

Volunteer Policy

Policy Statement

Playtime values the contribution volunteers make to early childhood services through supporting community connection, enriching children's experiences and assisting approved service activities where appropriate. Volunteer participation must occur in a way that protects children, maintains clear role boundaries and ensures all volunteers understand service expectations, confidentiality and child safe responsibilities at all times.

Background

Playtime recognises that volunteers may contribute to the service through family participation, community involvement, special events and approved support activities. Clear procedures for volunteer participation assist in protecting children from harm, supporting educators and ensuring volunteers understand their responsibilities while attending the service. Volunteer involvement must occur in a way that supports safe practice and ensures legislative obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations are met.

Scope

This policy applies to all children, educators, staff, families, management, volunteers and any other approved persons participating in volunteer activities within Playtime Early Childhood Services.

Playtime Procedure Reference

Volunteer Procedure

Policy & Procedure Access and Supporting Documents

- All Playtime Childcare policies and procedures are located:
 - Electronically on OWNA for Staff via → Staff → Policies and Procedures
 - Electronically on OWNA for Families via → Configure → Policies and Resources
 - Management has access electronically via computer documents
 - Hard copies available upon request
- Regulative required policies and procedures will be reviewed annually, all other policies biannually
- Relevant checklists, risk assessments and documents are located via the OWNA platform:
 - Student Induction Record
 - Student and Volunteer Information Record
 - Photography Permission and Agreement Form

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Related Statutory Obligations & Considerations

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. ACECQA
- Education and Care Services National Regulations.
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010.
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations.
- Guide to the National Quality Framework and National Quality Standard.
- United Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Office of the Children's Guardian – WWCC
- Code of Ethics

Legislative Requirements

Law/ Reg	Law/ Regulation	Our Response to:
170 (Law)	Offence relating to unauthorised persons on education and care service premises	Playtime ensures all students provide valid documentation, complete induction requirements and remain under direct supervision at all times. Students are not included in educator to child ratios unless permitted under approved qualification pathways. Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 No 104 - NSW Legislation
175 (Law)	Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents	Playtime maintains accurate and secure enrolment, attendance, student, volunteer and visitor records in accordance with regulatory requirements. All documentation is stored confidentially and made available to authorised officers upon request. Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 No 104 - NSW Legislation

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149 (Reg)	Volunteers and Students	Playtime maintains accurate records for all volunteers engaged at the service, including required personal details, attendance records and Working With Children Check information where applicable. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653) - NSW Legislation
168 (Reg)	Education and Care Service must have policies and procedures	Playtime maintains current, comprehensive policies and procedures to guide safe and compliant practice in line with the Education and Care Services National Regulations and the National Quality Framework. Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653) - NSW Legislation

Law/ Reg	Law/ Regulation	Our Response to:
170 (Reg)	Policies and procedures to be followed	Playtime ensures that the Approved Provider takes reasonable steps to ensure nominated supervisors, educators, staff, students and volunteers understand and follow all required policies and procedures through induction, access to current policy documents, ongoing training, supervision and regular review of practice. The Nominated Supervisor monitors compliance and addresses breaches promptly to uphold regulatory, operational and child safety standards.

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		<u>Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653) - NSW Legislation</u>
171 (Reg)	Policies and procedures to be kept available	Playtime ensures that current policies and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff, students and volunteers through electronic systems and service records, with hard copies available upon request. Current policies and procedures are also available for inspection at the service premises at all times the service is operating, or whenever requested by an authorised officer or stakeholder. <u>Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653) - NSW Legislation</u>
172 (Reg)	Notification of change to policies or procedures	Playtime ensures that families are provided with at least 14 days written notice prior to any policy or procedure change that significantly impacts the service's provision of education and care, family access to the service, fees charged, or the way fees are collected. Where an immediate policy change is required to protect the safety, health or wellbeing of a child, families are notified as soon as practicable following implementation. <u>Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653) - NSW Legislation</u>
181 (Reg)	Confidentiality of records kept by Approved Provider	Volunteers must maintain confidentiality regarding all child, family and staff information accessed while participating within the service.. <u>Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653) - NSW Legislation</u>

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National Quality Standard – Governance & Leadership

Quality Area	Standard/Element	Our Response to:
QA 4.2	Standard – Professionalism	Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical
QA 4.2.2	Professional Standards	Professional standards guide how visitor interactions, confidentiality and access to the service are managed respectfully, safely and consistently.
QA 6.2	Collaborative Partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
QA 6.2.2	Access and Participation	Volunteer participation supports inclusive opportunities for families and community members to contribute appropriately within the service while maintaining child safety and clear service expectations.
QA 6.2.3	Community Engagement	Volunteers may strengthen respectful connections between the service and community where participation supports children, families and the service's values.
QA 7.1	Standard - Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service that is child safe.
QA 7.1.2	Management Systems	Management systems support clear visitor sign

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		in procedures, identification where required, communication with staff and secure operational practices that protect children and maintain service safety.
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Quality Area	Standard/Element	Our Response to:
QA 7.1.3	Roles and Responsibilities	Clear roles and responsibilities support consistent visitor procedures, ensuring educators, staff and management understand how visitor access is authorised, monitored and managed within the service
QA7.2	Standard - Leadership	<i>Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.</i>

Guiding Principles

To ensure effective implementation, the following principles guide this Visitor Policy:

- **Child Safety:** The safety and wellbeing of children remains the highest priority during all volunteer participation within the service.

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- **Approved Participation:** Volunteer involvement occurs only where approved by management and where participation supports service operations, community connection or children's learning experiences.
- **Supervision and Accountability:** Volunteers remain under the direction or supervision of an educator, nominated supervisor or responsible person while participating within the service..
- **Confidentiality:** Visitors must respect the privacy of children, families, educators and service operations at all times.
- **Compliance:** Volunteers must maintain confidentiality regarding all child, family, staff and service information at all times.
- **Record Keeping:** Accurate attendance records, identification checks where required, and volunteer documentation are maintained securely to support legal, regulatory and child safe obligations.
- **Partnership and Inclusion:** Playtime values positive volunteer participation that strengthens respectful relationships with families and the wider community.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Volunteer procedures are regularly reviewed to reflect current legislation, best practice and service needs.
- **Professional Conduct:** Volunteers are expected to follow service policies, directions and child safe practices at all times while attending the service.

Related Policies

- Child Protection Reporting Policy
- Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
- Safe use of Digital Technology and Online Environment Policy
- Student Policy
- Tobacco, Vape, Drug, Alcohol Free Environment Policy

Policy Created/ Reviewed

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The policy will be reviewed bi-annually by: Approved provider or delegate, director, employees, children and families.

Key Terms

Term	Meaning	Source
Child protection	The legal and moral responsibility to protect children from abuse, neglect, and harm, including the obligation to report	Education and Care Services National Regulations, Reg. 84;
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	concerns under mandatory reporting requirements.	Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
Child Safe Code of Conduct	A document outlining expected standards of professional behaviour for all adults interacting with children at the service. It supports Playtime's commitment to maintaining a safe and respectful environment.	National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2019)
Direct Supervision	Active oversight by an educator, nominated supervisor or responsible person to ensure volunteers participate safely and within service expectations.	National Quality Framework
Volunteer	A person who participates in approved service activities without payment, including family members or community participants, under educator direction and within service expectations.	Education and Care Services National Regulations, Reg 149
Approved Participation	Volunteer involvement that has been authorised by service management and occurs in accordance with service procedures, child safe expectations and supervision requirements.	Education and Care Services National Law
Working with Children Check (WWCC)	A screening process that assesses a person's suitability to work or volunteer with children. A valid and not-prohibited WWCC (or equivalent clearance) is required before commencing any role that involves contact with children.	Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)

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