

# Volunteers and Students Policy

<b>Purpose:</b>	The purpose of this policy is to ensure the appropriate management of the participation of volunteers and students undertaking practicum placements at River School Early Childhood Centre.	
<b>Scope:</b>	Volunteers or students undertaking practicum placement, people undertaking work experience, parents, and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed term and casual employees  This policy applies to parent volunteers only within the definition of 'parent volunteer' provided within the policy	
<b>Status:</b>	Approved	<b>Supersedes:</b> All previous Student and Volunteer Policy
<b>Authorised by:</b>	Dee Farquharson	<b>Date of Authorisation:</b> 15 Jun 2022
<b>References:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</a>: Regulations 149, 168(2)(i)(iii), 170, 171, 172, 177, 181, 183, 184</li> <li>• <a href="#">National Quality Standard</a>: Quality Area 4 – Standard 4.2</li> <li>• River School Early Childhood Centre induction Policy</li> <li>• River School Early Childhood Centre Child Safe Environment Policy</li> <li>• River School Early Childhood Centre Child Risk Management Strategy</li> <li>• River School Early Childhood Centre Supervision Policy</li> <li>• Child Protection Policy</li> </ul>	
<b>Review Date:</b>	Every 2 years	<b>Next Review Date:</b> 15 Jun 2024
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	AME Board	

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## Policy Statement

Volunteers and students on practicum placements are welcomed, valued, and respected at River School Early Childhood Centre. The service aims to develop and maintain relationships with volunteers and students that are based on the principles of mutual respect, equity and fairness. These partnerships will be based on the foundation of understanding each other's expectations and attitudes, and build on the strength of each other's knowledge.

River School Early Childhood Centre particularly 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. The service 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 behaviour towards and relationships with employees, other adults and children at the service. Note, this policy applies to parent volunteers only within the definition of 'parent volunteer' provided below.

Volunteers and students will be recruited, selected, trained, and managed in line with the River School Early Childhood Centre Child Risk Management Strategy, as outlined below.

## Prior to Commencement

Volunteers and students will be recruited and selected in line with the River School Early Childhood Centre Child Risk Management Strategy, as follows:

- Volunteers and students will be interviewed to ascertain their suitability for, and interest in, the tasks they will be undertaking, and to assess whether their goals can be achieved;
- Reference checks will be undertaken by the Nominated Supervisor or another nominee of the Approved Provider to confirm work abilities or character attributes; and
- Volunteers and students at River School Early Childhood Centre will generally require a Blue Card. However, parents of children enrolled at the service and volunteers aged under 18 do not require a Blue Card. It is important to note that all students undertaking a practical placement as part of their studies with an education provider, no matter what their age, do legally require a Blue Card; and
- Volunteers and students will not commence at the service until they hold a valid Blue Card as required.

## Upon Commencement

Volunteers and students will be trained and managed in line with the River School Early Childhood Centre Child Risk Management Strategy, as follows:

- All policies at River School Early Childhood Centre that apply to employees will apply to volunteers and students in the same way. References in such policies to employees should be read to include volunteers and students.
- Volunteers and students will be provided with access to all service policies and procedures, and a copy of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*, particularly the

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River School Early Childhood Centre Employee Code of Conduct, Child Safe Environment and Work Health and Safety Policies.

- As with employees, volunteers and students will be inducted into the service under the River School Early Childhood Centre Induction Policy and Procedure and will be provided with appropriate training.
- Volunteers and students will be adequately supervised at all times to ensure that the health, safety, and wellbeing of children at the service is protected, in line with the River School Early Childhood Centre Supervision and Child Safe Environment Policies. Volunteers and students will not be left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children.
- Volunteers will only be engaged to complement, not replace, the work of paid employees. Accordingly, the services will not engage volunteers to fill the place of an employee who is ill or on leave, or to fill a vacant budgeted position.
- Volunteers will not be asked to perform tasks:
  - That put the children or themselves in a vulnerable or potentially unsafe situation;
  - That they are untrained, unqualified or too inexperienced to undertake; or
  - Where there is a conflict of interest.
- In line with the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*, the service will keep staff records for volunteers and students. These records will include:
  - The full name, address and date of birth of each student or volunteer; and
  - The date and hours of participation for each day the volunteer or student participates in the service.

## Definitions

Definitions relevant to this policy include:

**Parent volunteer:** a parent of a child at the service, volunteering on a regular basis; this excludes parents volunteering on an ad hoc or irregular basis for short periods of time only

**Student:** a person undertaking a practicum placement as part of a recognised early childhood qualification. This student will be supported by an educational institution in the completion of their placement

**Volunteer:** a person who willingly undertakes defined activities to support the education and care programs at a children’s service in an unpaid or honorary capacity

## Responsibilities

**River School Early Childhood Centre has the following role and responsibilities:**

- Act to establish positive and constructive relationships with volunteers and students.
- Recruit, select, train, and manage volunteers and students in line with the River School Early Childhood Centre Child Risk Management Strategy.
- Conduct interviews and reference checks of potential volunteers and students.
- Ensure that valid Blue Cards are held before volunteers and students commence.
- Provide access to and ensure compliance with service policies and relevant legislation.

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- Induct and train volunteers and students in accordance with the River School Early Childhood Centre Induction Policy and Procedure.
- Ensure that volunteers and students are appropriately supervised.
- Ensure that only appropriate tasks are delegated to volunteers and students.
- Keep appropriate staff records for volunteers and students.

**Employees of River School Early Childhood Centre have the following role and responsibilities:**

- Act in accordance with this Policy.
- Ensure that they assist with the appropriate supervision of volunteers and students.
- Only delegate appropriate tasks to volunteers and students.

**Volunteers and students at River School Early Childhood Centre have the following role and responsibilities:**

- Act in accordance with this Policy and all River School Early Childhood Centre policies and procedures.
- Act to establish positive and constructive relationships with employees, other adults, and children at the service.
- Openly and honestly take part in their recruitment, selection, training, and management by the service.
- Ensure that they hold a valid Blue Card before commencing at the service.

**Implementation**

In practice, River School Early Childhood Centre’s commitment to appropriately manage the participation of volunteers and students means that it will implement the following measures:

- Awareness - regularly raise awareness of the value and respect the service places on volunteers and students, including by the development and implementation of this Policy.
- Training – provide volunteers and students with access to appropriate training.
- Record keeping, monitoring, reporting – keep appropriate records, monitor, and report on volunteers and students within the service in line with this Policy.

**Compliance and Monitoring**

In line with the *Education and Care Service National Regulations 2011*, River School Early Childhood Centre will ensure that:

- Copies of this policy and any related procedures are readily accessible and available for inspection by the Nominated Supervisor, employees, volunteers, students and families.
- Parents of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before the service makes any change to a policy or procedure that may have a significant impact on the service’s provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service or the family’s ability to utilise the service.

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**Appendices**

Student and Volunteer details form number - RSECC – FHR10

Student and Volunteer Induction Form – RSECC -FHR07

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