

VOLUNTEERS, STUDENTS AND VISITORS POLICY

1. Policy statement

At Weldon Children's Services, the safety, wellbeing, and dignity of every child is our highest priority. Volunteers, students, and visitors are valued members of our community, contributing to the learning, development, and wellbeing of children.

All volunteers, students, and visitors must comply with Weldon Children's Services policies, procedures, and relevant legislation, including child protection laws, the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, and the National Quality Standard.

Access to children and participation in service activities will only occur under strict supervision and in accordance with Weldon Children's Services procedures. Any breach of this policy, or behaviour that poses a risk to children, will result in restricted access or immediate withdrawal.

This policy ensures Weldon Children's Services maintains a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment, while supporting the positive contributions of volunteers, students, and visitors.

2. Background

Weldon Children's Services recognises that volunteers, students, and visitors contribute valuable skills, knowledge, and support to children's learning and wellbeing. Their participation enriches programs, provides additional supervision and resources, and strengthens community engagement.

However, involving individuals who are not employed by the service introduces potential risks to child safety and wellbeing. Unsupervised or inadequately prepared individuals can inadvertently compromise safety, confidentiality, or service quality.

This policy is informed by:

- Child protection legislation, including the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act (NSW) and Working With Children Check requirements.
- Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations (2011), particularly regulations relating to supervision, staffing, and governance.
- National Quality Standard (Quality Areas 2 and 4), emphasising children's safety, wellbeing, and the management of educators, volunteers, and visitors.
- Weldon Children's Services' philosophy and Code of Conduct, which prioritises safe, inclusive, and respectful environments for children, families, and staff.
- Mandatory Child Safety Training on Geckko, ensuring all educators and staff are up-to-date with the latest child protection knowledge, risk management strategies, and safe practices for supervision of children in all environments, including interactions with volunteers, students, and visitors.

This policy ensures that all volunteers, students, and visitors:

- Are appropriately screened, inducted, and supervised.

- Understand and adhere to child safety expectations and service procedures.
- Contribute positively to the learning environment without compromising children’s safety, privacy, or wellbeing.

3. Legislative requirements

| Section/Regulation | Description |
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| Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW) – s.23, s.24 | Requires mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect by educators and staff; outlines responsibilities to protect children from harm. |
| Education and Care Services National Law (2011) – s. 167 | Obligation to notify regulatory authorities and report incidents affecting the health, safety, or wellbeing of children. |
| Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) – Reg 122, 123, 145, 155, 156, 168, 170, 171, 173 | Reg 122: Staffing arrangements must ensure adequate supervision. Reg 123: Children must be adequately supervised at all times. Reg 145: Visitors and volunteers must be documented in attendance records. Reg 155: Staff must have up-to-date first aid, CPR, and anaphylaxis training. Reg 156: Standard of staff qualifications for supervising students and volunteers. Reg 168: Policies and procedures must be maintained and made available to staff, volunteers, and families. Reg 170: Records of staff, volunteers, students, and visitors must be kept up to date. Reg 171: Confidentiality and record-keeping requirements for children and families. Reg 173: Maintaining attendance records for all children, staff, and visitors. |
| Working With Children Check (WWCC) – Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 | All volunteers, students, and visitors who work with children must have a valid WWCC clearance before participating. |
| National Quality Standard (NQS) – QA2, QA4 | QA2: Children’s health and safety, including supervision, child protection, and managing risk in all environments. QA4: Staffing arrangements, professional standards, staff qualifications, and ensuring volunteers and students meet compliance requirements. |
| SafeWork NSW – Work Health and Safety Act 2011 / Guidelines for Excursions | Ensures duty of care for all adults on site and safe participation in excursions and water-based or other high-risk activities. |
| Geckko Mandatory Child Safety Training (2026) | All staff and supervising educators must complete the government-mandated child safety modules to ensure awareness of contemporary child protection, risk management, and supervision practices. |

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| <p>National Child Safe Standards (10 Standards – ECEC Specific)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership & Governance – Child safety policies, procedures, and governance practices embedded in daily ECEC operations, with accountability for volunteers and visitors. 2. Child Participation – Children’s views and preferences are actively sought in activities, including programs involving visitors or student participation. 3. Family & Community Engagement – Families are informed, provide consent, and are engaged in decisions regarding volunteer and visitor involvement. 4. Equity & Diversity – Programs and interactions support inclusive practices, cultural safety, and respect for all abilities. 5. Workforce Suitability & Support – Volunteers, students, and visitors are screened, inducted, supervised, and supported according to ECEC regulatory standards (Reg 122, 123, 156). 6. Clear Reporting Processes – Procedures for reporting child safety concerns, incidents, or breaches are documented and communicated to all adults in the service. 7. Training & Supervision – All adults complete mandatory child safety training (including Geckko), induction, and ongoing supervision; educators model safe interactions with children. 8. Safe Physical & Online Environments – Access to children is controlled; facilities, excursions, and digital platforms comply with safety and supervision requirements. 9. Embedded Risk Management – All ECEC activities involving volunteers, students, or visitors undergo documented risk assessments, including excursions, incursions, and water-based programs. 10. Continuous Improvement – Policies, procedures, and supervision practices are regularly reviewed and updated in line with NQS QA2/QA4, regulatory changes, Geckko training, and feedback from staff, families, and children. |
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4. Principles informed in this policy:

Child Safety is Paramount

- The safety, wellbeing, and dignity of every child takes priority over all other considerations.
- All adults interacting with children must act to prevent harm, neglect, or abuse.

Compliance with Legislation and Standards

- All volunteers, students, and visitors must comply with relevant legislation, regulations, WWCC requirements, and mandatory child safety training (including Geckko modules).
- Practices align with the Education and Care Services National Law & Regulations and the National Quality Standard (QA2 and QA4).

Screening, Induction, and Ongoing Supervision

- All adults are screened, inducted, and supervised appropriately.
- Volunteers and students are never left unsupervised with children and are supported in understanding their responsibilities.

Accountability and Professional Conduct

- All volunteers, students, and visitors must adhere to Weldon Children’s Services Code of Conduct.
- Adults are accountable for their behaviour, interactions, and adherence to procedures.

Risk Management and Duty of Care

- All programs, excursions, and activities involving volunteers, students, and visitors are risk-assessed and monitored.
- Duty of care includes active supervision, reporting hazards, and implementing mitigation strategies.

Family and Community Engagement

- Families are informed of the roles of volunteers, students, and visitors and provide informed consent for their child’s participation in relevant activities.
- Engagement supports trust, transparency, and shared responsibility for child safety.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- All interactions promote cultural safety, inclusivity, and respect for diversity, ensuring every child can participate safely.

Clear Reporting and Response Mechanisms

- Volunteers, students, and visitors are trained to recognise and report any concerns or incidents immediately to the nominated supervisor or Centre Director.
- Reporting processes align with regulatory obligations and child protection laws.

Continuous Improvement

- Policies, procedures, supervision, and training are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect legislative changes, Geckko training updates, and emerging best practice.

1. Safe Physical and Digital Environments

- Access to children is controlled, both on-site and during excursions, including water-based activities.
- Digital platforms used in the service are monitored to ensure children’s privacy and safety.

5. Key terms

| Term | Meaning | Source |
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| Approved Provider | The legal entity responsible for operating Weldon Children’s Services, ensuring compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations. | Education and Care Services National Law 2011, s. 5 |
| Child Safety / Child Protection | The actions, policies, and practices in place to ensure children are safe from harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation. | National Child Safe Standards; Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW) |
| Code of Conduct | A set of standards and expectations for behaviour that all staff, volunteers, students, and visitors must follow when interacting with children. | Weldon Children’s Services Policy; NQS QA4 |
| Emergency Procedure | Documented steps to follow in the event of an incident affecting child safety, health, or wellbeing. | Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Reg 168 |
| Excursion / Incursion | Planned experiences outside or inside the service involving children, which may include volunteers, students, or visitors; includes risk management considerations. | Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Reg 100–102 |
| Geckko Training | Mandatory government-endorsed child safety online modules for educators and staff to ensure knowledge of contemporary child protection practices. | NSW Department of Education / Mandatory Child Safety Training 2026 |
| National Quality Standard (NQS) | A national benchmark for the quality of early childhood education and care services, including children’s safety, staffing arrangements, and risk management. | Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) |
| Nominated Supervisor / Centre Director | The educator responsible for day-to-day operation of the service, implementation of policies, and supervision of staff, students, volunteers, and visitors. | Education and Care Services National Law 2011, s. 161 |
| Volunteer / Student / Visitor | Individuals who support or participate in the service without being directly employed, including community volunteers, students on placements, and visitors attending programs or excursions. | Weldon Children’s Services Policy & Procedures; Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Reg 145 |
| Working With Children Check (WWCC) | A statutory screening process ensuring that individuals working or volunteering with children do not pose a risk of harm. | Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012 (NSW) |
| Risk Assessment | A systematic process of identifying hazards, evaluating risks, and implementing control measures to ensure the safety of children, staff, and visitors during activities. | Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Reg 100–101; NQS QA2 |
| Supervision | Active observation and monitoring of children to ensure their safety, wellbeing, and engagement in activities. | Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Reg 123; NQS QA2 |

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| Informed Consent | Written agreement from a parent/carer authorising a child's participation in activities, excursions, or programs involving volunteers, students, or visitors. | Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Reg 102 |
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6. Links to other policies

The following policies may be linked to this policy:

- Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Water Safety Policy
- Excursion Policy
- Staffing
- Emergency and Evacuation Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

7. Induction and ongoing training

- Induction and ongoing training will be implemented, focusing on this policy and related procedures.
- Information will be shared with relief/ casual and educator assistants on induction and as relevant to the environments that they are working in, their shift responsibilities and the children in their care.
- Procedures and clear expectations about conducting assessments are part of Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person induction training, and regularly reviewed at staff meetings.

8. Monitoring, evaluation, and review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every two years.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

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| Policy created: | May 2025 |
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| Review Date | Assignee | Notes |
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| 04/02/2026 | Lauren Roberts | Updated policy statement Updated Background Updated Legislative requirements Updated Mandatory training requirements |
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Procedure

Title

Onboarding and Orientation Procedure – Volunteers, Students, and Visitors

Reference to Policy and Philosophy

This procedure supports the Volunteers, Students, and Visitors Policy and aligns with the Weldon Way philosophy, which prioritises child safety, inclusion, wellbeing, and respectful, professional engagement. It ensures all non-employed personnel are prepared, informed, and compliant with regulatory and service standards before participating in any activity with children.

Procedure

- Pre-Engagement Checks
- Confirm valid Working With Children Check (WWCC) or equivalent.
- Obtain emergency contact and medical information (if applicable).
- Induction and Orientation
- Provide service handbook including policies, procedures, and Code of Conduct.
- Complete mandatory child safety training (Geckko modules).
- Explain roles, expectations, and boundaries regarding interactions with children.
- Orient to emergency procedures, supervision expectations, reporting processes, and safety equipment.

Documentation

- Record completion of induction in staff/volunteer/student files.
- Collect signed agreements or consent forms acknowledging understanding of policies and responsibilities.

Monitoring and Review

- Induction completion checked prior to participation in programs.
- Annual review of onboarding records and refresher orientation for returning volunteers or students.

Systems to Monitor

- Induction checklists and sign-off forms
- WWCC verification records
- Training completion records (Geckko, first aid, CPR)
- Incident reporting logs related to volunteers/students

Roles and Responsibilities Table

| Role | Responsibilities |
|--|---|
| Approved Provider | Ensure systems for onboarding volunteers, students, and visitors are compliant with legislation and service policies. |
| Centre Director / Nominated Supervisor | Oversee induction process; ensure records are maintained; verify compliance with WWCC and training requirements. |
| Educator | Support orientation by introducing volunteers/students to programs, supervision zones, and safety procedures. |
| Volunteer / Student / Visitor | Complete induction and mandatory training; read policies; sign acknowledgment forms; ask questions to clarify responsibilities. |
| Family / Carer | Provide accurate information where required (e.g., child medical info, permissions). |

Procedure

Title

Supervision Procedure – Volunteers, Students, and Visitors

Reference to Policy and Philosophy

This procedure supports the Volunteers, Students, and Visitors Policy and Weldon Children’s Services philosophy, prioritising active supervision, child safety, and wellbeing, while enabling meaningful participation of non-employed personnel under clear boundaries.

Procedure

Supervision Responsibilities

- Volunteers, students, and visitors must never be left alone with children.
- Educators maintain direct visual supervision of all children, including those engaged with volunteers/students.

- Supervision responsibilities are assigned prior to each activity, including excursions, water-based programs, and incursions.

Orientation of Supervision Roles

- Review program layout, supervision zones, and safety equipment with all non-employed personnel.
- Explain reporting lines for incidents or concerns.

Monitoring and Compliance

- Staff conduct regular checks of supervision adherence.
- Incidents, hazards, or near misses involving volunteers/students are documented and reported.
- Supervision practices reviewed during staff meetings and annual audits.

Systems to Monitor

- Supervision checklists and rosters
- Incident reporting logs
- Observation audits by Centre Director/Nominated Supervisor
- Staff debriefs and performance reviews

Roles and Responsibilities Table

| Role | Responsibilities |
|--|---|
| Approved Provider | Ensure adequate supervision systems and policies are in place; allocate resources to support safe participation of volunteers/students. |
| Centre Director / Nominated Supervisor | Assign supervision zones; oversee compliance with supervision policies; ensure volunteers/students follow instructions; intervene if safety risks are identified. |
| Educator | Actively supervise children; mentor volunteers/students in safe engagement; ensure policies and procedures are followed. |
| Volunteer / Student / Visitor | Follow assigned supervision protocols; never leave children unsupervised; report hazards or incidents immediately. |
| Children | Follow instructions; remain within supervised areas; report hazards or incidents to educators immediately. |
| Family / Carer | Support understanding of supervision expectations; provide information that may affect supervision (e.g., medical needs, swimming ability). |