

PARTICIPATION OF VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS POLICY

Mandatory – Quality Area 4

PURPOSE

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

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten 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.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Persons with Management or Control, Nominated Supervisor, Persons in day-to-day Charge, educators, staff, students (refer to *Definitions*), volunteers (refer to *Definitions*), parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten.

3. 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 Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten wherever appropriate and possible.

Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten 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).

Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten 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 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 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) Check. From 20 December 2019 onwards, this includes any parent, guardian or relative of a child attending Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten

In line with Child Safe Standard 4 and the *Child Safe Environment 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)
- *Working with Children Act 2005* (Vic)

4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *ANMK General Policy Definitions*.

Child-related work: In relation to the WWC Check, 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.

Staff record: A record which the Approved Provider of a centre-based service must keep containing information about the Nominated Supervisor, the Educational Leader, staff, volunteers, students and the Responsible Person at a service (Regulations 146–149). A sample staff record is available on the ACECQA website: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

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 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.

Working with Children (WWC) Check: The check is a legal requirement for those undertaking paid or voluntary child-related work (refer to *Definitions*) in Victoria and is a measure to help protect children from harm arising as a result of physical or sexual abuse. The Department of Justice assesses a person's suitability to work with children by examining relevant serious sexual, physical and drug offences in a person's national criminal history and, where appropriate, their professional history. A WWC Check card is granted to a person under working with children legislation if:

- they have been assessed as suitable to work with children
- there has been no information that, if the person worked with children, they would pose a risk to those children
- they are not prohibited from attempting to obtain, undertake or remain in child-related employment.

5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): www.acecqa.gov.au
- *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.cryp.vic.gov.au
- Working with Children Check unit, Department of Justice & Regulation – provides details of how to obtain a WWC Check: www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au

Service policies

- *Child Safe Policy*
- *Safe Environment Policy*
- *Code of Conduct Policy*
- *Complaints and Grievances Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Determining Responsible Person Policy*
- *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
- *Staffing Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider and Persons with Management or Control are responsible for:

- developing guidelines for accepting applications from volunteers and students to work at the service in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators and which are aligned with the *Child Safe* and *Safe Environment Policies*.
- accepting or rejecting a potential volunteer or student based on the circumstances of the service at the time, in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor
- 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 (Regulations 123, 355, 360) (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 (Regulations 145, 149(1))

- keeping a record for each day on which each student or volunteer participates with the date and the hours of participation (Regulation 149(2))
- 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 Nominated Supervisor, 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 (Regulation 83)
- ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service 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, Nominated Supervisor or educators under the law (Regulation 157)
- developing a range of strategies 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 *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while attending the service
- developing an induction checklist for volunteers and students attending the service (refer to Attachment 1 – Sample induction checklist for volunteers and students) in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators.

The Nominated Supervisor and Persons in Day to Day Charge are 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 Safe and Safe Environment Policies*.
- 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 (Regulations 123, 355, 360) (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*)
- ensuring that, where required, the WWC 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 that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service 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, Nominated Supervisor or educators under the law (Regulation 157)
- 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 *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while attending the service

- assisting the Approved Provider to develop an induction checklist for volunteers and students at the service (refer to Attachment 1 – Sample induction checklist for volunteers and students)
- 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.

All other educators are responsible for:

- assisting the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor to develop guidelines for applications from volunteers and students to participate at the service and are aligned with the *Child Safe and Safe Environment Policies*.
- 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*)
- providing volunteers, students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures, and a copy of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians comply with the National 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 the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor to develop an induction checklist for volunteers and students at the service (refer to Attachment 1 – Sample induction checklist for volunteers and students)
- 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 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 and Confidentiality Policy*)
- complying with the requirements of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* 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 if applicable (refer to Attachment 1) 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.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- providing information for the staff record as required
- complying with the requirements of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and with all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy* and *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* while attending 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.

PROCEDURES SPECIFIC TO ALFRED NUTTALL MEMORIAL KINDERGARTEN

Volunteers

The Kindergarten's philosophy values and encourages the involvement of parents in the Kindergarten programme on a voluntary basis. Community persons requesting volunteer work must be approved by the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor. Volunteers work under the supervision of the responsible person and must adhere to the Kindergarten's legislative, regulatory and policy and procedure requirements. Volunteers with management control are required to have the appropriate working with children checks.

From 20 December 2019 onwards, parent/guardian/grandparent helpers, whose children are in attendance, are required to have a WWCC.

Volunteers without a WWCC are required to be under direct supervision of an educator who has attained the age of 18 years of age.

Students

Work experience students or students enrolled in children's services qualification courses may attend the Kindergarten on placements. The nominated supervisor and educational leader must approve the acceptance of a student placement and only one student will be accepted at a time. Teaching students will have the required working with children checks and all students will work under the direction of the responsible teacher for the group and will be supervised by the nominated person/educational leader. Students will be required to implement requirements as designated by their educational institution.

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
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures unless a lesser period is necessary because of a risk.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Sample induction checklist for volunteers and students

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten on 16 October 2017 and approved for update on 17 September 2019.

ATTACHMENT 1**Sample induction checklist for volunteers and students**

Name: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by all volunteers and students participating at Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten and returned to the Nominated Supervisor prior to commencing at the service.

| | Please tick |
|---|--------------------|
| I have been given access to all the policies and procedures of Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten, [Delete if not applicable] | |
| I understand the content of service policies and procedures, including those relating to: | |
| • conduct while at the service (<i>Code of Conduct Policy</i>) | |
| • emergency, evacuation, fire and safety, including locations of fire extinguishers and emergency exits (<i>Emergency and Evacuation Policy</i>) | |
| • accidents at the service (<i>Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy</i>) | |
| • dealing with medical conditions (<i>Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy, Asthma Policy, Anaphylaxis Policy, Diabetes Policy, Epilepsy Policy and Administration of Medication Policy</i>) | |
| • good hygiene practices (<i>Hygiene Policy</i>) | |
| • dealing with infectious diseases (<i>Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy</i>) | |
| • first aid arrangements for children and adults, including the location of the nearest first aid kit (<i>Administration of First Aid Policy</i>) | |
| • daily routines | |
| • the importance of OHS and following safe work practices (<i>Occupational Health and Safety Policy</i>) | |
| • interacting appropriately with children (<i>Interactions with Children Policy</i>) | |
| • reporting of serious incidents and notifiable incidents at the service (<i>Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy, Complaints and Grievances Policy and Occupational Health and Safety Policy</i>) | |
| • reporting hazards in the workplace (<i>Occupational Health and Safety Policy</i>) | |
| • handling complaints and grievances (<i>Complaints and Grievances Policy</i>) | |
| • child safety and wellbeing and child protection including how to respond to concerns (<i>Child Safe Environment Policy</i>) | |
| • privacy and confidentiality of information (<i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i>) | |

| | Please tick |
|--|--------------------|
| I am aware of the non-smoking policy of the service | |
| 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: _____

ATTACHMENT 2

VOUNTEER GUIDELINES

ANMK is community run, not for profit, sessional kindergarten providing a stimulating and caring environment that promotes a love of learning and encourages each child to realise their full potential. We see our kindergarten as natural extension of a child's family and community life and we encourage, and highly value, community and family participation in our program. ANMK is committed to child safety and promotes the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children.

Please find below some guidelines to assist you during your time at Kindergarten

IMPORTANT - PLEASE:

- Sign in at the sign-in sheet as a visitor.
- Ensure you have read the Volunteer Code of Conduct Statement.
- Ensure that you have provided the details of your current Working with Children Check to the Kindergarten staff or the Committee of Management.
- Notify a staff member if a child requires help with self-care needs – staff, not family volunteers, are to assist with self-care/toileting needs of the children (unless it is your own child).
- If the doorbell rings, please notify a staff member and ask them to open the front door.
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of all children and families. If an incident occurs during the session, please allow the Teacher on duty to communicate with the relevant child(ren)'s parents about the incident rather than raising it with families yourself.
- Follow the direction of staff at all times and raise any questions or concerns with staff as soon as possible.
- Work in partnership with educators to support children's wellbeing and engagement in the program.

HOW YOU CAN HELP US DURING THE SESSION:

- Ensure a supply of clean drinking cups by the outdoor water dispenser.
- Top up the outdoor water dispenser as needed.
- Clean the outdoor water dispenser at the end of the session in preparation for the next day.
- Empty the dishwasher once the clean cycle has completed.
- Sort artwork into group baskets (or lockers if the artwork belongs to a child in your current session).
- Wipe down the inside tables as needed.
- Wash brushes and/or paint pots on the inside playroom sink as needed.
- Sweep the area around the outside cubbyhouse and sandpit.
- Tidy up the shelves that house the paper in the main playroom.
- Rake the sandpit and/or tan bark in the yard

SUGGESTIONS FOR JOINING IN WITH THE CHILDREN DURING THE SESSION:

- Read stories with a group of children.
- Assist children to put on smocks and/or put name on artwork (if needed)
- Assist children with completion of puzzles.
- Supervise messy activities.
- Join in constructive/manipulative play in the sandpit, block corner etc
- Ask children if they would like a push on the swing.
- Join and imaginative play area.
- Talk and play with children.
- With your child, look at their individual portfolio folder.
- Take some time to read the program book.
- Speak to educators if you have a special skill or interest that you would like to share with the group.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE!

ATTACHMENT 3**WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS****Template for recording and checking Working with Children Check Documentation for Volunteers:**

| Name of Card Holder | If a parent, child's name | Card Number | Expiry date | Name & Position of person checking | Date of check | Name & Position of person checking | Date of check |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

- The Nominated Supervisor must ensure that Working with Children Check Documentation is to be checked each 6 months

Information provided to Volunteers about the Working with Children Check:

Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten has a responsibility and commitment to ensure a safe place for children to play and learn. The Kindergarten has been working hard to ensure we meet the Victorian Child Safe Standards and as part of this work a policy statement has been developed regarding Working with Children Checks for Volunteers. Best practice reflects all volunteers having a Working with Children Check and most schools also now require parents/relatives to have a Working with Children Check to be able to volunteer at school activities. As a result, our policies require that all adults who volunteer to help during session times must hold a valid Working with Children Check, even parents and grandparents.

Working with Children Checks can be applied for through the Working with Children Check Victoria website – <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au> - and are free for volunteers. When applying for the check, please link your check to Alfred Nuttall Memorial Kindergarten as an organisation. When you receive your Working with Children Check, please bring the card to Kindergarten for the details to be recorded. Documentation is then verified online by the Kindergarten. Please note that if you are a Victorian teacher with a valid and current VIT or a Victorian police officer with valid and up to date identification, this is sufficient in place of a Working with Children's Check. Please pass this information onto any grandparents or other relatives who may wish to participate in the program by way of volunteering in session as we warmly welcome them and encourage family participation.

