Supervisor** – this is the person designated in writing by the Approved Provider of the service as the Nominated Supervisor of the service and in day to day charge of the service.
- **Educational Leader** – this is the person designated in writing to be responsible “to lead the development and implementation of educational programs in the service.”
- **Person in day to day charge** – this is a person designated in writing who can be placed in day-to-day charge of the service in the absence of the Nominated Supervisor or Approved provider.

Staff Communication

As staff work very closely together, it is important to have good staff communication. Unresolved conflict takes up time and increases the tension within the centre. Gossip and negative attitudes have a way of undermining morale in work place. Staff are encouraged to communicate in an informal way (through discussion), through their staff communication diaries located in rooms and staff room or to point out issues of concern at regular staff meetings.

Procedure regarding staff entitlements

- Wages are paid weekly by direct debit into employees nominated bank account
- Holidays/sick leave as per job description
- Pay slips are emailed directly to staff members personal email address, if you do not have an email address please see your centre director to make other arrangements.

Educators working directly with children records

Staff and educators are required to sign in and out of the centre via educator time sheets indicating the hours that each educator works directly with children being educated and cared for by the service and the OWNA App (if applicable).

Working with Children Check

All staff are required to obtain a WWCC which is to be verified prior to commencing employment at the centre.

Professional Development

Educators and Staff in conjunction with Nominated Supervisor/Educational Leader and Advisor are to source and attend at least two training courses per year. This can include training offered for free by Approved Provider and any other course offered free of charge e.g. Munch & Move. Any training which requires payment is done so by the staff member/educator unless approved by management. All professional development attended must be recorded on the centres educator training record and by the educator in their individual critical reflection and professional development journal. These are to be used to record notes at professional development training, which is then brought back and shared with other educators.

This centre is committed to providing a quality service and recognises the need for all staff and educators to have access to continuing education to keep them informed of new developments within early childhood education.

Assessment and Ratings

All staff members and educators must be committed and willing to participate in the National Quality Standard Assessment and Ratings process. This involves attending regular meetings and the creation, execution and evaluation of the centres Quality Improvement Plan/Self -Assessment.

Mobile Phones/Smart Watch

Mobile phones and smart watches are not permitted in the rooms, they may be kept in the staff room only and must be placed on silent. Educators and staff are not permitted to have their mobile phone or smart watches on them while working, this includes time spent out of the room on programming, critical reflection or during study time. Any phone calls/checking of messages by staff/educators must be done in their own time e.g. lunch breaks, unless permission is granted by the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.

Food/Drinks

Only water is acceptable to consume in a playroom, water bottles are only permitted in play room. Only healthy food is allowed to be consumed in a play room e.g. yogurt, fruit, suitable crackers (foods that meet our Nutrition Policy) etc. Under no circumstances is cordial, soft drink or any kind of energy drinks permitted. No glass, hot drinks or hot food are permitted in the playrooms.

Eating from trolleys is **not acceptable or allowed** – If there is a need to eat some of the food being served to role model and encourage children to try it then this would entail a very small amount being eaten whilst seated with the children and discussing the food and meal.

Staff Medication

Any medication must be kept locked in the staff room and inaccessible to children at all times, this includes cough lollies, cough mixture and any type of pain killers including Panadol.

Illness

Staff will not attend the centre whilst ill with an infectious disease and will be excluded for such time as specified by a Medical Practitioner. If you are unable to attend due to illness you are to notify the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person on duty. As much notice as possible is required to ensure a replacement staff member can be found. Shift times may need to be varied to ensure the correct staffing when the centre opens and closes. Educators and staff are not permitted to send a text message or call a friend. If the Nominated Supervisor is unable to be contacted the educator or staff member must call the centre and speak with the Responsible Person on duty. All absences must be verified with a certificate from your doctor that indicates the nature of the illness or injury suffered. Certificates that say you have an illness will not be accepted. Certificates must be received by 9.00am on the Monday following your absence in order to be processed. Certificates received after this will not be accepted.

Smoke (including e-cigarettes), Vape Devices and Substances, Drug and Alcohol Free Environment

No alcohol, smoking (including E-Cigarettes), vaping or drugs will be consumed on the premises at any time by staff, families or visitors. The centre is a smoke (including E-Cigarettes), vape and vape substance, drug and alcohol free zone. This includes the centre car park and surrounding gardens.

Dress code

Uniforms are required to be worn at all times when working within the centre. On employment staff will be allocated one shirt and one jacket or vest plus a hat. All other uniforms are to be paid for by the staff. Staff are to purchase sufficient uniforms for themselves to enable them to wear the approved uniform each day that they attend the centre for work. Staff are to team the uniform shirt with either navy or black pants, shorts, or skirt. Staff are to look neat and tidy at all times, presenting a professional image to the public.

Appropriate dress includes black or navy blue skirt which is just above or below the knee but not longer than the calf. Black or navy pants which can be long to ankle or shorts which sit just above the knee or 3/4 pants. Inappropriate dress includes Jeans, leggings, tracksuit pants, tights, short shorts and short skirts.

All staff are responsible for keeping their uniforms clean and tidy. All uniforms are to be ironed and clean. Laundering of these uniforms are at the staff members own expense and to be undertaken in their own time. The centre washing machine can be used after centre operating hours for washing of uniforms only. Uniforms are to be replaced when they have begun to look tatty and old. Uniforms are not to have any holes or tears in them.

Employees ensure that appropriate footwear is worn. Appropriate footwear includes enclosed shoe, jogger, or sport shoe – which must be clean & tidy. Employees will only be barefoot in the indoor and outdoor play environments – barefoot requires no socks or slippers to be worn at all – all other areas of the centre such as staffroom, hallway, bathrooms, kitchen etc shoes will be worn at all times.

Sunglasses are permitted to be worn in the playground but must be removed when speaking to a parent. Mirrored sunglasses are not permitted.

If staff resign prior to their three months probationary period finishing they will be required to reimburse the centre for their allocated shirt and jacket/vest and hats are to be returned to the centre.

Piercings

Small studs or sleepers only are to be worn in the ears. Any facial piercings must be a small stud or sleeper only.

Tattoos

Any tattoo on the body that can be seen (if possible) must be covered with clothing, socks etc. during working hours.

Hats

Must be worn at all times whilst outside, by staff, visitor's and children alike. Visors/caps are not permitted. Staff will be provided with a Tillys hat by the Nominated Supervisor.

Hair

Is to be clean, well-groomed and not be of any bright colours.

Notification of Suspected Child Abuse

Staff must follow the centres **Child Protection Policy** – any issues should be discussed with the Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider, remembering to observe confidentiality at all times.

If you are worried about a child's development

If you are worried about a child's development or have other concerns about a child whilst in your care, please bring these issues to the attention of the Nominated Supervisor who will follow up on the matter.

Unsatisfactory work performance

If there are concerns about any work performance issues, the issues will firstly be informally discussed with the staff member by the Nominated Supervisor/Educational leader. If work performance issues continue then a formal Performance Improvement Plan detailing the work performance issues will be set up for the staff member by the Nominated Supervisor/Educational leader with dates to review the staff persons work performance. This process will continue until the work performance issues improve. If issues continue then a staff performance Matrix will be used explaining the areas of concern and why they are of concern. Staff person will be counselled about the concerns. The staff person will then be required to reply in writing to and to explain how they will work towards improving their work performance. This will be conducted by a member of the management Team. If the staff persons work performance does not improve they will be informed that their employment is or may be in jeopardy if the work issues continue. Dismissal may be necessary in regard to serious work issues. A staff person has a Duty of Care towards the children in their care.

Inappropriate behaviour includes:

- Breach of the Code of Conduct
- Any abuse towards a child – physical, sexual, emotional or neglect
- Inability to show sympathy in their care of the child
- Breach of the Education and Care National Law or Regulations
- Inability to follow centre Policy/Procedure/Philosophy

Computer/iPad Usage

Computers/iPads are not to be used for personal use. This includes looking at any internet addresses that are not directly related to the educational program of the centre including banks and building societies, as well shopping and travel sites etc. It is also not acceptable to be using Facebook or any other chat line or social site or to use the centres internet for personal usage for any reason whilst caring for children whilst in the employment of Tillys Play & Development/Education Centre. Staff are also not to take inappropriate photos using the centre iPads such as selfies of each other or with the children. Staff are advised that a breach in computer/iPad usage may result in the termination of that staff member, or any other staff member involved in this matter. Employees are also reminded that all computers remain the property of Tillys Play & Development/Education Centre.

Online Social Networking Sites

Tillys deems it unprofessional for employees to engage in internet social networking with any of the clients (families, parents and students) of Tillys Play & Development/Education Centre, this includes Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram or any other networking site. We see our staff as professionals, any public displays on these sites of inappropriate photos, text, etc. is considered inappropriate behaviour if parents are able to view this.

Equal Opportunities for Staff

It is the policy of the centre to provide equality within the workplace for all people employed or seeking employment. Every person will be given a fair and equal chance to compete for employment, promotion or transfer. For existing staff and educators, a *Transfer Position of Interest and Position Application form* must be completed in order to be eligible for any transfers or employment opportunities.

Staff Selection procedure

The following procedure will be followed when recruiting new staff members:

An advertisement will be placed in the appropriate newspapers or online job seeking website (Seek/Indeed) with a brief job description and a request for applicant's qualifications and experience and any other relevant information for the position that is required.

- All resumes will be sent to a member of the Management Team
- A member of the Management Team will check the applicant's information for relevant qualifications (including first aid and child protection training), WWCC, experience and age (any staff member under 18 years of age must not work alone at the service and must be adequately supervised at all times by an educator over 18 years.)
- The applicant's former employee (if applicable) will be contacted to ascertain the applicants suitability for the position, 2 referees provided by the applicant will also be contacted as to the applicants suitability for the position.
- A member of the Management Team will arrange an interview panel. The panel will include a member of the Management Team, Nominated Supervisor of the centre, and any other room staff or staff of the centre, parents or community members. The applicant will be interviewed to determine suitability to the position being offered and will be asked relevant verbal questions and also be requested to hand write answers to some questions.
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- The interview panel as a group will decide upon the most suitable applicant for the position available.
- A member of the Management Team or the Nominated Supervisor will advise applicants of the outcome of their interviews.

Orientation of new, returning and casual staff

All new, returning and casual staff and educators will receive an orientation to the centre 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 centre.

During orientation, generally the following items will be addressed:

- Introduction to other staff members, management etc.
- Centre tour highlighting key health and safety features such as fire extinguishers, evacuation plans, fire exits, first aid kit storage and chemical use and storage, show the new person where they may store personal items and the location of the Staff room, toilets, kitchen, laundry, parking, etc
- Morning tea and Lunch breaks
- Pay arrangements.
- Questions (who to ask, how to ask, and confidentiality).

Prior to employment or during orientation staff and educators will receive a staff folder.

The staff record will include:

- Full name, address, date of birth
- Evidence or relevant qualifications held or evidence of actively working towards qualification documentation
- Evidence of any approved training (first aid (including anaphylaxis and asthma management), Child protection, child safety, food handling)
- A copy of their employment contract and job description
- Details for obtaining a WWCC and verified WWCC including expiry date.
- Declaration of disciplinary and investigative history
- Statement of philosophy; staff code of ethics; and other work guidelines including conditions of employment, organisation and centre standards, service expectations, customer relations, and centre operations.
- Confidentiality Agreement and Policy Declaration
- Relevant policies and procedures including workplace health and safety; grievance procedures; supervision; child protection and ensuring a safe environment for children; confidentiality and privacy.
- Immunisation Details
- Tax File Declaration and Super Form

Casual staff and educators are often required to care for children as soon as they arrive at the centre with limited time to familiarise themselves with the environment, policies and procedures. A casual staff Induction checklist has been designed to highlight the important information, procedures and practices that the casual educator needs to be immediately aware of i.e. evacuation procedures, location of dangerous products hazards, child protection policies etc. Where possible the centre will maintain a list of permanent relief and casual educators that are familiar with centre policies, procedures, staff, children and families.

Ongoing communication and support

During orientation or on their first day staff and educators will be given another staff person as a mentor – this staff person will be responsible for addressing any issues the new staff person may have and assisting the new staff person to settle into the work environment during their first few weeks.

All employees will be expected to engage with their critical reflection and professional development journal. These will be completed at team meetings and other times the educator chooses to. The new employee will be encouraged to write down any questions they would like to discuss, which will be addressed by their mentor where appropriate, or the Director at regular meetings which will occur weekly, monthly and 3 monthly, staff and the delegated person will sign for each time frame and identify any areas of concern. At the end of the probationary period the Director will hold an appraisal meeting with the new person to identify their strengths and plan for professional development opportunities.

When an employee has a child enrolled at the centre

When an employee has a child enrolled at the centre, we will wherever practically possible ensure that a child of an employee is not placed in a room with their parent as one of their primary educators. Children of fellow employees enrolled in the service will be cared for and interacted with

in the same manner as all other children within the service. Educators must at all times follow all centre policies and procedures in the same manner when caring for children of fellow employees.

For Staff and Educators at the centre:

Staff and educators need to be mindful of the fact that the educator is also a parent of the service and as such will interact with the educator in a manner that satisfies both of their roles. Educators will follow the centres policies in relation to interactions with families – specifically the educator will offer the employee/parent the respect and courtesy they would also offer a parent who is not an employee. Specifically, this would include greeting the employee and child on drop off and pick up and engaging in verbal communication to facilitate the transition between home and the centre and the centre and home.

For Employees with a child at the centre:

Employees will prioritise their role within the service as Educator first and parent second. Specifically they will tend to the role that they are employed in: e.g. care for the children and families of the service as a priority whilst their child's educators care for their child. They will engage in a mutually respectful relationship with their child's educators and will be respectful of the role their child's educator plays in caring for their child. The employee will follow the centres policies and procedures in relation to interactions between staff and with families. Please note that this specifically includes the centres confidentiality policy.

When grievances arise:

Both parties need to first follow the centres "Grievance procedure". The Nominated Supervisor (or in their absence the responsible person on duty) is to be immediately notified in any circumstance of conflict between or involving educators where one of the educators also has a child at the service – regardless of whether or not this conflict involves the child at the service. The Nominated Supervisor will engage in mediation of any conflict as soon as practically possible to promote a positive relationship between educators.

Where conflict arises in relation to the care of the employees child the employee/parent is also encouraged (after first following the steps above) to follow the centres complaints policy.

Critical reflection forums

Critical reflection forums will be organised by each centre, four times per year. The Nominated Supervisor of the service will set the date and time of the forum.

- Forum dates will be posted in the staff room for the year ahead.
- Forums designed to share critical reflection notes and findings and engage in discussion for future planning and practice.
- Will include training and development sessions
- Whole team critical reflection discussions and change to practice as lead by NS and EL
- All educators are required to attend each forums. Forums are paid meetings.
- Forums will be held at the centre.
- The Nominated Supervisor and Educational Leader (or a delegated person) will conduct the forum.
- All educators are encouraged to contribute to the forums.
- Minutes of the forum will be recorded by a nominated person attending the forum; the minutes will be dated and signed by all educators who attended the forums. Forum minutes will be linked to the NQS.

Approved Provider will:

- Ensure the centre operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations at all times.
- Ensure all centre policies and procedures are reviewed and updated annually or as required to ensure compliance with legislative requirements.
- Ensure that children being educated and cared for by the service are provided with an environment that is free from the use of tobacco, vaping devices, vaping substances, illicit drugs and alcohol.
- Ensure that any educator at the service who is under 18 years of age—
 - (a) does not work alone at the service; and
 - (b) is adequately supervised at all times by an educator who has attained the age of 18 years.
- Ensure that a staff record is kept for that service that includes:
 - (a) the information about nominated supervisors set out in regulation 146; and
 - (b) the information about staff members set out in regulation 147; and
 - (c) the information about the educational leader set out in regulation 148; and
 - (d) the information about volunteers set out in regulation 149(1).
- Ensure the service keeps a record of educators working directly with children that includes the following information—
 - (a) the name of each educator who works directly with children being educated and cared for by the service;
 - (b) the hours that each educator works directly with children being educated and cared for by the service.

Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure the centre operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations at all times.
- Ensure all staff are aware of this Staff Policy and all other relevant policies and procedures.
- Ensure all new, returning and casual staff and educators undergo a thorough staff orientation procedure following the guidelines outlined in this policy.

Educators will:

- Educators and staff will be familiar with and follow the Education and Care Services National Regulations and national Law, centre philosophy, policies and procedures and centre standards and ECA Code of Ethics as outlined in this policy and staff handbook.

Related Legislation

- Education and Care Services National Law Act: Section 169, 301
- Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulations 145, 147, 149, 151, 168, 170, 171, 181, 183

Links to other policies and documents

- Staff Folder
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Determining the Responsible Person present at the Service
- Performance Appraisal
- Position descriptions
- Confidentiality Agreement
- Fair Work Statement
- Grievance procedure

Links to Education and Care Services National Regulations:

145, 147, 149, 151, 168, 170, 171, 181, 183

Links to National Quality Standards/Elements:

1.2, 4.1, 4.2, 7.1

Sources

- Donna MacIntyre – Approved Provider
- ACECQA www.acecqa.gov.au
- Community Early Learning Australia – CELA
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- ECA Code of Ethics