



PARTICIPATION OF VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS POLICY

Mandatory – Quality Area 4

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Holy Trinity Kindergarten on **20 August 2017**

REVIEW DATE: 20/08/2020.

PURPOSE

This policy provides the guidelines for the engagement and participation of volunteers and students at Holy Trinity Kindergarten, while ensuring that children's health, safety and wellbeing is protected at all times.

POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Holy Trinity Kindergarten is committed to:

- Supporting connections with educational institutions to provide opportunities for students to undertake practicum placements as part of their studies.
- Building relationships with community members and providing suitable opportunities to engage volunteers to contribute to the programs and activities of HTK.
- Ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of each child at HTK through consistent compliance with this policy and procedures when engaging volunteers and students.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Holy Trinity Kindergarten.

BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

Volunteers and students may participate in programs and activities at HTK from time to time in order to observe and experience the provision of centre-based education and care. This will be encouraged and facilitated by Holy Trinity Kindergarten wherever appropriate and possible.

Holy Trinity Kindergarten values the participation of parents/guardians and other family members, and the voluntary contribution they make to the education and care of their own and other children. This is reflected in our philosophy. "In genuine partnerships families and educators value each other's knowledge and roles, communicate freely and respectfully and engage in shared decision making"



(*Early Years Learning Framework*). Holy Trinity Kindergarten aims to provide a range of opportunities for family members, 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 HTK (refer to *Code of Conduct Policy*).

Volunteers and students can expect:

- A safe and well-managed workplace.
- Meaningful work experience with appropriate direction, supervision and training.
- Recognition for their contribution.

The role that volunteers play in children's services varies and can include working with groups of children, preparing materials or food, assisting with administrative tasks or working one-on-one with individual children. The children's service is responsible for ensuring that volunteers are suitable to work with children, and that children's health, safety and wellbeing is protected at all times.

Prior to participation at HTK, a volunteer (aged 18 years or over) must be in possession of a Working with Children (WWC) Check card, unless they are exempt under the under the WWC Check. WWC Check is required for anyone who is in contact with children including oral, written or electronic communication.

Parents/guardians and family members closely related to children attending HTK are exempt from needing a WWC Check. However, HTK has decided, as a demonstration of duty of care, that all parents/guardians who volunteer at HTK are required to undergo a WWC Check, if a copy has not been produced previously, the Supervisor must sight this at time of sign in.

Volunteers should only be engaged to complement, not replace, the work of paid staff. Accordingly, services should not engage volunteers to fill the place of an employee who is ill or on leave, or to fill a vacant budgeted position.

Volunteers must not be asked to perform tasks:

- That they are untrained, unqualified or too inexperienced to undertake.
- That put the children or themselves in a vulnerable or potentially unsafe situation.
- Where there is a conflict of interest.

Prior to commencing work at HTK, all volunteers should be interviewed to ascertain their suitability for, and interest in, the tasks they will be undertaking, and to assess whether the volunteer's goals can be achieved. The interview process also provides an opportunity for volunteers to have their questions answered. Reference checks must be undertaken by the Approved Provider or a nominee of the Approved Provider, to confirm work abilities or character attributes. Good practice in volunteer management includes acknowledgement and recognition of volunteer contributions, and this can involve a mixture of formal and informal recognition strategies.

It is a requirement under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* that the Approved Provider uses the staff record to document the details of all students and volunteers. The staff record must include the full name, address and date of birth of each student or volunteer who participates at HTK. The Approved Provider of a centre-based service must also keep a record for each day on which the student or volunteer participates at HTK, including the date and the hours of participation. In addition to this, it is recommended that students and volunteers undertake an induction to HTK and complete an induction checklist (refer to Attachment 1), which should also be stored with the staff record.



Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Section 169
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 123, 145, 149, 157, 355, 358, 360
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic)
- *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth)
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements
 - Standard 4.1: Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development and ensure their safety and wellbeing
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic)

Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>
- Commonwealth Legislation – ComLaw: <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/>

DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

Conflict of interest: (In relation to this policy) refers to an interest that may affect, or may appear reasonably likely to affect, the judgement or conduct of the volunteer, or may impair their independence or loyalty to HTK. A conflict of interest can arise from avoiding personal losses as well as gaining personal advantage, whether financial or otherwise, and may not only involve the volunteer, but also their relatives, friends or business associates.

Family Volunteer: A parent/guardian or close family member who willingly undertakes defined activities to support the education and care programs at a children's service in an unpaid or honorary capacity. These activities may include direct contact with children, accompanying excursions, administrative tasks, or preparing materials for the educational program. Typically, this would include Kinder Duty, membership of our Committee of Management or participation in the educational program.

Student: A person undertaking a practicum placement as part of a recognised tertiary early childhood qualification or a secondary school student completing a work experience or community service placement. This student will be supported by an educational institution in the completion of their placement.

Volunteer: A person from the general community who willingly undertakes defined activities to support the education and care programs at a children's service in an unpaid or honorary capacity. These activities may include direct contact with children, administrative tasks, or preparing materials or food for the educational program.

Working directly with children: The Working with Children's Act 2005 states: "direct contact" means any contact between a person and a child that involves— (a) physical contact; face to face contact; contact by post or other written communication; contact by telephone or other oral communication; contact by email or other electronic communication



Working with Children (WWC) Check: The check is a legal requirement for those undertaking paid or voluntary child-related work in Victoria and is a measure to help protect children from harm arising as a result of physical or sexual abuse. The Department of Justice assesses a person's suitability to work with children by examining relevant serious sexual, physical and drug offences in a person's national criminal history and, where appropriate, their professional history. A WWC Check card, notice or document (valid for five years), is granted to a person under working with children legislation if:

- they have been assessed as suitable to work with children
- there has been no information that, if the person worked with children, they would pose a risk to those children
- they are not prohibited from attempting to obtain, undertake or remain in child-related employment.

SOURCES

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): www.acecqa.gov.au
- National *Early Years Learning Framework*: <https://www.education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework>
- Working with Children Check Unit, Department of Justice, Victoria: www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren/
- The Working with Children's Act 2005 s3(1)

RELATED POLICIES / PROCEDURES

- *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- *Code of Conduct Policy*
- *Complaints and Grievances Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Determining Responsible Person Policy*
- *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
- *Staffing Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Developing and reviewing the process in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators for accepting applications from volunteers/students to work at HTK.
- Accepting or rejecting a potential volunteer/student based on the circumstances of HTK at the time, in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor.
- Ensuring that children being educated and cared for by HTK are adequately supervised, and the legislated educator-to-child ratios are complied with at all times (Regulations 123, 355, 360) (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*).
- Ensuring that, where required, the Working with Children (WWC) Check has been read/sighted prior to the volunteer's commencement at HTK.



- Ensuring that the staff record contains information for all volunteers/students attending HTK with details of name, address, date of birth, days and hours of participation and details of the Working with Children (WWC) Check (Regulations 145, 147, 149).
- Ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are adequately supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at HTK is protected.
- Ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children.
- Ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending HTK can enter HTK premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or educators under the law (Regulation 157).
- Developing a range of strategies to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at HTK.
- Providing volunteers/students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures, and a copy of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*.
- Ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians (family volunteers) comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while attending HTK.
- Developing an induction program for volunteers/students attending HTK (refer to Attachment 1 – Volunteers and Students induction) in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators.
- Developing an induction program for family volunteers involved in the Committee of Management and guidelines for family volunteers involved in the program in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- Assisting the Approved Provider to develop guidelines for applications from volunteers/students to work at HTK.
- Assisting the Approved Provider with decisions in relation to accepting/rejecting a potential volunteer/student based on the circumstances of HTK at the time.
- Ensuring that children being educated and cared for by HTK are adequately supervised, and the legislated educator-to-child ratios are complied with at all times (Regulations 123, 355, 360) (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*).
- Ensuring that, where required, the Working with Children (WWC) Check has been read/sighted prior to the volunteer's commencement at HTK, and that details are included on their record.
- Ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are adequately supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at HTK is protected.
- Ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children.
- Ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending HTK can enter HTK premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or educators under the law (Regulation 157).
- Ensuring strategies are in place to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at HTK.
- Providing volunteers/students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures, and a copy of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*.



- Ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while attending HTK.
- Assisting the Approved Provider to develop an induction checklist for volunteers/students at HTK (refer to Attachment 1 – Sample induction checklist for volunteers/students).
- Ensuring that volunteers/students have completed the induction checklist (refer to Attachment 1) and have been provided with a copy of the staff handbook, if applicable.

Educators are responsible for:

- Ensuring that, where required, the Working with Children (WWC) Check has been read/sighted prior to the volunteer's commencement at HTK.
- Assisting the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor to develop guidelines for applications from volunteers/students to work at HTK.
- Ensuring that children being educated and cared for by HTK are adequately supervised, and the legislated educator-to-child ratios are complied with at all times (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*).
- Providing volunteers/students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures, and a copy of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*.
- Ensuring that volunteers/students and parents/guardians comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while attending HTK.
- Complying with the requirement that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are adequately supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at HTK is protected.
- Complying with the requirement that volunteers/students and parents/guardians are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children.
- Enabling parents/guardians of children attending HTK to access HTK premises at any time the child is being educated and cared for except where this poses a risk to the safety of children and/or staff.
- Encouraging the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at HTK.
- Assisting the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor to develop an induction checklist for volunteers/students at HTK (refer to Attachment 1 –Volunteers and Students induction).
- Assisting volunteers/students to understand the requirements of this policy and the expectations of HTK.

Volunteers and students, while at HTK, are responsible for:

- Ensuring they have provided all details required to complete the Volunteer and Student Record.
- Undertaking a Working with Children (WWC) Check and presenting a current WWC Check card or other notification, as applicable.
- Understanding and acknowledging the requirement for confidentiality of all information relating to educators and families within HTK (refer to *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*).
- Complying with the requirements of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and with all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while at HTK.
- Undertaking the induction process and completing the induction checklist (refer to Attachment 1) prior to commencement at HTK.
- Following the directions of staff at HTK at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Complying with the requirements of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and with all service policies and procedures, including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, while attending HTK.



- Following the directions of staff at HTK at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- Check staff records on a regular basis to ensure details of students and volunteers are maintained in line with all legislative requirements as outlined in the policy.
- Regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness.
- Monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy.
- Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice.
- Revise the policy and procedures as part of HTK's policy review cycle, or as required.
- Notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: HTK induction checklist for volunteers/students



ATTACHMENT 1

Volunteers and Students Induction

To be completed by all volunteers (not including Parent Kinder Duty volunteers) and students participating at Holy Trinity Kindergarten.

Name:

School/Organisation:

Discussed (tick)	Induction Item
	Parking arrangements and tour of the kinder including emergency exits, toilets, storerooms, kitchen and office. The buildings, playgrounds and within four meters of the front entrance/ parking area of the kinder are non-smoking areas.
	In the event of an emergency, volunteers/students must comply with the directions of the kinder staff. Please note the location of emergency exits and evacuation/lockdown assembly points. This is also listed on the evacuation plans located near the door of each room at the kinder.
	A first aid box is located in the children's bathroom. All kinder staff are qualified first aid providers and volunteers and students should immediately inform staff if any children require first aid (volunteers/students should not provide this). There are also first aid supplies and medications in the emergency evacuation kit.
	An outline of the kinders' daily routines and timetables is available on the kinder noticeboard in the office (tertiary students will also be provided with a copy).
	The kinder is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people and to upholding the Child Safe Standards. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. Volunteers/ students are not to be left in sole supervision of individuals or groups of children.
	The kinder has a nutrition policy that encourages healthy eating as well as an anaphylaxis policy that details any foods that should not be brought into the centre.
	Occupational Health and Safety is of great importance. Volunteers/students should follow safe work practices at all times, including when lifting (manual handling), climbing ladders etc. Volunteers and students must report any potential hazards to a member of staff as soon as practicable. Volunteers/ students are expected to participate in general tasks, including maintaining the environment in a clean, safe and tidy condition.
	We have zero tolerance for child abuse, harassment, bullying and discrimination. Volunteers/students with concerns should report this to the Director or their supervisor from their school/organisation as appropriate.
	The policies and procedures manual of Holy Trinity Kindergarten is available on the kinder website (www.holytrinitykindergarten.com.au) and in the kinder foyer. Volunteers/students are responsible for following these policies and their procedures.
	Volunteers/students must abide by the conditions of use for the Holy Trinity Kindergarten IT facilities when accessing the kinder computers, iPads and any other technology, including use of the kinder Wi-Fi.
	Volunteers/students must complete a personal information record or approved DET work experience form before commencing duties. A Working with Children Check is required for all volunteers and students who are 18 years of age and over.



	Should the volunteer/student have any medical conditions, allergies or impediments to participation in general tasks at the kinder, they should inform the staff member completing this induction.
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Volunteer and Student Induction and Code of Conduct Acknowledgement

I hereby acknowledge that I have participated in the induction (as above) and have read the Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy, Guidelines and Code of Conduct. I understand its contents and I agree to abide by the principles, practices and consequences set out within. I understand that the Approved Provider (Holy Trinity Kindergarten) will address any breach of this policy, and that any *serious* breach could lead to legal or disciplinary action.

Volunteer/Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Staff Member Conducting Induction (Name & Signature): _____

For Volunteers/Students Under 18 Years of Age

As the parent/guardian of the above named volunteer/student, I agree that my child is permitted to use the kinder's IT facilities (in line with the guidelines for use). I understand that Holy Trinity Kindergarten provides no censorship for anything a volunteer/student may access.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____