

## **Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities**

- CP01** Family Access including Custody
- CP02** Intergenerational Program
- CP03** Volunteers and Visitors to the Centre

### Policy Statement

- Partnerships with families contribute to building a strong and inclusive community within the centre. Shared decision making with families demonstrates respect for the role of the parent and supports consistency between children's experiences at home and at the centre.
- The centre has an open door policy for families.
- Information with regard to family issues and personal lives will be handled confidentially.
- Parent/guardians may visit the Centre at any reasonable time whilst their child is in care.
- Parents are required to fully complete the centre's Enrolment Form and make the centre aware of any custody orders or access details and of any potential issues with these.
- All centre staff will be impartial and not act in any way that could be construed as 'taking sides' in any custody or access issue.

### Policy Considerations

The Early Years Learning Framework tells us that partnerships are based on the foundations of understanding each other's expectations and attitudes, and build on the strength of each other's knowledge. In genuine partnerships, families, and educators:

- value each other's knowledge
- value each other's contributions to and roles in each child's life
- communicate freely and respectfully with each other
- share insights and perspectives about the children
- engage in shared decision-making.

### Strategies for Implementation

#### *Centre Responsibility*

- The centre ensures the wellbeing of children is the priority and request parents to be mindful of the other children in care
- Parents are strongly encouraged to engage in open communication with room staff but also remembering that they are involved with children in their care

Staff will not offer to act as witnesses for any family in the centre in any legal hearings. This must be officially managed through the Legal Department of the University, and courts if required. All contact with Lawyers must be referred to the Director who will refer it to the University's Legal Team.

#### *Parent Responsibility*

- When parents are in the centre with their child they must be responsible for their child. Once they leave the room the educators will take responsibility. Should a child behave in a disruptive way that provides an issue for the educators 'Duty of Care' to the other children they will talk to the parents and may if necessary request the parent to take charge or request the parent leave the room with or without their child.

Parents are required to ensure all enrolling and related documentation lodged with the centre is current and accurate and kept up to date.

Parent/guardians will have access to the relevant Team Leader, the Coordinator or the Director as arranged at any reasonable time to enable them to discuss any concerns that they may have regarding their child.

Parents who wish to visit their child in the centre may do so if it is not disruptive to the other children or the program unless it is stipulated that the visitor must be supervised.

The centre will facilitate parent access to the following while they are in the centre:

- information about the educational program
- assessments or evaluations of their child's development, needs, interests, experiences and participation in the program and assessments of the child's progress against the learning outcomes
- enrolment records

### Custody

Where a child attending the centre is not living with both parents/guardians, or where disputes arise in relation to custody of the child, both parents have right of access, unless there is a Court Order to the contrary.

Where a non-enrolling parent cites a Court Order giving custody to him/her, the Court Order needs to be produced for inspection by the Director. The enrolling parent will be telephoned, both to check the existence of the Court Order, and to be informed about the situation. If necessary the legal team of the University will be requested to interview.

### Collection of Children

Staff members will only allow authorised nominees to collect a child.

The National Regulations provide that a parent of a child being educated and cared for by a service may enter the premises at any time that their child is attending the service. However, a parent can be refused entry to an Approved Service premises if permitting the parent's entry would pose a risk to the safety of children and staff, or if the provider, supervisor or educator is aware of a court order prohibiting the parent from having contact with the child.

The parent or collector of the child will ensure they are seen by the staff when collecting their child from the centre.

Only parents and authorised nominees identified on the Enrolment Form will be able to collect children from the centre.

Should a person be unauthorised because a parent forgot to nominate them and arrange authorisation to collect a child, staff will contact the parent/guardian and seek written authorisation via email or fax. Without written authorization the child cannot leave with this person.

If an unauthorised person who is not verified attempts to collect a child, staff will immediately dial '4444' and request the assistance of Security or the Police department on '0 000'.

The staff are obliged to request sight of identification from any collector not known to them such as driver's license or photo ID so they can compare against the Enrolment Form or fax or email provided by the parent.

Both parents will have access to their child at any time either to collect or visit if there are no legal orders limiting or refusing access to their child.

Administration staff or educators will guide the process of calling Crisis Care to arrange emergency care for any child that is not collected by parents or authorised nominees by 6.30pm (*See Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations and Delivery and Collection of Children Policies*)

### Parent Referrals

The Centre recognises that child rearing can be a difficult and stressful task for many reasons (e.g. insufficient economic, social and/or personal resources), and that some parents and children may require more specialist assistance than is available at the centre. Such parents will be assisted to gain information about other services available for obtaining support and assistance.

Parents experiencing economic, social or personal problems should be encouraged, and if necessary, assisted to seek help from the most appropriate agency. This may be done through liaison with the Director or Coordinator.

While respecting and supporting parents' rights, the centre takes the view that the welfare of children is also the responsibility of all members of the community.

Where a child's welfare is believed to be at risk and the parents are unable or unwilling to take steps to protect their child, the centre believes the rights of the child must take precedence over parental rights and in these circumstances such action as the Director deems appropriate will be taken to ensure protection of the child. (*See Child Protection and providing a child safe Environment Policy*)

**Where the wellbeing of any child or staff member is at risk any part of the above may not be able to be complied with. In such circumstances the W.A Police will be immediately contacted.**

### Considerations and Sources

Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012

- Section 165, 167, 173 – 175

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012

- Regulations 84, 99, 157, 160, 161, 162, 166, 168(2)(f)(h)(k), 170, 176, 177

National Quality Standard Quality Areas 1, 2, 6 and 7 including:

- 1.3.3 Information for families – Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.
- 2.2 Safety – Each child is protected.
- 2.2.3 Child protection – Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.
- 6.1 Supportive relationships with families – Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
- 6.1.2 Parent views are respected – The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in the decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
- 6.1.3 Families are supported – Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
- 7.1.2 Management systems – Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.

The Early Years Learning Framework

'Child protection responsibilities and the National Law' – Information sheet from the Department of Local Government and Communities (2015)

### Related Policies

The Curriculum – Developing Programs (*including Procedure*)

Interactions with Children

Orientation of Families and Children (*including Procedure*)

Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Diversity and Inclusion (*including Procedure*)

Dealing with Complaints (*including Procedure*)

Delivery and Collection of Children (*including Procedure and Late Collection of Children Procedure*)

Child Protection and providing a child safe Environment (*including Procedure*)

Violent or Threatening Behaviours (*including Procedure*)


### Related Forms

Enrolment Form

### Related Publications

The Parent Handbook: A Centre Guide for Parents and Families

### Authority



Signed:

- **Date: April 2021**

### Policy Statement

This policy must be read in conjunction with the policy **CP03** on **Visitors and Volunteers to the Centre**.

In the context of the **Early Learning Framework** the words Community and Partnership are often used. They can have a variety of meanings when being considered from either a personal or professional level but contribute towards developing a sense of belonging for all. An Intergenerational program contributes to building both strong relationships and inclusivity of community within the Centre. It is a program of reciprocal relationships between the children and families at the Centre and people of the community. The purpose is to provide generational sharing of experience, skills and knowledge which in turn results in a sense of contributing, well-being and worth in the older generation; and it allows both older and younger people to enjoy the pleasure that occurs one generation to another. Research has shown that intergenerational programs benefits the well-being across generations by increasing skills in learning and building knowledge in the younger generation while providing care and social support for children and the elderly in a common environment at the same time.

### Policy Considerations

The Early Years Learning Framework tells us of the importance of partnerships that are based on the foundations of understanding each other's expectations and attitudes, and builds on the strength of each other's knowledge. In genuine partnerships with families, children and educators the centre supports this idea by inviting in elderly people from our community to play a role as part of the children's experience. Children grow knowledge and respect for the elderly and the elderly have an opportunity to have purpose, understanding and respect. They:

- value each other's knowledge
- value each other's contributions to and roles in each other's life
- communicate freely and respectfully with each other
- share insights and perspectives
- engage in shared decision-making
- consider the physical and social environment
- have an understanding of intention.

### Strategies for Implementation

The Centre contacts the age care facilities/residence in the area and works with the appropriate person to identify people who may be interested in working with the Centre on a variety of activities that will play to the strengths of the aged person and support children's learning. The Centre informs its community of the intention to bring people in. They are advised of the activity and when it will take place. This is done with a minimum of two

week's notice in which time parents and children are invited to comment and express interest.

Once suitable candidates have been selected the Centre and volunteer work together through an orientation process and other procedures as outlined in policy **CP03**.

### *Centre / Aged Care Responsibility*

Prior to session conduct a risk audit to ensure location is suitable:

- for people with walkers or wheelchairs
- furniture suitable for children and adults
- suitable safety and fall equipment available for activities held in high risk or outdoor spaces
- Protocols regarding health protocols for children, families and the elderly must be established
- commencement of the session, parents (on behalf of their child), older people and staff should sign to acknowledge that they are well
- early childhood and aged care teams need to stay up-to-date with current government health protocols
- hygiene and food safety plans should be shared to ensure all participants are aware of the Centre's safety protocols

### **Considerations and Sources**

Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012

- Section 165, 167, 173 – 175

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012

- Regulations 84, 99, 155-157, 166, 168(2)(a)(b)(h)(j), 170, 176,

National Quality Standard Quality Areas 1, 5, 6 including:

- 1.1.3 Program learning opportunities.
- 1.2.1 Intentional teaching.
- 1.2.2 Responsive teaching and scaffolding
- 5.1.2 Dignity and rights
- 5.2.1 Collaborative Learning
- 5.2.2 Self-regulation
- 6.1.2 Parent views are respected
- 6.2.2 Access and participation
- 6.2.3 Community engagement

The Early Years Learning Framework

**Early Childhood Australia – A Research in Practice series**

**Related Policies**

The Curriculum – Developing Programs

Interactions with Children

Orientation of Families and Children

Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Child Protection and providing a child safe environment

**Related Forms**

Risk Assessment Form (Volunteer Checks Information)

WWCC

**Related Publications**

The Parent Handbook: A Centre Guide for Parents and Families

Government of Western Australia Volunteer Checks

**Authority**

**Signed:** 

**Date: April 2021**



The Intergenerational programme is designed as a reciprocal exchange where children have the opportunity to work with an older generation and learn from them, while the older generation have an opportunity to mix with younger children, learn from them and add purpose to their daily life.

The intergenerational volunteers will receive an orientation from the Curtin University Early Childhood Centre which will include

- Communication and confidentiality
- Treating children with respect
- Manual handling and Risk Assessment

At all times the staff at Curtin University Early Childhood Centre will work with volunteers/ older generation to ensure that interactions with children:

- promote a safe, secure and nurturing environment
- ensure that volunteers are authentic and responsive in their interactions with children
- act in a manner as dictated by fairness, acceptance and empathy with respect for culture, rights, community and the individual.
- Children will not be picked up or held by the older generation person

The older people who enter the centre will work with a small group of no more than 4 children. They will always be accompanied by an educator and at no time will be left alone with the children. The Centre is respectful of culture and of respectful interaction with all.

Prior to working with children we will conduct a Centre visitor orientation including Risk Assessment and Manual Handling, keep name, address and emergency number on file

The intergenerational volunteers work with the group of children to demonstrate skills such as gardening, music and movement, story-telling and dress up. They will hold a Working With Children Check (WWCC) supported by the Centre. A copy will be kept on file.

The intergenerational person is welcome to discuss ideas and make suggestions to the Educators or Director on the projects they would like to do with the children.

### **Policy Statement**

At Curtin University Early Childhood Centre, we are committed to ensuring children's health and safety are paramount at all times. While we welcome visitors into the centre and encourage community involvement we continue our commitment to the children of the centre. In doing so we have developed strategies to ensure that interactions with visitors and volunteers are maximised whilst ensuring the supervision and safety of each child is maintained.

There are three categories of visitors that come into the Centre. The first being the personal kind. That is:

- Visitors that are part of the an enrolled child's family such as an authorised relative or close family friend who comes in to see where the child spends their day and to have a look over the Centre
- Parents who are assisting with an event

The second is a visitor who may provide an experience to the children of the Centre. Such as:

- Professional in-service for children such as the fireman, policeman, nurse, student teachers, children's professional entertainer etc.
- A volunteer from the university.
- Someone from the aged care facility, the community, or a family relative that comes in to give a helping hand.

The third category of visitor is of a professional nature. That is:

- Department of Education and Training authorised persons
- Tradespersons
- Medical and early childhood professionals acting in a support role to the child such as speech therapist or inclusion agency.
- Of staff within the University in relation to centre operations such as Health and safety, human resources

Officers from some sections of the Australian and Western Australian governments also have legal access to the centre, these include, but is not inclusive: Department for Child Protection and Family Support, Department for Communities, W.A. Police, Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and the relevant Staff Unions

### **Policy Considerations**

It is the Centre's role to welcome and work with visitors to build and enhance programs for children whilst remaining vigilant in their supervisory requirements to ensure the safety of children at all times. And to ensure that the visitor/volunteer is able to engage in their activity in safe confidence.

So that the above can happen, at all times while in the Centre visitors must be under the supervision of a staff member when working in direct contact with children. It is mandatory for all those from Category 2 and 3 (above) to have a current working with children's check also.

- Trades people who have come into the Centre for maintenance work and are not working directly with children are not required to have a WWCC.

### **Strategies for Implementation**

#### *Centre Responsibilities*

##### *Category 1*

- An authorised relative or close family friend who comes in to see where the child spends their day and to have a look over the Centre
- Complete the Visitors' Register upon arrival and departure with signature and arrival and departure times.
- Remain under the direct supervision of educator/supervisor and/or mentor
- Follow the instructions and guidance of educator/supervisor and/or mentor
- Maintain confidentiality in relation to children, and families
- All visitors and volunteers to the Centre are supplementary to staff requirements and will not be used in staffing ratios.
- All visitors and volunteers to the Centre are governed by the Policy and Procedures of the centre.

##### *Category 2 & 3*

This group may consist of professional in-service for children such as the fireman, policeman, nurse, student teacher, children's professional entertainer etc. It may be a volunteer from the university, someone from the community, or a family relative that comes in to give a helping hand.

- Maintaining a register of visitors – Ensure visitors fully complete and sign the Visitors Register – time of arrival and departure; phone no. and signature
- Provide training annually to educators to supervise, support and mentor students and visitors
- Prepare children for visitors to the service
- Children to remain with the educator whilst visitors are in attendance
- Remain under the direct supervision of educator/supervisor and/or mentor
- Follow the instructions and guidance of educator/supervisor and/or mentor
- Maintain confidentiality in relation to children, and families
- Scheduling visitors, where practicable, to attend when educational leader/coordinator can be in attendance as well to support the supervision of children
- Provide volunteers with an orientation process

#### *Student Practicums*

### **To be read in conjunction with SA08 Students on Practicum**

#### *Priority of Access for Students*

When a student comes into the centre the priority is:

- Disciplines from Curtin University will have priority followed by those from other Universities, TAFE and Registered Training Organisations.

- High school students gaining work experience as part of their school program, provided that the school has requested the placement, and the student is studying an accredited early childhood or family studies.

Staff from other approved education and care services attending learning events at the Centre as are approved by the Director. They will be subject to the policies and procedures of the Centre as are appropriate to the event.

### *Centre Responsibilities*

- Ensuring students hold current mandatory safety checks (WWCC) – record on file  
Students who are approved for placement at the Centre will be oriented to the Centre and its policies, especially the policies of confidentiality and those that detail the rights of the child to a safe environment.
- Students on practicum are to display a photo with an explanatory sign for parents on the door or window of the areas they are allocated to.
- Students are required to follow the guidelines of the Centre with regard to their appearance, approach and professional conduct.
- The parents or guardian of any child are provided with the right to request that their child is not involved with the student or subject to student observations.
- The number of students and the timing of taking students are at the discretion of the Director.
- The events and needs of the Centre children and families will take priority over student placement.
- Student visits will be managed to ensure they do not disrupt the existing program and harmony of the Centre.

### *Category 3*

This category consists of Department of Education and Training authorised persons or other such authorities related to the service. Trades people and medical and early childcare professionals acting in a support role to the child.

- Ensuring all required insurances are up to date (public liability)
- Maintenance and repairs done outside of operating hours, as far as practicable
- Trades people who have come into the Centre for maintenance work and are not working directly with children are not required to have a WWCC.
- Ensuring records are stored in a safe secure location maintaining confidentiality.

### **Supervision**

Adequate supervision of children must be maintained at all times. Children being educated and cared for in the service will be supervised at all time by the educator and not left alone with a visitor or volunteer (regulation 166(165))

Behaviour that is determined harmful or inappropriate will result in the visitor or volunteer being asked to leave the Centre.

Uninvited visitors will be asked to leave the Centre. Refusal to leave will necessitate the calling of security and or the police.

### Considerations and Sources

Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012

- Section 161-175

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012

- Regulations 145, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 163, 164, 165, 166, 169

National Quality Standard including:

- 4.2 Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships
- 5.1 Respectful relationships are developed and maintained with each child.
- 7.3.1 Reporting Information to Regulatory Bodies

The Early Years Learning Framework

### Related Policies

Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations

Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Diversity and Inclusion

Enrolment (*including Procedure and Management of the Waiting List*)

Orientation of Families and Children

Staff Orientation

### Authority

- **Signed:** 
- **Date: 6 May 2021**

### References and resources

Department of Education and Training

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)

Belonging, Being & Becoming

Early Childhood Australia

Protecting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young

People

National Quality Framework

