

Early Learning Staffing Policy

Overarching Statement

The *Keeping Children Safe Policy* of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania (refer to *Sources*) is the overarching whole of church policy to be implemented by individuals and entities involved with or connected to the Uniting Church. All children who are involved in any of the Church's activities, events or programs have a right to feel and be safe. The Church is committed to provide safe environments where children are cared for, respected, nurtured and sustained.

Policy Statement

Uniting Early Learning is committed to:

- staffing arrangements that enhance children's learning and development and ensure their health, safety and wellbeing;
- fulfilling a duty of care to all children attending the service, including active supervision at all times;
- providing accountable and effective staffing and management practices;
- employing educators with a range of relevant qualifications and experience to provide a quality educational program that meets the needs of children and families in the community;
- employing educators according to legislative, policy and funding requirements;
- complying with current legislation in relation to the employment of staff, including the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, Fair Work Act 2009 and the Working with Children Act 2005.

Executive Summary

The presence of adequate numbers of qualified and experienced educators has been consistently linked with quality interactions and positive learning experiences for children.

Legislation requires that services maintain the required educator-to-child ratios at all times based on: the ages and number of children being educated and cared for at the service setting. An educator cannot be included in calculating the educator-to-child ratio unless they are working directly with children. Working directly with children means an educator is physically present with the children and is directly engaged in providing education and care to children.

Adults working with children and those engaged in management of the service or residing on the premises will be required to be assessed as fit and proper to fulfil their role. It is important to ensure that all children are educated and cared for by educators that are suitable and have the experience, judgment and maturity to deal with situations that may arise at a service. Professional standards will guide educator's behaviour (refer to the *Code of Conduct Policy*), practice, interactions and relationships. Rosters will be planned to ensure that educators are always available to respond to children and to support the continuity of care and supervision requirements at all times.

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Educators and staff will be employed with qualifications and experience that meet legislative, policy and service standards, and include Working with Children, criminal history record checks and for early childhood teachers, registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. A responsible person will be present at all times the education and care service is operating. As a demonstration of duty of care and best practice, all UnitingCare Early Childhood Services educators are required to have current approved first aid qualifications, anaphylaxis management training and emergency asthma management training.

Accurate staff/volunteer/student records will be kept, maintained and regularly updated. Staff will be provided a position description, induction, professional development opportunities and engage in annual performance reviews to ensure currency of skills and knowledge. Processes and systems will be in place to monitor staff's performance on an on-going basis by their manager, to enable regular feedback and support.

Current Environmental Context

A current list of approved qualifications is available on the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) website. Applications can also be made to ACECQA to determine if other qualifications (such as those gained overseas) entitle the individual to work as an early childhood teacher, diploma-level educator or certificate III level educator. Application forms are available on the ACECQA website and a fee is required for processing an application.

All volunteers and students are required to have a current criminal history record check and maintain a Working with Children check.

Attachment 12a - Responsibilities relating to the Staffing Policy

Form 12.1 – Induction Checklist (Employee)

Form 12.2 – Training Register

Reference/Sources

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

Keeping Children Safe Policy of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, Approved June 2015:

<https://www.victas.uca.org.au/UCA%20Resources/Documents/Keeping%20Children%20Safe%20Policy.pdf>

<i>Administration of First Aid Policy</i>	<i>Anaphylaxis Policy</i>
<i>Asthma Policy</i>	<i>Child Safe Policy</i>
<i>Code of Conduct Policy</i>	<i>Complaints and Grievances Policy</i>
<i>Delivery and Collection of Children Policy</i>	<i>Determining Responsible Person Policy</i>
<i>Educational Program and Practice Policy</i>	<i>Excursions, Regular Outings and Service Events Policy</i>
<i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>	<i>Interactions with Children Policy</i>
<i>Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy</i>	<i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i>
<i>Supervision of Children Policy</i>	

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- Children’s Services Act 1996: S25, 29A, 30
- Children’s Services Regulations 2009: r38, 50-63
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 12, 13, 14, 161, 162, 165, 169
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 14, 15, 16, 46, 47, 48, 49, 83, 84, 118, 120, 121–123, 125–126, 129–135, 136, 137–143, 145–152, 355, 357, 358, 360–364
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) (amended in 2014)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Fair Work Act 2009
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
- *Staffing Arrangements* Fact Sheet Department of Education and Training 2016 (Vic)
- Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)
- Working with Children Regulations 2006 (Vic)
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/edcare/pages/profresource.aspx>
- Working with Children Check unit, Department of Justice: www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren/
- Victoria Police – National Police Record Check: www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document_ID=274

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by Uniting Early Learning: 11th May 2017

Review

This policy is to be reviewed by: 11th June 2018

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Attachment 12a - Responsibilities relating to the Staffing Policy

National Regulations & Act

AP=Approved Provider

NS=Nominated Supervisor

CS=Certified Supervisor

Victorian Regulations & Act

L=Licensee

PN=Primary Nominee

N=Nominee

Action	Approved Provider/ Licensee	NS & PN	CS, Nominee Educators	Parents,
Ensure relevant services have a service supervisor certificate (refer to <i>Glossary</i>)	x			
Ensure that the service does not operate without a Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person on the premises at all times	x	x		
Ensure that all staff comply with the <i>Code of Conduct Policy</i> at all times	x	x		
Ensure that children attending the service are adequately supervised at all times they are in the care of the service	x	x	x	
Comply with the legislated educator-to-child ratios at all times	x	x	x	
Ensure that all staffing meets all legislative and funding requirements at all times the service is in operation	x	x		
Comply with current legislation relating to the employment of staff, including the <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i> , <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i> and the <i>Working with Children Act 2005</i>	x			
Employ the relevant number of appropriately-qualified educators with qualifications approved by ACECQA	x	x		
Employ additional staff, as required, to provide a quality early childhood education and care program	x			
When required by legislation, ensure an Early childhood teacher is working with the service for the required period of time specified, and that a record is kept of this work	x	x		
At relevant services, appoint an appropriately-qualified and experienced educator to be the Educational Leader, and ensure this is documented on the staff record	x	x		
Ensure that educators and all staff are provided with a current position description that relates to their role at the service	x			
Maintain a staff record in that complies with legislative requirements	x	x		
Comply with the requirements of the <i>Working with Children Act 2005</i> , and ensure that all educators, staff, volunteers and students on placement at the service have a current Working with Children Check or a Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) certificate of registration	x	x		
Ensure that the <i>Working with Children Check</i> or <i>VIT</i> registration have been sighted and the details kept on each staff record	x	x		
Complete a fit-and-proper assessment in accordance with national and state legislation.	x			
Determine who will cover the costs of <i>Working with Children Checks</i> or criminal history record checks	x			

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Action	Approved Provider/ Licensee	NS & PN	CS, Nominee Educators	Parents,
Develop (and implement where relevant) an appropriate induction program for educators and all staff appointed to the service	x	x		
Educators participate in and support other staff through induction process		x	x	
Ensure that volunteers/students, support staff and parents 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	x	x	x	
Ensure educators who are under 18 years of age are not left to work alone, and are adequately supervised at the service	x	x	x	
Ensure that all educators with current approved first aid qualifications, anaphylaxis management training and emergency asthma management training in attendance are immediately available at all times that children attend the service. Details of qualifications and training must be kept on the staff record	x	x		
Develop procedures to ensure that approved first aid qualifications, anaphylaxis management training and emergency asthma management training are evaluated regularly, and that staff are provided with the opportunity to update their qualifications prior to expiry	x	x		
Ensure that records of staff, educators working directly with children, volunteers and support staff, are updated annually, as new information is provided or when rostered hours of work are changed	x	x		
Ensure staff are provided with regular opportunities for formal feedback and support	x			
Ensure that annual performance reviews of educators and other staff are undertaken	x	x		
Review staff qualifications as required under current legislation and funding requirements on an annual basis	x	x		
Ensure that the educators, staff, volunteers and students on placement are fit for work at the service, and are not affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication) that would impair their capacity to supervise or provide education and care to children	x	x	x	
Ensure that all educators and staff have opportunities to undertake professional development relevant to their role to keep their knowledge and expertise current	x	x		
Ensure that the Nominated Supervisor, Primary Nominee, early childhood teachers, educators, staff and volunteers are advised of and aware of current child protection laws and any obligations that they may have under these laws	x			
Inform parents of the name/s of casual or relief educators/staff where the regular educator/staff is absent	x	x	x	
Develop and maintain a list of casual and relief staff to ensure consistency of service provision	x	x		

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Action	Approved Provider/ Licensee	NS & PN	CS, Nominee Educators	Parents,
Ensure that the procedures for the appointment of casual and relief staff are compliant with all regulatory and funding requirements	x			
Provide written consent to accept the role of Nominated Supervisor/ Certified Supervisor and Educational Leader		x	x	
Ensure that the name and position of the Responsible Person in charge of the service is displayed and easily visible from the main entrance of the service		x	x	
Comply with the service's <i>Code of Conduct Policy</i> at all times	x	x	x	x
Ensure educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times, that each educator at the service meets the qualification requirements relevant to their role, including the requirement for current approved first aid qualifications, anaphylaxis management training and emergency asthma management training, and that details of such training are kept on the staff record		x	x	
Develop rosters in accordance with the availability of Responsible Persons, staff qualifications, hours of operation and the attendance patterns of children		x		
Ensure that less experienced educators and others working with children are adequately supervised		x	x	
Provide details of your current <i>Working with Children</i> registration for the staff record		x	x	
Sight and record details of current <i>Working with Children Checks</i> or VIT registrations before staff commence at the service		x		
Ensure that you are fit for work and not affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication) that would impair your capacity to supervise or provide education and care to children		x	x	
Ensure that you are aware of the <i>Child Safe Standards</i> , current child protection laws and any obligations that you may have under these laws	x	x	x	
Inform the Nominated Supervisor in the event of absence from the service due to leave or illness so they can be replaced by another Responsible Person (Certified Supervisor only)			X	
Renew <i>Working with Children Check</i> assessment every five years			x	
Advise the Department of Justice of any relevant change in circumstances, including change of name, address, contact details and change of employer/ volunteer organisation, including changes to the organisation's contact details		x	x	
Supervise volunteers/students, support staff and parents at all times to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service		x	x	
Maintain educator-to-child ratios at all times		x	x	
Maintain current approved qualifications relevant to your role, including first aid qualifications, anaphylaxis management training and emergency asthma management training		x	x	
In collaboration with the Nominated Supervisor/Primary Nominee, initiate and undertake		x	x	

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Action	Approved Provider/ Licensee	NS & PN	CS, Nominee Educators	Parents,
professional development training relevant to your role				
Participate in performance development reviews		x	x	
Maintain currency in professional knowledge		x	x	
Follow the directions of staff at the service at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected				x

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