

COMMUNITY CHILD CARE

STAFF HANDBOOK

An integral part of the induction process for new staff is the provision of information about the education and care service and how it operates.

Provision of a staff handbook ensures the consistent dissemination of information to new staff.

Management can have confidence that all staff, this includes administration, auxiliary and educators, have the relevant information on hand to enhance their orientation into their new position.

Why do we need a staff handbook?

A handbook will describe the philosophy and goals of the service, the policies that relate to all service issues and any procedures that staff need to know about in order to fulfill their duties. This is a requirement of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* (r. 168 – 172) and relates to National Quality Standard Quality Area 4 Staffing Arrangements and Quality Area 7 Leadership and service management.

A handbook provides staff with a reference point to quickly find out information on procedures, employment conditions and service policies relevant to them.

A handbook spells out processes and procedures for communication and is a useful mechanism to help ensure communication channels between staff and management is clear.

The staff handbook is an important tool in settling staff into the service, in conjunction with meeting the other staff, the families, the children and management. It is also an integral part of the induction and orientation process.

Information and policies to include in a staff handbook

- ▶ service philosophy and goals
- ▶ information on the *National Quality Framework; National Quality Standard, the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and the *Education and Care Services National Law 2010*
- ▶ approved frameworks; *Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF)*, *My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia (FSAC)*, *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)*
- ▶ operational procedures; management structure, hours of operation, approved places, confidentiality and privacy
- ▶ employment conditions such as the relevant award or workplace agreement; any above-award conditions, and also sick leave and holiday entitlements, grievance procedures
- ▶ permanent and casual positions and the number of educators and staff employed at the service
- ▶ participation of volunteers and students
- ▶ health and safety matters for staff and children including policies on child safe environment, delivery and collection of children, refusal of authorization for a child to leave the service, medication, accidents, immunisation, exclusion, smoke-free environment, first aid, water safety, Sun Smart policy, alcohol and illegal substances, anaphylaxis and asthma management, excursions, supervision, protective care policies. nutrition and food safety
- ▶ emergency and evacuation procedures, intruders, fire drills
- ▶ information on Working With Children Checks (WWCC) and Police Checks
- ▶ occupational health and safety, Work Cover, safe work practices
- ▶ information for staff; code of conduct, determining the responsible person present, position descriptions, qualifications and training, staff meetings, dress codes, how and when staff report to management, staff expectations, rosters and timesheets, appraisals and professional development, recruitment and selection grievance procedure for staff, families and children
- ▶ interactions with children, positive guidance of children
- ▶ a regular day at the service (this will give educators an indication of the process)
- ▶ service rules and guidelines
- ▶ programming

References and further reading

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (No. 69, 2010).

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (No. 653, 2011).

Early Childhood Development Steering Committee of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) 2009, *National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care*, Commonwealth of Australia, ACT.

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) and Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority (VCAA) 2009, *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework for all Children from Birth to Eight Years*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.

Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) 2009, *Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, Commonwealth of Australia, ACT.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) 2011, *My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia*, Commonwealth of Australia, ACT.

Department Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) 2011, *Child Care Service Handbook 2011 – 2012*, Commonwealth of Australia, ACT.

Contacts

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority | www.acecqa.gov.au

Department of Education and Workplace Relations
www.deewr.gov.au

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development | www.education.vic.gov.au

Fair Work Australia | www.fwa.gov.au

Community Child Care, Resource and Development Unit
www.cccvic.org.au

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CCC provides leadership, advocacy and support to build the capacity of the children's services sector and promote public support for community owned, not for profit services.

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