

PARTICIPATION OF VOLUNTEERS & STUDENTS ON PRACTICUM PLACEMENTS POLICY



Policy Statement

Little Adventures Early Learning recognises the value of working with both students (including work placement) and volunteers wanting to participate in programs at the Service.

Little Adventures Early Learning is committed to building connections with students and volunteers wanting to develop their professional skills and knowledge in their effort to become Early Childhood Education and Care professionals.

All students and volunteers are required to participate in the Service's Program and comply with all operational policies and procedures to ensure a positive learning environment is maintained.

Strategies and Practices

- The *Participation of Volunteers and Students on Practicum Placements Policy* is available to families upon enrolment and staff upon induction.
- The **Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person** is responsible for ensuring:
 - The Service operates in line with the National Law and Regulations at all times.
 - All students, volunteers and family members who enter the Service are fit and proper to be working with children prior to commencing.
 - The student or volunteer is aware of the placement dates and hours to be worked.
 - An induction and orientation session is conducted for all students and volunteers, including but not limited to, providing a tour of the service, showing emergency exits, staff room and bathroom facilities and explaining operational policies and procedures that need to be adhered to.
 - Students and volunteers sign a confidentiality agreement prior to commencement of their placement.
 - Students and volunteers are made aware of any important information relating to specific children (as required).
 - Students and volunteers are adequately supervised at all times with the health, safety and wellbeing of the children being protected at all times.
 - Students and volunteers are not to be left with the sole supervision of individual children or a group of children. Students and volunteers are not to be included in the educator to child ratio at any time.
 - They are aware of the ethical and regulatory guidelines relating to volunteers and students participating in the Service.
 - They inform families, children and educators when students and volunteers are present at the Service, including the role and the dates they will be present at the Service.
 - They introduce students and volunteers to other educators and families.
 - They provide educators with relevant information relating to the tasks the student is required to complete in the Service as a part of their practicum.
 - Students and volunteers are aware that they must not discuss concerns, issues, complaints or information regarding children's learning and development with parents, guardians and/or visitors.

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- **Educators** are responsible for ensuring they:
 - Are aware of the relevant information surrounding the tasks the student is required to complete in the service as a part of their practicum.
 - Provide guidance throughout each day.
 - Make all students and volunteers feel welcome and valued.
 - Have open communication with students and volunteers.
 - Never put a volunteer or student in a compromising situation that could jeopardise their qualification or put the service in breach.
 - Model high quality professional practices.
 - Comply with the requirements that volunteers and students are adequately supervised at all times and the health, safety and wellbeing of all children at the Service are protected.
 - Comply with the requirements that volunteers and students are not to be left with the sole supervision of individual children or a group of children.
- **Students and Volunteers** are responsible for ensuring they:
 - Show enjoyment and enthusiasm when engaging with the children.
 - Understand and acknowledge the importance of maintaining confidentiality at all times when concerned with the children, families and educators of the Service.
 - Comply with operational policies and procedures, including the Code of Conduct, as well as the National Regulations.
 - Undertake the orientation process and complete required paperwork prior to commencement at the Service.
 - Follow the directions of staff at the service at all times to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.
 - Hold a current approved Working with Children Check (if applicable).
 - Learn about the children through interaction and practical experience.
 - Develop the skills and knowledge needed to care for and educate the children.
 - Discuss any problems they may be experiencing with their supervisor.
 - Never remove a child from direct staff supervision.

Students at & Volunteers at Risk

If educators feel a student is at risk of failing their practicum or a volunteer is deemed unsuitable, the following steps need to be taken:

- The supervisor of the student/volunteer needs to advise the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person of the concerns that have been identified.
- The Nominated Supervisor will arrange for a discussion with the student/volunteer to occur to address the concerns.
- Contact will then be made with the Student's teacher/supervisor, to discuss the concerns.

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Termination of Practicum

A student's practicum or volunteers attendance at the service will be terminated if they:

- Harm a child in their care
- Is under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Fails to notify the Service if they will not be attending the Service
- Does not adhere to start times, finish times and break times
- Is observed using repeated inappropriate behaviour at the Service
- Does not comply with all policies and procedures addressed in the induction and orientation
- Not applying the required level of enthusiasm to complete the practicum placement

References

- *Education and Care Services National Law*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
- Community Early Learning Australia – Sample Policies
- Australian Child Care Alliance NSW - <https://nsw.childcarealliance.org.au/members/policies-required-under-regulation-168>
- Dr Brenda Abbey (*Childcare by Design*)

Policy Review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities, where necessary, as part of the review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.