

PARTICIPATION OF VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS POLICY

QUALITY AREA 4 |



PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines to ensure:

- the adequate supervision of all enrolled children is maintained at all times.
- the provision of a safe and secure environment for all children at Sholem Aleichem College and Preschool.



POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Sholem Aleichem College and Preschool 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 the service
- ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of each child at the service through consistent compliance with this policy and procedures when engaging volunteers and students.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Sholem Aleichem College and Preschool including during offsite excursions and activities.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Developing guidelines for accepting applications from volunteers and students to work at the service in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators and which are aligned with the <i>Child Safe Environment Policy</i>	√	√	√		

Accepting or rejecting a potential volunteer or student based on the circumstances of the service at the time, in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor	√	√			
Ensuring that children being educated and cared for by the service are adequately supervised, and the legislated educator-to-child ratios are complied with at all times (<i>Regulation 123, 355, 360</i>) (<i>refer to Supervision of Children Policy</i>)	R	R	√		
Checking the status of the Working with Children (WWC) Clearance of volunteers and students where required, and ensuring that the details are recorded in the service register	√	√			
Ensuring that the staff record contains the name, address and date of birth of volunteers and students attending the service (<i>Regulation 145, 149(1)</i>)	R	√			
Keeping a record for each day on which each student or volunteer participates with the date and the hours of participation (<i>Regulation 145, 149(2)</i>)	R	√			
Ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians are adequately supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected	√	√	√		
Ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children	√	√	√		
Ensuring that the nominated supervisor, educators and other staff, volunteers and students on placement at the service are not affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication) that would impair their capacity to supervise or provide education and care to children (<i>Regulation 83</i>)	R				
Ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service 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 (<i>Regulation 157</i>)	R	R	√		
Developing a range of strategies to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service	√	√	√		
Providing volunteers, students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures, and a copy of the	√	√	√		

<i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</i>					
Ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians comply with the National Regulations and all service policies and procedures, including the <i>Code of Conduct Policy</i> , while attending the service	√	√	√		√
Developing an induction checklist for volunteers and students attending the service (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>) in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators.	√	√	√		
Notifying parents/guardians of a serious incident (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) involving their child as soon as possible, but not more than 24 hours after the occurrence (<i>Regulation 86, 87 (3)(e)</i>)	R	√	√		
Ensuring that volunteers and students have completed the induction checklist (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>) and have been provided with a copy of the Parent/Guardian and Volunteer Code of Conduct, if applicable.		√			
Assisting volunteers and students to understand the requirements of this policy and the expectations of the service			√		
Volunteers/students provide all details required to complete the staff record				√	√
Volunteers/students understand and acknowledge the requirement for confidentiality of all information relating to educators and families within the service (<i>refer to Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i>)				√	√
Volunteers/students comply with the requirements of the <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</i> and with all service policies and procedures, including the <i>Code of Conduct Policy</i> , while at the service				√	√
Volunteers/students undertake the induction process and completing the induction checklist (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>) prior to commencement at the service					√
Volunteers/students follow the directions of staff at the service at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.				√	√



BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

Students may participate in programs and activities at the service from time to time including observing and experiencing the provision of centre-based education and care. This will be encouraged and facilitated by Sholem Aleichem wherever appropriate and possible.

Sholem Aleichem College and Preschool 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. "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 – refer to Sources).

Sholem Aleichem College and Preschool 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 the service (refer to Code of Conduct Policy).

The role that volunteers play in education and care 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 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.

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 participation at the service, a volunteer or student (aged 18 years or over) must be in possession of a Working with Children (WWC) Clearance (*REFER TO DEFINITIONS*).

Parents/guardians whose children usually attend the service are exempt from needing a WWC Check (*Refer to Definitions*). However, a service may decide, as a demonstration of duty of care, that all parents/guardians who volunteer at the service are required to undergo a WWC Check (*Refer to Definitions*).

In line with Child Safe Standard 4 and the Child Safe Environment Policy, prior to engaging a volunteer or student an assessment should be undertaken of the nature of the responsibility to determine whether a position description is required, and based on that whether an interview and referee checks are required.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

Child Safe Standards

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)

Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)

National Quality Standard, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au



DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

Child-related work: In relation to the WWC Check (refer to Definitions), child-related work includes work with children which may involve physical contact, face-to-face contact, oral, written or electronic communication.

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 the service. 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.

Staff record: A record which the approved provider of a centre-based service must keep containing information about the nominated supervisor, the Educational Leader, staff, volunteers, students and the responsible person at a service (Regulations 146–149). A sample staff record is available on the ACECQA website: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

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 service in an unpaid or honorary capacity. These activities may include child-related work (refer to Definitions), administrative tasks, or preparing materials or food.

Working with Children (WWC) Check: The check is a legal requirement for those undertaking paid or voluntary child-related work (refer to Definitions) 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.

Working with Children (WWC) Clearance: A WWC Clearance is granted to a person under Worker Screening 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 AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): www.acecqa.gov.au

- The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: Belonging, Being, Becoming: www.acecqa.gov.au
- A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation (The Commission for Children and Young People) www.cyp.vic.gov.au
- Working with Children Check unit, Department of Justice & Regulation – provides details of how to obtain a WWC Check: www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au

Service policies

- 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 Policy
- Staffing Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy

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, volunteers and where appropriate parents/guardians 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 the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk



ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Induction Checklist Template



AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Sholem Aleichem College and Preschool in August 2025. It was reviewed and adopted by the approved provider in February 2026.

REVIEW DATE: February 2029

ATTACHMENT 1

Sample induction checklist for volunteers and students

Name: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by all volunteers and students participating at Sholem Aleichem College and returned to the nominated supervisor prior to commencing at the service.

	Please tick
I have a current and valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) and a copy of it has been provided to Sholem Aleichem College.	
I have read the Child Protection Policy and Parents/Guardians and Volunteers Code of Conduct	
I have read the Volunteer Guidelines and have completed a Volunteer Declaration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">I have completed the Child Protection eModule and a copy of my completion certificate has been provided to Sholem Aleichem College.	

Volunteer or student name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Nominated Supervisor's name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



