



# BOURKE AND DISTRICT CHILDREN'S SERVICES

## QUALITY AREA 4: STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

### **POLICY NAME: EMPLOYEE, VOLUNTEER AND STUDENT PROBATION & INDUCTION**

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Our service aims to implement a probation and induction program to ensure employees, volunteers and students are aware of their roles and responsibilities to enable effective performance within their employment. A formal induction program provides an opportunity for new employees, volunteers and students with information regarding service policies, procedures and practices and ensures they have an understanding of the values and organisational culture within our service.

#### **BACKGROUND**

We are committed to ensuring we meet all legislative and regulatory requirements including the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations, Children and Young Persons Act, Fair Work Act and Anti-Discrimination Act. The National Quality Framework states that a comprehensive induction process plays a critical role in creating and maintaining a positive and professional culture. By providing an efficient and effective induction program we aim to ensure employees, volunteers and students have the skills and knowledge to perform their roles confidently.

We are committed to being a child safe Education and Care Service and embeds the National Child Safe Principles. Our robust recruitment, probation and induction processes play a vital role in protecting children from harm.

#### **OVERALL STRATEGIES / HOW WILL IT BE DONE?**

#### **PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

All new employees are subject to a probationary period of six months. A probationary period does not apply to volunteers or students and instead, any agreement that is in place can be terminated by either party at any time. The purpose of a probationary period is for both the employee and service to ensure suitability of the role for the employee. During this time employees will receive advice, training, and guidance to help them become familiar with and competent in, performing the work they have been appointed to do. The appointment is subject to the satisfactory completion of the probationary period which itself is subject to termination during any stage, by either party, upon notice in writing, or by payment in lieu of notice.

During the probationary period an induction program will be initiated with the new employee. This allows the new employee an opportunity to understand the expectations and standard of conduct required to pass the probationary period. Probationary meetings will be scheduled within the first week of employment and at the end of the probationary period and feedback will be provided to the employee regarding performance. The probation meeting is also an opportunity for the new employee to ask any questions or raise any concerns.

The probationary period may be extended at the end of six months if any conduct or performance concerns are identified. If concerns are raised during the probationary period, they will be addressed during the probationary meeting and documented. If a decision to end the employee's employment within the employment period is made, the employee will receive the appropriate notice as per employment contract and receive the termination of employment in writing.

The employee may terminate employment within the probationary period by providing the appropriate notice in writing as per employment contract. The employer may terminate employment within the probationary period by providing the appropriate notice as per employment contract. A termination of employment letter will state the reason of termination, notice period and the date of the employees last day of employment.

Employees, full time and part time, will accrue and are eligible to access paid leave entitlements during the probationary period such as annual leave and sick leave. If an employee does not pass their probation period any unused annual leave entitlements will be paid out. At the end of the probationary period, the Approved Provider or appointed nominee will advise if the employee has successfully completed the probationary period.

#### **INDUCTION**



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Our service is committed to providing a comprehensive induction program to ensure the smooth integration of new employees, students and volunteers. The Approved Provider will assign a nominee to support the new employee, student or volunteer and help them to understand the organisational structure, how decisions are made and communicated and what role they will have in the decision-making process. An induction checklist will be used to support this process, which explains responsibilities of the new employee, student or volunteer to know the policies, procedures and practices within our service and their duty of care obligations to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children.

The Induction process will include relevant information on child safe practices to ensure the safety and well-being of children at the service. This includes:

- Child Safe Standards.
- Code of Conduct.
- Child Protection Policy.
- Child Protection Law.
- Strategies that identify, assess and minimise risks to children.
- Mandatory Reporting duties and procedures.
- The Reportable Conduct Scheme.

On the first day of employment the assigned nominee will ensure the new employee, student or volunteer has completed all relevant paperwork and have a copy of their employment contract and job description (see Recruitment Policy). The induction program will work alongside the probation period (if an employee) and it is expected the induction program will be performed during the six-month probation period.

The new employee, student or volunteer will be partnered with a mentor from the relevant service and feedback and guidance will be given during the probation period to ensure connectivity to the service. Each service also has its own 'in house' checklist in relation to matters that are specific to that particular service and the Nominated Supervisor of the service will work through this checklist with the new employee, student or volunteer, as part of the overall induction process. As part of the 'in house' checklist, the new employee, student or visitor will receive a tour of the service and will be shown the location of the emergency, exits, bathrooms and staff room.

The new employee, student or volunteer will be required to read and become familiar with key service policies and procedures as part of the induction program. The organisation Philosophy, Staff Handbook, Code of Conduct and the Early Childhood Code of Ethics will also be shared. The new employee, student or volunteer is required to ask for clarification from the assigned nominee or mentor if they are unsure of any of the content. During the induction program, new employees, students and volunteers will be advised of any children with a health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition.

All new employees, students or volunteers will be appropriately trained and informed of workplace health and safety policies and procedures before commencing employment, this includes:

- Incident forms and reporting procedures.
- Use of PPE equipment.
- Location of fire safety equipment.
- Emergency and evacuations procedures.
- Location and use of Safety Data Sheets (SDS).
- WorkCover information.
- Security procedures.
- Location of First Aid kits.



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As part of the induction program, the assigned nominee will inform the new employee, student or volunteer of the location of the below documents (BDCS Padlet) and will be able available to answer any questions and provide clarity regarding their content, if necessary:

- Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations.
- The National Quality Standard.
- BDCS Policies.
- Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework.
- Early Childhood Australia- Code of Ethics.
- National Principles Child Safe Organisations - Child Safe Standards.
- Reportable Conduct Scheme.
- Mandatory Reporter Guide.
- Employee Handbook.

#### **SCHOOL BASED TRAINEES**

Our service employs school-based trainees to work towards their Early Childhood Education and Care qualification whilst still attending High School. The Nominated Supervisor, a supervisor from the High School and an assessor from the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) will meet periodically to discuss the progress that the trainee is making and any potential concerns.

#### **STUDENTS AND VISTORS**

Our service supports the participation of students and voluntary workers and endeavours to support them to develop professional skills and knowledge to assist them with their future endeavours. To ensure a professional and pleasurable experience, we will provide a range of opportunities for 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. At no time will a child or children ever be left alone with a student or volunteer.

While on placement at our service, students and visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Learn about the children through interaction and practical experience.
- Develop the skills and knowledge needed to care for and educate children.
- Learn about the importance of working as part of a team in the Early Childhood profession.
- Learn strategies for working in a team environment.
- Work a variety of shifts to gain knowledge of different aspects of service operation.

The termination of a student or volunteer placement can occur if the student or volunteer:

- Is unable to maintain or hold a current Working With Children Check (if age appropriate).
- Termination can occur if the student or volunteer:
- Harms or is at risk of harming a child at the service.
- Removes any child or children from the direct supervision of an educator.
- Is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Fails to notify the service if they will not be attending.
- Does not adhere to the correct start times or break times.
- Is observed using repeated inappropriate behaviour at the service.
- Does not comply with all policies and procedures.

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

APPROVED PROVIDER AND NOMINATED SUPERVISORS WILL:

- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Ensure educators (including casual staff) receive information and induction training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of the Employee, Volunteer and Student Probation and Induction Policy, their



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responsibilities in implementing it, and any changes that are made over time.

- Ensure students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy.
- Ensure all relevant documentation as outlined in this policy is completed.
- Ensure volunteers and students are suitably supervised at all times and are never left alone with children.
- Ensure the staff, student and volunteer record is kept up to date as per the Record Keeping and Retention Policy.
- Ensure appropriate mentors are appointed to support new employees, students and volunteers.

#### INDUCTORS AND MENTORS WILL:

- Ensure all relevant documentation, including the New Employee Induction Checklist, is completed and kept up-to-date.
- Ensure all new employees, students and volunteers are aware of where they can find all documentation listed in this policy that they are required to be familiar with.
- Ensure a thorough understanding of Child Protection responsibilities
- Ensure adequate supervision is provided to new employees.
- Ensure students and volunteers are aware of what they are not allowed to do due to not being an employee.
- Provide feedback in a constructive and timely manner.
- Give guidance and direction on how to undertake certain tasks and procedures.

#### EDUCATORS WILL:

- Ensure new employees, students or volunteers are made to feel welcome at the service
- Act as role models to all new employees, students or volunteers.
- Where possible, provide support to new employees, students or volunteers to assist them in their role.

#### NEW EMPLOYEES, STUDENTS OR VOLUNTEERS WILL:

- Ask their Inductor or Mentor for clarification on anything that they do not understand.
- Students and volunteers will understand that as they are not employees, they:
  - Are unable to be counted in ratio.
  - Are unable to be left alone with children.
  - Are unable to perform certain tasks (e.g. nappy changing) as detailed in their induction.

#### CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our Employee Probation and Induction Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators, and management.

#### CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Standard 1	Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture
Standard 5	People working with children are suitable and supported
Standard 7	Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training
Standard 10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe.

#### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

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4.1	Staffing arrangements	Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development.
4.1.1	Organisation of educators	The organisation of educators across the service supports children's learning and development.
4.1.2	Continuity of staff	Every effort is made for children to experience continuity of educators at the service.
4.2	Professionalism	Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical.
4.2.1	Professional collaboration	Management, educators and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills.



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4.2.2 Professional standards Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.

#### QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

5.1.1 Positive educator to child interactions Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.

#### QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

7.1.3 Roles and Responsibilities Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood and support effective decision making and operation of the service.

7.2.3 Development of professionals Educators, co-ordinators and staff members' performance is regularly evaluated, and individual plans are in place to support learning and development.

#### EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS AND NATIONAL LAW

4 Definitions

84 Awareness of child protection law

90 Medical conditions policy

Part 4.4 Staffing arrangements

Division 7 Approval and determination of qualifications

Division 9 Staff educator records – centre based services

#### STATUTORY LEGISLATION & CONSIDERATIONS

[A New Tax System \(Family Assistance\) Act 1999](#)

[Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998](#)

[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 \(Amended 2023\)](#)

[Education and Care Services National Regulations \(Amended 2023\)](#)

[Fair Work Act 2009](#)

[Family Law Act 1975](#)

[NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977](#)

[Sex Discrimination Act 1984](#)

[Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)

#### SOURCES

Acknowledgement to Community Early Learning Australia and Childcare Centre Desktop.

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). (2014).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). (2023). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).

Australian Government Department of Education. (2022). [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia](#). V2.0, 2022.

Australian Government. Fair Work Ombudsman. (2020). Hiring employees <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/small-business/hiring-employees>.

Australian Human Rights Commission. Child Safe Organisations. <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/childrens-rights/projects/child-safe-organisations>

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017). (Amended 2023).

Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2023).

Revised National Quality Standard. (Amended 2023).

#### RELATED POLICIES

- Child Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy



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#### RELATED DOCUMENTS

Code of Conduct

New Employee Documentation Checklist

New Employee Induction Checklist

Staff Handbook

POLICY AUTHORISED BY	Prue Ritchie	POLICY REVIEWED	August 2024
NEXT REVIEW DATE	August 2025		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New policy format</li> <li>• Child Safe Standards added</li> <li>• Regulation amendments incorporated</li> <li>• Renamed policy (was previously 'Induction of Staff, Volunteers and Students')</li> <li>• Added Probationary Period, School Based Trainees and Students and Visitors sections</li> </ul>		
PREVIOUS REVIEW			
POLICY AUTHORISED BY	Prue Ritchie	DATE	January 2021