

Child Safe Recruitment and Selection Policy & Procedure

Staff policy

Date Reviewed:

February 24, 2026

Regulation:

84, 146, 147, 168(2)(i)

Standards:

2,4,7

Aim

Woden Valley Early Learning Centre (WVELC) is committed to providing a fair, ethical, transparent, and child-safe recruitment process for the selection of all educators, staff, students, and volunteers.

Our recruitment procedures are designed to ensure that:

- All employees are suitable for working with children.
- Mandatory regulatory requirements are met in full.
- Child safeguarding is embedded in all stages of recruitment.
- WVELC's values of safety, inclusion, and excellence in early education are upheld.

This policy aligns with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012, the Child Safe Standards, and WVELC's Child Safety Commitment Statement.

From **27 February 2026**, WVELC also applies the strengthened National Quality Framework child safety reforms, including mandatory child safety training, strengthened WWVP requirements, and workforce register obligations.

Procedure

1. Advertising & Expression of Interest

- Recruitment opportunities will be advertised through reputable platforms such as Seek.com.au, Facebook, and early childhood professional networks.
- All advertisements will include:
 - Key selection criteria.

- Mandatory requirements (e.g., Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) registration, ACECQA-approved qualifications).
- A clear statement of WVELC's commitment to child safeguarding and adherence to the Child Safe Standards.
- A statement that applicants must be eligible to meet all **new child safety requirements**, including mandatory national child safety training and workforce register requirements.
- Interested applicants will submit an Expression of Interest via email or phone to the Director.

2. Initial Screening

- All applications will be screened against key selection criteria by the Director.
- Applicants who fail to meet essential criteria (e.g., relevant qualifications, current WWVP clearance) will not proceed further.
- Any inconsistencies, unexplained employment gaps, or concerns relating to child safety will be clarified before moving forward.
- WVELC will confirm that shortlisted applicants understand that:
 - they must hold a **valid WWVP clearance before commencing work**; and
 - they must be able to comply with mandatory child safety training and other child safety obligations under the National Law.

3. Interview Process

- Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an in-person interview at WVELC.
- Interviews will be conducted by the Director and at least one Pedagogical Leader and/or a Bachelor-qualified Early Childhood Teacher.
- Child-safeguarding questions will be included to assess:
 - Knowledge of child protection responsibilities and mandatory reporting.
 - Ethical behaviour, boundaries, and professional conduct when working with children and families.
 - Understanding of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
 - Understanding of new child safety reforms (including device restrictions, WWVP obligations, and mandatory training expectations).

4. Reference & Background Checks

- At least two professional references (preferably previous employers in early childhood education or related fields) will be contacted.
- Referees will be specifically asked about the applicant's:
 - Suitability to work with children.
 - Ethical conduct and professional boundaries.
 - Any past concerns, allegations, or disciplinary actions.
- Applicants must hold a current **WWVP clearance**, which will be independently verified before employment.
- **Applicants must present their physical WWVP card** before they are permitted to work directly with children, and WVELC will sight and record the details in staff records. (In the ACT, educators are required to always carry their WWVP card while educating and caring for children.)
- Where appropriate, additional checks will be completed (e.g., verifying qualifications, right-to-work, identity checks).

5. Potential Red Flags

During the recruitment process, WVELC will remain alert to behaviours or patterns that may indicate an applicant is unsuitable to work with children. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Refusal or unwillingness to provide professional references.
- Inconsistencies or dishonesty in application materials, interviews, or reference checks.
- Frequent job changes or a history of short employment periods without reasonable explanation.
- Sudden or unexplained career changes that raise concerns about motivation or suitability.
- Reluctance to discuss child safety, safeguarding responsibilities, or professional boundaries.
- Concerning behaviours or attitudes displayed during interviews (e.g., minimising child protection responsibilities, inappropriate comments about children, or defensiveness when discussing ethical dilemmas).
- Reluctance to comply with mandatory regulatory obligations such as WWVP verification, mandatory training, or safe device use requirements.

Where such concerns arise, the applicant's suitability will be carefully reconsidered, and the recruitment process may be discontinued.

6. Child Safeguarding Declarations

All applicants will be required to sign a Child Safeguarding Declaration, confirming that they:

- Understand their obligations as mandated reporters.
- Will comply with WVELC's Child Safety Commitment Statement, Child Protection Policy, and Code of Conduct.
- Have no criminal history or substantiated allegations relating to child abuse or neglect.
- Commit to upholding the Child Safe Standards in all aspects of their work.
- Will maintain a valid WWVP clearance and notify WVELC immediately of any change to WWVP status.
- Will complete all required mandatory child safety and child protection training within required timeframes.

7. Decision & Notification

- The Director will review interview outcomes, safeguarding responses, and reference checks to determine the most suitable applicant.
- The successful applicant will be notified in writing and provided with a Letter of Offer outlining employment terms and conditions.
- The Letter of Offer will state that commencement is conditional on completion of all mandatory pre-commencement requirements, including:
 - valid WWVP clearance,
 - presentation of the physical WWVP card,
 - identity/qualification checks,
 - required declarations, and
 - registration/readiness for mandatory national child safety training in Gecco.
- All unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing that their application has not been successful.

8. Orientation & Induction

- Before commencing employment, all new staff will complete a comprehensive induction program, including:
 - WVELC's philosophy, policies, and procedures.
 - Mandatory reporting and child safeguarding training.
 - Code of Conduct expectations, including professional boundaries.

- Emergency and evacuation procedures.
- Digital device and image-use requirements (including prohibition on personal device use while working directly with children, except where lawfully authorised).
- New educators must read and sign the Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy before starting work.
- WVELC will ensure new workers are set up with an individual **Geccko account** (personal email address) so mandatory national child safety training can be completed and tracked.
- WVELC will record and maintain required workforce details for the **National Early Childhood Worker Register** in line with approved provider obligations. (Staff do not self-register; the approved provider enters and maintains the required information.)

9. Ongoing Safeguarding

- Staff will engage in ongoing professional development on child safety, ethical practice, and safeguarding responsibilities.
- Refresher training on mandatory reporting and professional boundaries will occur annually.
- WVELC will ensure all required staff, volunteers and students complete **mandatory national child safety training** and **mandatory child protection training** within prescribed timeframes.
- WVELC will maintain up-to-date workforce records, including WWVP details, and meet approved provider obligations for the National Early Childhood Worker Register (including updates when workers commence or details change).
- Staff must notify WVELC immediately of any changes to their WWVP status. WVELC must notify the Regulatory Authority where required.
- Concerns about staff conduct will be managed immediately, in line with the Complaints and Disciplinary Policy and relevant child protection laws.

10. Rejection of Applications

- At any stage, if an applicant does not meet WVELC's child safety criteria or demonstrates unsuitable conduct, their application will be declined.
- This includes failure or refusal to:
 - provide required evidence of qualifications/identity,
 - hold and present a valid WWVP clearance/card,
 - comply with mandatory safeguarding declarations, or
 - meet mandatory child safety training and regulatory requirements.
- Applicants deemed unsuitable will be notified in writing.

Why This Matters

Recruitment at WVELC is more than filling a position — it is about protecting children, upholding ethical standards, and building a safe and high-quality educational environment.

By embedding safeguarding into every step of recruitment, WVELC ensures that:

- Only qualified, ethical, and child-safe educators work with children.
- Risks to children are minimised through thorough vetting and clear expectations.
- The rights and wellbeing of children remain at the centre of all staffing decisions.
- WVELC meets strengthened child safety obligations under the National Law, including the requirement that children's safety, rights and best interests are the paramount consideration

Related Documents / References

- Code of Conduct
- Child Protection Policy
- Child Safety Commitment Statement
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012
- Child Safe Standards (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2019)
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (COAG, 2019)

Created:	Reviewed by:	Last reviewed:	Next review:
25/10/2018	Paulina Jagus	24/02/2026	2027

Employee code of conduct

Date Reviewed:

August 20, 2025

Regulation:

168(2)(i)

Standards:

4.2, 7

Aim

This Code of Conduct sets out the professional standards, ethical principles, and expectations of behavior for all employees, students, volunteers, and contractors at Woden Valley Early Learning Centre (WVELC).

At WVELC, the protection, safety, and wellbeing of children is paramount. Every individual engaged with our service is expected to act in a manner that upholds the Child Safe Standards, the WVELC Child Safety Commitment Statement, and the Child Safety Code of Conduct at all times.

Staff and associated personnel must demonstrate fairness, integrity, and professionalism in every interaction, and remain accountable for their decisions and actions. Compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and service policies is mandatory.

Responsibilities

(a) In relation to children and families:

- Place the health, safety, and wellbeing of all children above all else.
- Act in the best interests of children at all times, ensuring they feel safe, respected, and heard.
- Treat every child with dignity, respect, and courtesy, recognising their unique strengths, cultural identity, and individual rights.
- Promote inclusivity and celebrate diversity, ensuring equitable participation for children of all backgrounds and abilities.
- Respect parents and carers as the primary caregivers, supporting their role and valuing their knowledge of their child.
- Develop and maintain strong, honest, and respectful partnerships with families, grounded in trust and collaboration.
- Uphold children's right to safety and actively educate them about their rights and protective practices in line with our child-friendly safeguarding policy.

(b) In relation to the service and colleagues:

- Recognise and respect the professional strengths and contributions of each team member.
- Foster a culture of collaboration by sharing knowledge, resources, and expertise.
- Encourage democratic, respectful, and inclusive decision-making.
- Support professional growth and learning opportunities for staff and educators.
- Adhere to all WVELC policies, procedures, and Constitution.
- Maintain strict confidentiality of personal and organisational information.
- Refrain from providing false, misleading, or incomplete information.
- Actively contribute to a safe, harmonious, non-discriminatory, and child-safe workplace.
- Uphold the service's values and promote its positive reputation in the community.

Technology Usage

- Mobile phones must not be used in rooms or corridors. Calls may only be taken outside or in the office.
- Personal use (e.g., texts, checking notifications) is permitted in the staff room only and must not disturb others.
- Computers are strictly for professional programming and documentation purposes. Personal browsing, including social media or emails, is prohibited.

Commitment to Child Safety

By adhering to this Code of Conduct, all WVELC personnel affirm their responsibility to:

- Actively uphold the Child Safe Standards.
- Embed the principles of our Child Safety Commitment Statement in everyday practice.
- Abide by the Child Safety Code of Conduct, ensuring children are always protected from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Create and maintain environments where children feel safe, included, respected, and empowered to speak up.

Fit and Proper Person Policy

Date Reviewed:

June 11, 2025

Regulation:

168

Standards:

4, 7

Aim:

To ensure the ongoing wellbeing, safety, education and care of children within WVELC is maintained through an ongoing assessment process that determines if a person is fit and proper to be in the company of children.

Policy:

The Education and Care Services National Regulations states that educators and staff must be fit and proper to care for or/and be in the company of children.

A person is deemed '*fit and proper*' if:

- The person is capable of providing adequate standard of care and education in accordance with the person's actual or processed role
- Understands the needs of children, families and is capable of performing the professional duties of the position
- The person is of good character and is suitable to be entrusted with the care of children.

The educator providing education and care in approved Centre Based Care will:

- Notify service of any reasons he/she may not be considered as 'fit and proper'
- Ensure that he/she possess or obtain Working with Vulnerable People [WWVP] Check/Card
- Notify the service in writing within 24 hours of any change of circumstances to their WWVP check

Fit and Proper evidence requirements:

Checks made of all persons with:	ASIC Person	Bankruptcy/ Insolvency	National Criminal History	WWVP Check
Management or control of a provider	x	x	x	x

Day-to day operational responsibility of a service	x	x
Educators		x

RELATED DOCUMENTS / REFERENCES:

- Staffing Policy
- Education and Care Services National Regulations, 2012

Woden Valley Child Care Centre Association Incorporated

Leave and Attendance Policy & Procedure

Date Reviewed:

August 20, 2025

Regulation:

Privacy Act 1988

Children Services Award

Standards:

4, 7

Aim

Timely attendance is a critical aspect of every position at Woden Valley Early Learning Centre (WVELC). To ensure operational efficiency, adequate staff coverage, and child safety, employees must follow clear processes for requesting leave and notifying the service of both scheduled and unscheduled absences.

This procedure outlines expectations for attendance, leave requests, and call-in procedures. It must be read in conjunction with all relevant WVELC policies, procedures, and agreements, and does not supersede regulatory directives or the National Employment Standards (NES).

General Expectations

- Employees are expected to work their full, approved schedule as directed, report to work on time each day, and be ready to commence duties at the start of each shift.
- Routine medical or personal appointments should be scheduled outside work hours wherever possible, or at times that minimise disruption to service operations.
- Lunch and approved breaks cannot be accumulated, combined, or used to shorten the workday.

Scheduled Leave Requests

- Requests to modify schedules (e.g., extending breaks, adjusting hours, or taking leave) must be submitted to and approved by the Director in advance.
- **Annual leave requests must be lodged at least two (2) weeks prior to the desired leave dates.** Requests submitted with less than two weeks' notice may not be accommodated due to operational requirements.
- **Only one employee per room** may take leave at the same time. Approval will be subject to service needs.

- Leave may only be taken once written approval has been received. It is the employee's responsibility to follow up if no response is received.
- Approval of leave remains at the discretion of the Director, subject to operational needs and staffing levels.

Unscheduled Absences

- Employees must notify the service of unscheduled absences (e.g., sickness, emergencies, lateness) in accordance with the following procedure:
 - Call at least **2 hours prior** to the scheduled start time.
 - Speak to a live person whenever possible. If the immediate supervisor is unavailable, leave a message with a contact number and continue to call the Director, alternate supervisor, or Team Leader until direct contact is made.
 - For absences longer than one day, employees must follow the call-in procedure **each day before 4:00pm**, unless medical documentation specifies the expected duration of absence.
- Failure to follow the call-in procedure may result in the absence being deemed **unauthorized leave without pay** and may lead to disciplinary action.

Sick Leave / Personal Carer's Leave

- Employees (excluding casuals) are entitled to paid personal/carer's leave in line with the NES. This may be used when:
 - The employee is unfit for work due to illness or injury.
 - The employee needs to care for or support a member of their immediate family or household who is ill, injured, or experiencing an unexpected emergency.
- Entitlements:
 - Full-time employees: 10 days per year.
 - Part-time employees: pro rata of 10 days per year.

Evidence and Medical Certificates

Medical certificates or other acceptable evidence are **always required** when:

- The absence occurs on a **Monday or Friday**.

- The absence occurs **immediately before or after annual leave**.
- The absence occurs **immediately before or after a public holiday**.
- The absence is for **more than one day**.
- The certificate is specifically requested by management due to ongoing concerns, patterns of absence, or trust issues.

Failure to provide evidence in these situations may result in leave being deemed unauthorized.

Substitution of Leave

- **Sick leave cannot be retrospectively swapped for annual leave** unless this has been requested by the employee and approved in writing by the Director prior to the absence.

Leave Verification

- WVELC reserves the right to request medical verification of any personal leave to ensure compliance with the NES.
- Evidence must be sufficient to satisfy a reasonable person that the employee was not fit for duty.
- All private and sensitive information provided is protected under the Privacy Act 1988.
- In cases where annual leave requests have been denied and sick leave is subsequently taken for the same dates; medical certification will always be required.
- WVELC permits up to 3 undocumented sick leave days per year. Beyond this, or when evidence is requested and not provided, leave may be deemed unauthorized.

Disciplinary Action

WVELC makes every effort to accommodate leave requests submitted in line with policy. However, employees are expected to use leave responsibly and professionally. **Excessive absences, misuse of leave entitlements, or failure to comply with reporting requirements will not be tolerated.**

Disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, may occur in cases such as:

- Failure to follow the call-in procedure.
- Failure to report for scheduled shifts.
- Repeated or unexplained tardiness.

- Unauthorised absences.
- Falsifying timesheets, medical certificates, or other leave documentation.
- Ongoing patterns of concerning absences.
- Accumulating **30 days of leave without pay (LWP)** or undocumented leave within a 12-month period.

Parental Leave Policy

Date Reviewed:

June 11, 2025

Regulation:

n/a

Standards:

4.1, 7.3

Aim:

To ensure the correct procedure is followed when an educator or staff member wishes to take paid and/or unpaid parental leave.

Parental Leave:

- Full-time and part-time employees can take twelve (12) months of unpaid parental leave if they have worked continuously for twelve (12) months prior to the birth or adoption of a child.
- To apply for parental leave, the employee must give written notice at least ten (10) weeks before the leave is to start, and specify the start and end dates of their parental leave.
- The employee must confirm leave dates with their employer at least four (4) weeks before they go on parental leave. If an employee needs to make any changes to their leave dates prior to commencing leave, they should inform their employer as soon as possible.
- From the 1 July 2016, staff may be entitled up to eighteen (18) weeks Paid Parental Leave. You can receive up to eighteen (18) weeks of *Parental Leave Pay* at the National Minimum Wage. You may be eligible for *Parental Leave Pay* if you:
 - Are the primary carer of a newborn or recently adopted child.
 - Meet Australian residency requirements.
 - Have received an income of less than \$150,000 in the financial year before the birth or adoption date.
 - Are on leave or not working from the time you become the child's primary carer until the end of the Paid Parental Leave period; and
 - Have met the work test (for more information about the work test please refer to the Department of Human Resources website).
- Claims for Parental Leave Pay can be lodged up to three (3) months before expected date of birth or adoption of your child.
- Your Parental Leave Pay can start from the day your child is born or adopted, or a later date. It must be fully paid within fifty-two (52) weeks from the date of birth or adoption.

- To be eligible for the full eighteen (18) weeks of Parental Leave Pay, the nominated start date for your Parental Leave Pay needs to be within thirty four (34) weeks of the birth or adoption of your child.
- If eligible, the staff member must nominate when they would like the payments to begin. The Director/Nominated Supervisor is to record this on the Paid Parental Leave form.
- The Director/Nominated Supervisor is to complete a Paid Parental Leave form for the employee and send it to payroll to be processed.
- Visit the Department of Human Services website to determine eligibility and submit the relevant forms associated with Paid Parental Leave.
- The Service requires fitness to work certificate at 34 weeks and 38 weeks if the educator wishes to continue work.
- Subject to sub-clause 25.9, an employee is entitled on his or her return to work to the position which he or she held immediately before commencing parental leave.
- If the educator wishes to return to work into a different position (e.g. team leader to assistant, etc.) and different hours, the Service have a right to re-negotiate the employee's contract.
- Where an employee's position no longer exists but there are other vacant positions which the employee is qualified for and is capable of performing, the Employee is entitled to a vacant position as nearly comparable in status and pay to that of their former position.

Enterprise Agreement rules (non-official):

Service is currently not bounded by enterprise agreement however honors previous arrangements, which states that:

After 12 months of confines service, employees are entitled to:

- 6 weeks paid parental leave which may be taken over a period of 12 weeks at half pay;
- Parental leave may be taken during the period commencing 6 weeks before the expected date of birth of the child and up to 12 months after the actual birth.

Performance Management and Termination Policy

Date Reviewed:

August 20, 2025

Regulation:

Standards:

4.2, 7.2, 7.1

Aim:

- Ensure professionalism, lawful conduct, and respectful behaviour toward colleagues, families and children at all times.
- Ensure educators and staff understand the importance of delivering outcomes in line with their role, responsibilities, and the operational needs of the Service.

General information

Termination of employment is a serious decision and is not made lightly. However, Woden Valley Early Learning Centre (WVELC) reserves the right to take disciplinary action, including termination of employment, where there is a valid reason.

Valid reasons may include, but are not limited to:

- a) Unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet the inherent requirements of the role;
- b) Improper conduct, inappropriate behaviour, or repeated failure to comply with lawful and reasonable directions;
- c) Operational changes, redundancy, or restructuring resulting in the role no longer being required or the employee no longer being suitable for the revised role;
- d) Serious misconduct, or a serious breach of the Education and Care Services National Law, National Regulations, Centre policies, or child safety obligations;
- e) Revocation, suspension, or loss of a valid WWVP registration, or where the employee is otherwise not suitable to work in the presence of children or young people;
- f) Unsuccessful completion of probation;
- g) Any conduct that places children, families, colleagues, or the Service at risk (including reputational risk, compliance risk, or safety risk).

Other conduct that may constitute misconduct includes (but is not limited to): offensive or abusive language, repeated lateness, failure to follow policies and procedures, refusal to follow reasonable and lawful management directions, repeated failure to meet deadlines, breaches of confidentiality, inappropriate use of personal devices, or any form of abuse, intimidation, or harassment.

WVELC may also receive and act on directions or compliance requirements issued by regulatory bodies (including CECA), and those directions may override internal employment arrangements or management decisions where required by law or regulation.

Changes to Employment Arrangements

Employees may request changes to their employment arrangements (for example, hours, days, duties, or work patterns). Any such request will be considered in good faith; however, approval is not guaranteed.

Requests may be declined where, in the Service's reasonable view, the proposed change:

- does not meet the operational needs of the Service;
- would adversely affect supervision, ratios, compliance, continuity of care, or staffing arrangements;
- would impose unreasonable administrative or financial burden on the Service; or
- is otherwise not suitable for the role or the needs of children and families.

Managing Conduct and Performance Concerns

Before making a decision to terminate employment for conduct or performance reasons (other than serious misconduct or where summary dismissal is justified), WVELC will generally follow a fair process. The exact process may vary depending on the seriousness and circumstances of the issue.

1) Letter of Concern

Where a conduct or performance issue is identified, management may first hold a formal meeting with the educator/staff member to outline the concerns, required improvements, and expected standards. The outcomes of this meeting may be confirmed in writing by way of a **Letter of Concern**.

2) Written Warning

If concerns continue, WVELC may issue a **Written Warning**.

- The employee will generally be given notice of the meeting and may be invited to bring a support person.
- A support person is present for support only and not to advocate or negotiate on behalf of the employee.
- The written warning will outline the concerns, expectations, and possible consequences of further issues.

3) Final Written Warning

If concerns continue, WVELC may issue a **Final Written Warning**.

- A final written warning is a serious disciplinary outcome.
- Any further conduct or performance concerns may result in termination of employment.
- Depending on the severity of the conduct, WVELC may bypass earlier warning steps and move directly to a final warning or termination.

Formal Investigations, Standing Down, and Regulatory Action

Where there are serious allegations, a child safety concern, a compliance issue, or any matter requiring formal investigation, WVELC may commence a formal investigation process.

During an investigation, WVELC may take interim measures, including temporarily removing the employee from duties, changing duties, or directing the employee not to attend the workplace while the matter is investigated.

Any stand down without pay will only occur where permitted by law, an applicable industrial instrument, or the employee's contract. WVELC reserves the right to stand down an employee without pay to the extent lawfully permitted. (Unpaid stand down is not available in all circumstances.)

Where CECA or another relevant authority issues a notice, direction, prohibition, suspension, or other compliance action, WVELC must comply with that direction and may take corresponding employment action, including suspension from duties or termination where appropriate. CECA may require providers to take action in relation to educators or services under applicable legislation.

Termination of Employment

Where the reason for proposed termination relates to unsatisfactory performance or improper conduct, management will generally ensure (unless the circumstances justify summary dismissal or another lawful exception applies):

- i. The educator/staff member has been informed of the concerns;
- ii. The educator/staff member has been given a reasonable opportunity to respond and/or improve (where appropriate);
- iii. WVELC has considered the seriousness of the issue and any response provided; and
- iv. WVELC retains discretion as to the number and type of warnings (if any), depending on the circumstances.

WVELC is not required to issue any specific number of warnings before termination. Serious misconduct or serious risk matters may result in immediate termination (summary dismissal), subject to applicable law.

Fair Process and Opportunity to Respond

WVELC will provide the educator/staff member with the reason(s) for proposed disciplinary action and, where appropriate, a reasonable opportunity to respond before a final decision is made.

Where practicable, the employee may bring a support person to meetings regarding conduct or performance matters. WVELC may refuse a proposed support person on reasonable grounds, including where the person may disrupt the meeting, is directly involved in the matter, or is otherwise unsuitable.

The employee has the right to present their version of events and any relevant information before a final decision is made. In some matters, WVELC may offer a formal meeting or process for the employee to respond to allegations ("plead their case") before disciplinary action is finalised.

Redundancy or Restructuring

Before terminating employment due to redundancy or restructuring, WVELC will comply with applicable consultation and notice obligations and will consider operational requirements, alternative roles (where available), and any legal requirements under the applicable award, agreement, or legislation.

Performance and Capability

WVELC recognises that employees may at times experience capability issues due to changes in the role, performance expectations, health, or personal circumstances.

WVELC may provide support, supervision, training, and feedback where appropriate. However, employees remain responsible for performing their duties to the required standard and seeking support early where needed.

Where a capability concern has a serious or ongoing impact on the Service, children, families, or compliance obligations, WVELC may take disciplinary action, including termination, with notice (or without notice where lawful).

Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs)

WVELC does not generally rely on formal Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) as a standard process, as in the Service's experience they have had limited success and are not always appropriate in an early childhood education and care environment.

Instead, WVELC may address concerns through direct supervision, written directions, training, warnings, and role-specific support.

At WVELC's discretion, a structured improvement process may be offered in some cases. This may include:

- clear performance expectations,
- identified support or training,
- a review period, and
- follow-up meetings.

WVELC reserves the right to determine whether a PIP or other improvement process is appropriate, and may skip or discontinue a PIP where the issue is serious, ongoing, or where the process is not effective.

Exceptions

WVELC is not required to follow every step in this procedure where:

- i. The employee refuses to participate in the process or behaves in a way that makes the process impracticable;
- ii. The employee has short service and the law does not require the full process;
- iii. Urgent action is required due to child safety, regulatory risk, health and safety, or other serious operational concerns;
- iv. The nature of the conduct justifies summary dismissal; or
- v. Compliance with the process is not reasonably practicable in the circumstances.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff are expected to:

- Understand and carry out the duties in their employment contract and position description professionally and efficiently;
- Follow all Centre policies, procedures, and lawful directions;
- Maintain professional conduct and communication with children, families, and colleagues;
- Raise concerns promptly with the Director/Nominated Supervisor;
- Use respectful communication and conflict resolution strategies;
- Participate in feedback and supervision processes;

- Take reasonable steps to improve conduct or performance where concerns are raised.

References:

- Fair Work Ombudsman, *Managing Performance and Warnings*, <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/managing-performance-and-warnings>, accessed 7 September 2018.
- Fair Work Ombudsman, *Effective Dispute Resolution*, <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/templates-and-guides/best-practice-guides/effective-dispute-resolution> accessed 7 September 2018.
- Early Childhood Australia, *Code of Ethics*, <http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ECA-COE-Brochure-2016.pdf>, accessed 7 September 2018.

Created:	Reviewed by:	Last reviewed:	Next review:
30/06/2021	Paulina Jagus	24/02/2026	2027

Social media, Cyber Safety and use of AI tools Policy

Date Reviewed:

June 11, 2025

Regulation:

Privacy Act 1988

Standards:

4, 7

Aim:

To ensure that staff and families use social media appropriately at and regarding Woden Valley Early Learning Centre (WVELC). To maintain cyber safety in our use of social media at all time.

Definitions:

Social media are forms of electronic communication, such as websites for social networking, through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content. Examples of social media systems include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest and Snapchat.

Cyber safety is the safe and responsible use of information and communication technology. It is about keeping information safe and secure, being responsible with the information, being respectful of other people online and using good internet etiquette.

For the purposes of this policy, Storypark will be considered an example of social media. Whilst it is a secure and private online service it is accessible by both staff and families attending our center and as such its appropriate usage will be covered by this policy. The security of Storypark has been enhanced for our center by the creation of unique emails for all staff with robust passwords to protect against unauthorized access to any data.

Guidelines on the safe use of online environments and social media at the service:

- Staff shall only access social media for personal use on their own devices (not centre computers) during their designated break times. This does not include the use of Storypark which is to be used on centre computers during work hours.
- Staff shall only use centre computers for Storypark to ensure the protection of data and photos. This means Storypark cannot be used by any staff at home or anywhere outside of WVELC.
- Staff, volunteers, and visitors are strictly prohibited from using personal devices, such as smartphones, tablets, or cameras, to take photos or recordings of children in care.
- Only centre-owned devices, which are monitored and managed by WVELC, may be used for taking photos or recordings of children for educational and documentation purposes.
- Staff shall not share private information about centre families or other staff members on social media (apart from Storypark).

- Staff shall not post information about what happens at the centre or photos taken at the centre, or on an excursion, on social media (apart from Storypark).
- As the administrator of the WVELC Facebook page the Director has the authority to post centre related information but not to post photos of children's faces or personal information with children's or families' names. Staff and families can 'tag' the WVELC Facebook page but cannot add content.
- Staff may communicate with centre families via social media if they choose to (e.g. 'Friending' families on Facebook) but they must adhere to the WVELC Staff Code of Conduct whilst doing so.

Breach of Social Media and Cyber Safety Policy

If a staff member is found to have published on social media (excluding Storypark):

- photos of a child or children enrolled at the centre
- comments or published documents about the centre or its staff
- information about any family or child in our care,

The Director/Authorised Supervisor shall immediately investigate the allegation. If the employee is found to have breached this policy, all associated content shall be removed from the social media system, a formal warning shall be issued to the staff member, followed by the development of a Performance Improvement Plan.

If a staff member posts offensive content, content that is inappropriate or derogatory towards WVELC or content which could reasonably be considered harassment such as, but not limited to, bullying, sexual or verbal harassment on social media including Storypark, the staff member's actions shall be investigated and assessed by the Director. Appropriate disciplinary action shall include the immediate removal of any inappropriate posts, a formal apology to those involved, a formal warning for the staff member and the development of a Performance Improvement Plan. Dependent upon the severity and nature of the inappropriate conduct, employment may be terminated.

If a centre family member harasses a staff member via social media including Storypark, the Director/Authorised Supervisor shall conduct an inquiry into their actions and the posts in question shall immediately be removed, a formal apology issued and a warning that future breaches of this policy could result in the dismissal of the family from the centre.

For further information regarding the appropriate use of social media within the work environment consult the ACT Government Social Media Policy at http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/open_government/engage/social_media_policy. In accordance with the ACT Government Social Media Policy, if a staff member breaks the law on social media, such as, but not limited to, defamation or privacy breaches, the centre will contact the police and other relevant authorities.

The center shall use Storypark according to its Privacy Policy which can be found at <https://www.storypark.com/privacy-policy>.

For more information on Cyber safety and Storypark consult <https://www.storypark.com/cybersafety>

Use of AI tools:

At Woden Valley Early Learning Centre (WVELC), educators are permitted to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools such as Grammarly, ChatGPT, and similar platforms to support professional tasks. This includes assistance with language use, content writing, researching ideas, and enhancing program planning and documentation.

Educators acknowledge that:

- AI tools are a support resource and may not always provide accurate or contextually appropriate information.
- Professional judgment, critical thinking, and alignment with early childhood best practices must always guide the use of AI-generated content.

Privacy and Safety:

Under no circumstances are educators permitted to upload or input photos of children into any AI tools, platforms, or websites unless:

- The use is part of an approved educational program (e.g. photo-to-animation transformation); **and**
- **Written consent** has been obtained from the child's parent or guardian prior to use.

This policy reflects our commitment to ethical use of technology, protection of children's privacy, and responsible innovation in early childhood education.

Policy created on:

July, 2024

Written by:

Paulina Jagus

Review date:

June 11, 2025

New review:

May, 2027

Staff Dress Code Policy

Date Reviewed:

August 5, 2025

Regulation:

168

Standards:

4, 7

Purpose

At Woden Valley Early Learning Centre (WVELC), our staff represent the professionalism, values, and culture of our Centre. This Dress Code Policy ensures all staff present a professional, safe, and cohesive image while fostering an inclusive and comfortable work environment.

This policy reflects our commitment to:

1. Professionalism: Maintaining a polished, professional image when working with children, families, and the community.
2. Safety & Hygiene: Ensuring attire supports safe movement, hygiene, and appropriate supervision of children.
3. Team Cohesion: Promoting a sense of unity and belonging by wearing Centre-logo tops while allowing flexibility in other attire.
4. Inclusivity & Respect: Recognising and supporting cultural, religious, and personal needs in line with our values and workplace requirements.

Dress Code Requirements

Tops

- Staff are required to wear Centre-provided tops with the WVELC logo during work hours.
- Tops must be clean, neat, and in good condition.

Bottoms

- Any pants, skirts, or dresses may be worn, provided they are:

- Presentable and free of rips or holes (including “fashion rips”).
- Of appropriate length – skirts and dresses must be at least knee length.
- Professional in appearance, avoiding overly casual or revealing styles.
- Sweatpants/tracksuit pants are permitted during colder months, provided they are presentable and do not display large brand logos.

Footwear

- Closed, non-slip shoes are required at all times for safety.
- Open-toed shoes, sandals, or unsafe footwear are not permitted.

Outerwear

- In colder months, jackets, beanies, and gloves may be worn, provided they are clean and professional in appearance.
- Oversized hoodies and keeping hands in pockets during supervision are not permitted, as they can obstruct visibility and communication.

Hair & Grooming

- Long hair must be tied up at all times, particularly during food service and meal preparation, to maintain hygiene and safety.

Sun Safety

- Wide-brimmed hats that protect the nose, ears, and neck are part of the uniform and must be worn outdoors when UV levels require it, as per our SunSmart policy.

Prohibited Attire

Staff must not wear:

- Activewear (e.g., gym tights, sports crop tops) outside of approved sweatpants in winter.
- Ripped or frayed clothing, including fashion rips.
- Clothing displaying offensive language, imagery, or large brand logos.
- Overly short skirts, dresses, or shorts (above knee length).
- Open-toed shoes, sandals, or high heels.

Uniform Entitlements & Purchasing

- Full-time staff are entitled to three (3) new logo tops annually.
- Part-time and casual staff are entitled to two (2) new logo tops annually.
- Any additional purchases (e.g., extra shirts, jackets) beyond these allocations may be made at the staff member's expense.
- Additional purchases can be split across four (4) payroll cycles to make payments manageable.

Uniform Maintenance

- Staff are responsible for keeping uniforms clean, neat, and in good repair.
- Any damage beyond normal wear and tear will be the responsibility of the staff member to replace.

Cultural Inclusion

WVELC is committed to fostering an inclusive and respectful workplace that celebrates cultural and religious diversity.

- Staff are encouraged to wear culturally or religiously significant attire, such as hijabs, turbans, or other traditional garments, provided it aligns with workplace health, safety, and hygiene requirements.
- Where cultural or religious attire may require adjustments for safety or hygiene (e.g., during food service or outdoor activities), management will collaborate with staff to find appropriate solutions.
- Staff are encouraged to openly communicate with management about cultural or religious dress needs, and discussions will be treated confidentially and respectfully.

Pregnancy & Medical Provision

WVELC recognises that staff may experience pregnancy-related changes or temporary medical conditions that impact their ability to wear standard uniforms.

- Staff who cannot fit into the provided uniform due to pregnancy or a temporary medical condition will be excused from wearing the uniform and supported to wear alternative presentable attire that aligns with the dress code.
- Staff are encouraged to discuss their needs with management, and accommodations will be made on a case-by-case basis, balancing comfort with professionalism.

Accidents & Hygiene

- If a staff member's uniform becomes soiled or damaged during a shift (e.g., from spills or bodily fluids), they may change into clean, comfortable clothing for the remainder of their shift.

Uniform-Free Days

- Occasional uniform-free days may be scheduled throughout the year to promote camaraderie.
- The final week of Centre operations may also include uniform-free days to celebrate the end of the year.

Compliance

- Staff are expected to adhere to this dress code at all times.
- Non-compliance will result in discussions with management and, for repeated breaches, disciplinary action in line with WVELC's Code of Conduct.

RELATED DOCUMENTS / REFERENCES:

- Performance management and Termination Policy
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Employee Handbook

Woden Valley Child Care Centre Association Incorporated

Staffing Arrangements Policy

Date Reviewed:

June 11, 2025

Regulation:

122-136, 150, 173, 240-279

Standards:

4.1.1, 7.1.1

The Woden Valley Early Learning Centre will maintain compliance to the following in relation to the everyday practicalities of service's operations:

- Educators rostering and routines will at all times make sure enough educators are available for the adequate supervision of children.
- Supervising educators give their attention to the children and not to any other duties.
- At no time will students or volunteers be included in the ratio of adults supervising children.
- Students and volunteers will never be left alone with a child or a group of children.
- A nominated supervisor or responsible person in charge will be on the premises at all times when children are being educated or cared for.
- There will be more than one educator present when children are in attendance.
- In any situation where adequate supervision of children is threatened, any educators on a meal-break must be prepared to return to duty to supply adequate supervision.
- The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will ensure that regulations in relation to the supervision of children are adhered to.
- Educators supervising outdoors / indoors, should position themselves to see as much of the play area as possible.
- One educator should be positioned close to the climbing frame as often as possible.
- Any water activity should be closely supervised by one educator at all times.
- Except for necessary discussions or concerns regarding children or matters relating to the Service, educators will not congregate together outside.
- When children are resting or sleeping they will be supervised.
- During hand washing and/or toilet times children will be supervised in the bathroom area.

- Rosters will be designed and implemented to ensure that children receive continuity of care.
- The Woden Valley Child Care Centre will, when possible and to the best of our ability, make use of a regular pool of relief educators.

Responsible Person:

The Woden Valley Child Care Centre will have at least one “responsible person in charge” present at all times when caring for and educating children. A responsible person in charge is:

- an approved provider
- a nominated supervisor
- an educator who is in charge of the daily running of the service during absence of a nominated supervisor and signed appropriate agreement.

The name of the responsible person will be clearly displayed in the main entrance of the Service. If the responsible person in charge needs to change (for example the current person needs to leave the Service), he or she will “hand over” responsibility for the role to another eligible person at the Service. Both the old and new responsible person will communicate directly and ensure the name of the responsible person displayed at the Service correctly reflects who currently holds the position. This will also be highlighted in the staff sign in book, so it is clearly visible of the responsible person signs out who the relief responsible person for that day is.

Educator to Child Ratios:

Our educator to child ratios will always meet the minimum requirements as stated below:

- 6 weeks to 24 months - 1 educator to 4 children
- 24 months – 36 months – 1 educator to 5 children
- 36 month and above – 1 educator to 11 children

When an early childhood teacher (ECT) is required to be in attendance at the service as per the licensed places of The Woden Valley Child Care Centre, that teacher will be counted as an educator at the service for the purposes of this regulation.

Qualifications:

- At least 50% of educators who work directly with children and are included in our educator to child ratios must have or be actively working towards an approved Diploma level education and care qualification.

- All other educators who work directly with children and are included in our educator to child ratios must have or be actively working towards an approved Certificate III level education and care qualification.

Approved Diploma Qualification:

A person is taken to hold an approved Diploma level education and care qualification if:

- they hold an approved qualification or former qualification as published on <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/qualifications/> or
- if immediately before 1 January 2012, they were recognised under the former education and care services law of any participating jurisdiction as a Diploma level educator and employed or engaged in a declared approved service. Approved

Certificate III Qualification:

A person is taken to hold an approved Certificate III level education and care qualification if:

- they hold an approved qualification or former qualification as published on <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/qualifications/> or
- immediately before 1 January 2012, they were recognised under the former education and care services law of any participating jurisdiction as certificate III level educator and employed or engaged in a declared approved service.
- was employed in a service at any time from 1 January 2010 to 1 January 2012 and met the requirements of Regulation 52 (2) of the Children's Services Regulation 2004 which required primary contact staff members caring for children under 2 to have a Child Care Certificate, a Certificate of Child Care Studies, an Associate Diploma of Social Science (Child Studies) from Tafe, a Diploma of Community Services (Children's Services) from a registered training organization or another approved qualification. Until 31 December 2015, educators who have been continuously employed as an educator in an education and care service or a children's service for a period of at least 15 years immediately before 1 January 2012 and continue to be employed by the same Approved Provider as they were immediately before 1 January 2012 can be taken to hold a Certificate III qualification. This provision applies until 1 January 2018 for services located in remote and very remote areas. Remote and very remote areas are classified this way in the Australian Statistical Geography Standard: Volume 5 Remoteness Structure, Australian Bureau of Statistics Cat No 1270.0.55.005

Early Childhood Teacher (ECT):

The Woden Valley Child Care Centre will always employ a qualified early childhood teacher (ECT) as per the following minimum requirements:

- One ECT must be in attendance at all times when the service is educating and caring for children

Approved ECT qualifications:

- an approved qualification that is published on <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/qualifications/>
- The educator holds a qualification that is published in the list of former qualifications on <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/qualifications/>. The educator was recognised as an ECT under the 7 former law of any participating jurisdiction, or for the purposes of a preschool funding program and was employed or engaged in a declared approved service as an ECT.
- The educator was registered as an ECT in accordance with the requirements of another jurisdiction. This does not apply if the educator was working towards an ECT qualification.
- If immediately before 1 January 2012, the educator was recognised as an ECT because they were enrolled in a course for a qualification that is published on <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/qualifications/> in the list of former qualifications approved as early childhood teacher qualifications, the educator is taken to hold an approved ECT qualification when they complete the course.
- If immediately before 1 January 2012, the recognition, registration, accreditation or qualification as an ECT as written above was subject to any restrictions imposed by or under an education law of a participating jurisdiction, the person is taken to be an ECT with the same restrictions.
- In some cases, educators who were registered as teachers in other States or jurisdictions hold an approved qualification. These are listed in regulation 241 and on the national regulator's website www.acecqa.gov.au/qualifications.
- From 1 January 2014 to 1 January 2018, for services with less than 30 children, an educator who has completed at least 50% of a relevant qualification that would enable them to be qualified as an ECT and is actively working towards the completion of the qualification or holds an approved diploma level education and care qualification can be counted as an ECT.

Qualifications for Educators:

Child Protection

- The Approved Provider of an education and care service must ensure that the nominated supervisor, educators and other staff members who work with children are advised of the current child protection law and any obligations they may have under the law.
- The service's Nominated Supervisor and Certified Supervisors will have successfully completed a course in child protection that is approved by the NSW Regulatory Authority.

Working with Children Check

- The Approved Provider or nominated supervisor of an education and care service must ensure a Working With Children Check (WWCC) is completed for all educators, staff, volunteers and students whose duties will involve direct contact with children. Some exemptions apply e.g. WWCC are not required for children under 16 or in most circumstances where the volunteer is a parent or close relative. Further information is available from the following website <http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/New-Working-with-Children-Check>

First Aid Qualifications

The approved provider must ensure that at least one educator attending the service :

- holds a current approved first aid qualification
- has undertaken current approved anaphylaxis management training and
- has undertaken current approved emergency asthma management training.

An educator is taken to hold an approved first aid qualification or training if:

- the educator holds an approved qualification or training as published on <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/qualifications/>

REFERENCES:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard
- NSW Office of the Children's Guardian

Woden Valley Child Care Centre Association Incorporated

Student and Volunteer Policy

Date Reviewed:

March 3, 2026

Regulation:

120,145, 149, 168

Standards:

7.1, 7.2

Purpose

Woden Valley Early Learning Centre (WVELC) values the contributions of students and volunteers. Having students and volunteers within our service:

- Strengthens our connection with the community.
- Promotes the early childhood education profession.
- Provides meaningful opportunities for aspiring educators to gain hands-on experience.

While we welcome students and volunteers, the care, safety, and wellbeing of children remain our highest priority.

Scope

This policy applies to students, volunteers, educators, staff, families, visitors, and children at WVELC.

Implementation

1. Service Commitment

The Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor / Responsible Person will:

- Require all students to attend the service before commencing placement for a mandatory induction and tour, ensuring they understand emergency exits, staff areas, bathrooms, children's rooms, and relevant Service policies.
- Provide all students and volunteers with a Student & Volunteer Orientation Package.
- Discuss placement schedules, including times, hours, and dates of attendance.
- Require all students over the age of 16 to hold and provide a current Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) card prior to commencing placement.

- Reject any placement requests from Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood Education students who do not hold prior early childhood or teaching qualifications or experience.
- Require students to provide a poster with a recent photo ID for display in the Service, which must include:
 - Name
 - Photo
 - Placement times/dates
 - Focus of study
- Maintain a Staff Record of students/volunteers including full name, address, date of birth, and dates/hours of participation.
- Appoint an Educator as a Student/Volunteer Supervisor/Mentor for the duration of the placement.
- Discuss key information about children (e.g., court orders, additional needs, dietary requirements) as appropriate for the student/volunteer role.
- Ensure students/volunteers are never left alone with children and are not counted in educator-to-child ratios.
- Ensure students/volunteers do not change nappies, assist with toileting, or perform any intimate care tasks at any time.
- Ensure students/volunteers do not discuss any concerns or issues directly with parents or visitors.
- Maintain open communication with educational institutions to ensure supervision, appropriate placement, and compliance with requirements.
- Require students to register for and complete mandatory child safety training via the Gecco portal. Registration must use a personal email address and be completed before the start of the placement. Training ensures students understand child protection responsibilities in line with Australian Government reforms.
- Prohibit the use of mobile phones or any other personal devices during placement. Failure to comply will result in immediate termination of the placement.

2. Educators' Responsibilities

Educators will:

- Support students/volunteers by providing clear guidance, supervision, and constructive feedback.
- Work collaboratively with practicum teachers to assess performance and progress.
- Role model professional conduct at all times.

- Ensure students are aware of their tasks and expectations in line with practicum requirements.
- Immediately report concerns about student/volunteer performance or behaviour to the Room Leader and Nominated Supervisor.

3. Room Leader Responsibilities

The Room Leader will:

- Oversee student/volunteer daily tasks and provide ongoing feedback.
- Ensure students are supervised at all times.
- Address any concerns raised by students/volunteers and escalate them to the Student Supervisor/Nominated Supervisor as needed.
- Monitor the completion of assessment tasks required by the student's education provider.

4. Student & Volunteer Responsibilities

Students and volunteers will:

- Attend a pre-placement induction and tour prior to starting placement.
- Provide a poster with a photo ID for display in the Service.
- Hold and provide a current WWVP card (for those aged 16 and above).
- Adhere to all WVELC policies and procedures.
- Never be left alone with a child.
- Never change nappies or assist with toileting.
- Inform the Supervisor in writing of practicum requirements and provide timesheets or evaluation forms.
- Remain up to date with all written work related to their practicum.
- Be proactive, seek guidance when needed, and contribute to the team in a positive, professional manner.
- Notify the Service promptly if unable to attend a scheduled shift.
- Register and complete mandatory child safety training via Gecco prior to starting placement.
- Refrain from using mobile phones or any personal devices during placement.

5. Probity Checks

Before commencing placement, students must:

- Provide valid photo identification.
- Provide a current Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) card if aged 16 or older.

- Meet with the Nominated Supervisor to receive information about key policies, including:
 - Child Protection
 - Record Keeping and Confidentiality
 - Complaints
 - Dress Code
 - Educator/Student Quick Guide

6. Performance Concerns & Termination

If a student is at risk of failing their practicum:

- The Room Leader will notify the Student Supervisor.
- The Supervisor and Room Leader will discuss concerns with the student.
- The Supervisor will arrange a meeting with the student's practicum teacher.
- The educational institution and Nominated Supervisor will determine the outcome of the placement.

Immediate termination of placement may occur if a student:

- Harms or is at risk of harming a child.
- Is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Fails to notify the Service of non-attendance.
- Repeatedly displays inappropriate behaviour.
- Fails to provide required documentation (e.g., WWVP, photo ID poster, Geccko training completion).
- Uses mobile phones or other personal devices during placement.
- Does not adhere to WVELC policies or practicum requirements.

Why This Matters

WVELC is committed to providing a safe, professional, and supportive environment for students and volunteers, while ensuring the highest level of care and protection for children. These requirements:

- Ensure child safeguarding is prioritised.
- Maintain professional and ethical standards in line with the National Quality Framework.
- Support students to gain meaningful, structured learning experiences in early childhood education.

REFERENCES:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations.
- National Quality Standard.
- Early Years Learning Framework.
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011.
- Fair Work Act.
- Dealing with Employee Work-related Concerns and Grievances Policy and Guidelines: NSW DPC
- Preventing and Responding to Workplace Bullying: Safe Work Australia Draft Code of Practice
- Anti-bullying jurisdiction: Fair Work Commission
- Revised National Quality Standard.

The sudden death of a member of our community

Date Reviewed:

Regulation:

Standards:

March 9, 2023

n/a

4 & 7

Definition:

A member of our community – for the purpose of this policy, that person is defined as a child, parent/ carer, staff or significant centre community member (i.e. ex-staff member)

Aim / Purpose:

The below policy is necessary to support Woden Valley ELC (WVELC) staff and the broader community in the event of the sudden emergency described.

We kindly ask families for patience and understanding, as such events could devastate the WVELC staff & community. Every attempt will be made to give as much notice as possible to all families; however, please understand that our emotions may be heightened in such an event. In addition, this may be a sudden event, and we may receive little notice.

Policy / Procedure:

When the Centre gets notified of a sudden death occurrence of a community member, these are the steps we shall follow.

1. Notify staff members with the utmost discretion allowing educators to deal with their emotions in a safe environment.
2. Notify families via phone call (or email should time not allow).
 1. If the impact of the incident significantly affects staff and they cannot finish their shift, families will be informed to collect their child/ren as soon as possible.
3. The Centre will then close (if required) for the rest of the day and an additional day of grieving (if required).
4. No care charges will be incurred to the families for days when the Centre elects to close .
5. In addition to those closure days, the Centre will close for the day of the funeral, allowing all staff and families to attend.

6. As much notice as possible will be given to families.

Staff, families and children's mental support:

1. The Centre will notify families of their eligibility to access 6 free counselling sessions with the Employee Assistance Program and the contact details for this. This service will provide this resource to staff and their families.
2. Children will not be informed of the occurrence, and staff will only discuss this with children on occasions once their families inform them and provide consent in writing to do so.
3. We would encourage families to inform their children who had a close connection to the deceased person and inform their level of comprehension, allowing them to understand the situation. Families will be offered tools and resources to help them to pass on that message and speak openly about death & grief.

Families:

1. WVELC management will not inform families of the deceased person's identity over the phone but will activate the above policy. Our priority at that point will be to close the Centre as fast as possible and allow staff to get home safely.
2. The timing of the notification will determine the closure of the Centre, and we will further assess the closure the following day, letting families know via Story Park/ HubWorks or phone calls. We kindly ask families to monitor communication provided by the Service closely.

WVELC Staff:

1. The Centre will provide staff with the details to access the CHS Employment Assistance Program (details below)
2. In the case of a such event when the Centre chooses to close down, the staff will be paid their usual working hours and will not be required to access annual or sick leave. "Bereavement leave" will be applied to relevant closure days.
3. Should staff require further leave as a result of the event, the Centre will hold conversations with this staff member to ascertain ways to support them further.
4. Staff are urged to remain professional and use discrete and kind ways of communication while speaking to other staff members or our community members.
5. For the news to be shared in a controlled way, should a staff member be informed prior to management, we ask the educator to inform the management as a priority before speaking to other staff members. This will allow us to follow this procedure and ensure the safety and well-being of staff and families of WVELC.

6. Staff who cannot drive will be offered alternative transport home at no cost to themselves.
7. Please be mindful of your social media appearance & posts and the families cultural beliefs or wishes.

WVELC Leadership / Management:

1. The responsible person in charge / or nominated staff member may be responsible for informing both staff and families of the occurrence.
2. The utmost discretion and sensitivity will be given while speaking to the community members.
3. The responsible person in charge will inform the regulatory authorities of the closure and the occurrence.
4. The Centre will follow the wishes and cultural beliefs of the deceased and their family.

EAP Program	Provider - Converge	Phone	Entitlements	Staff Under
	Converge International	1300 687 327	6 free counselling sessions	Canberra Health Services (no division needed)

Other fee support services:

Grief Line - 1300 845 745

Life Line - 131 114

Kids Helpline - 1800 551 800

Suicide Call Back Line - 1300 659 467