Glen Iris Child Care and Kindergarten

GI-024 – Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy

Policy Number	GI-024
Quality Area	QA4 – Staffing Arrangements • QA7 – Governance and Leadership
National Law	s.162 • s.167 • s.168 • s.169
National Regulations	Regs. 149 • 151 • 168 • 169
Related NQS	QA4.1.1 • QA4.2.2 • QA7.1.2
EYLF V2.0	Practice Principles • Collaborative Leadership and Teamwork • Respectful Relationships and Responsive Engagement
Victorian Child Safe Standards:	Standards 2 • 4 • 6 • 11
Version:	1.0
Approved By:	Centre Director
Approved Date:	July 2026
Review Date:	July 2027

OUR COMMITMENT

Glen Iris child care and kindergarten values the contribution that students and volunteers make to our learning community. Their participation enriches the educational environment, supports professional learning and strengthens connections with the wider community.

We are committed to providing students and volunteers with meaningful learning opportunities while ensuring the safety, wellbeing and rights of every child remain our highest priority. All students and volunteers will be appropriately supervised, inducted into the service and supported to understand their responsibilities, including their obligations under the Victorian Child Safe Standards and the service's policies and procedures.

LEGISLATIVE INTENT

This policy supports Glen Iris child care and kindergarten in meeting its obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations by ensuring students and volunteers participate in the service in a manner that protects children's safety, supports quality education and care, and maintains appropriate supervision at all times.

The policy also supports compliance with the National Quality Standard, the Victorian Child Safe Standards and the service's commitment to child-safe practices and professional conduct.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide clear expectations for the participation of students and volunteers.
- Ensure students and volunteers understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Protect the safety, wellbeing and rights of all children.
- Ensure appropriate supervision is maintained at all times.
- Promote professional learning and positive mentoring experiences.
- Maintain compliance with legislative and child safety requirements.
- Support a culture of professionalism, accountability and continuous improvement.

WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO

This policy applies to:

- Approved Providers.
- Centre Director.
- Nominated Supervisor.
- Educational Leader.
- Educators.
- Administration Staff.
- Students undertaking work placement.
- Volunteers.
- Contractors (where applicable).

DEFINITIONS

Student
A person undertaking vocational education, tertiary study, secondary school work experience or another approved placement within the service as part of a recognised education or training program.

Volunteer
A person who provides assistance or support to the service without payment and who is approved by the Centre Director or Approved Provider.

Direct Supervision
Continuous visual and auditory supervision provided by an educator who is immediately available to guide, support and intervene where necessary.

Working with Children Check (WWCC)
A screening process required under Victorian legislation to help protect children from the risk of harm by assessing whether a person is suitable to work or volunteer with children.

WHY THIS POLICY MATTERS

Students and volunteers provide valuable contributions to early childhood education through fresh perspectives, additional support and opportunities for professional growth. Effective induction, supervision and mentoring ensure students and volunteers develop their knowledge and skills while maintaining high standards of professional conduct and child safety.

This policy ensures all students and volunteers understand their responsibilities, work within the scope of their role and contribute positively to the learning environment while supporting the safety, wellbeing and best interests of every child.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Glen Iris child care and kindergarten is committed to:

- Providing students and volunteers with positive, supportive and meaningful learning experiences.
- Ensuring the safety, wellbeing and rights of every child remain the highest priority.
- Maintaining effective supervision of students and volunteers at all times.
- Promoting professionalism, ethical conduct and confidentiality.
- Ensuring students and volunteers understand and uphold the Victorian Child Safe Standards.
- Supporting collaborative mentoring and professional growth.
- Ensuring all participation complies with legislative requirements, service policies and recognised best practice.

OUR POLICY

Glen Iris child care and kindergarten welcomes students and volunteers whose participation supports children's learning, educator development and community engagement.

Students and volunteers are valued members of the service; however, they will always work under the direct supervision of an educator or Responsible Person and will never be left alone with children or be included in educator-to-child ratios unless permitted under the National Regulations.

Prior to commencing at the service, students and volunteers will participate in an induction that outlines:

- Child Safe Standards.
- Code of Conduct.
- Privacy and Confidentiality requirements.
- Emergency procedures.
- Health and Safety expectations.
- Child Protection responsibilities.
- Appropriate professional boundaries.
- Reporting obligations.
- Service philosophy, policies and procedures.

Students and volunteers are expected to demonstrate respectful relationships with children, families and educators while maintaining professional behaviour at all times.

HOW WE PUT THIS POLICY INTO PRACTICE

Recruitment and Induction

Glen Iris child care and kindergarten will:

- Verify all required documentation before a placement commences.
- Sight and record Working with Children Check details where applicable.
- Confirm placement requirements with training organisations or schools.
- Complete a comprehensive induction prior to commencing.
- Provide students and volunteers with access to relevant policies and procedures.
- Explain expectations regarding professional conduct and child safety.

Supervision and Support

The service will:

- Allocate an experienced educator to mentor each student.
- Ensure volunteers are supervised by an educator at all times.
- Clearly explain the responsibilities and limitations of each role.
- Provide regular guidance, feedback and opportunities for reflection.
- Encourage students to ask questions and participate in professional discussions.
- Ensure students undertake learning experiences appropriate to their course requirements and skill level.

Professional Conduct

Students and volunteers are expected to:

- Demonstrate respectful interactions with children, families and educators.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Follow educator directions and service procedures.
- Respect children's dignity, rights and individual differences.
- Wear appropriate clothing and identification where required.
- Immediately report concerns relating to child safety, wellbeing or workplace safety.

Child Safety

Glen Iris child care and kindergarten will ensure:

- Students and volunteers understand their obligations under the Victorian Child Safe Standards.
- Children are never placed at risk through inappropriate supervision.
- Professional boundaries are maintained.
- Students and volunteers are never responsible for the service or left alone with children.
- Any concerns regarding conduct are addressed immediately.
- All child safety concerns are managed in accordance with the Child Protection and Child Safe Environment Policies.

Confidentiality

Students and volunteers will:

- Respect the privacy of children, families and educators.
- Keep all information confidential.
- Not remove service documentation without permission.
- Not share photographs or information through personal devices or social media.
- Follow the service's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy at all times.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Approved Providers

Will:

- Ensure systems support the safe participation of students and volunteers.
- Maintain compliance with legislative requirements.
- Provide resources that support quality supervision and mentoring.
- Promote a child-safe organisational culture.

Centre Director
Will:

- Approve student placements and volunteers.
- Ensure required documentation is completed before commencement.
- Coordinate inductions.
- Allocate appropriate mentors.
- Monitor placements and address any concerns promptly.
- Ensure compliance with child safety requirements.

Educational Leader
Will:

- Support educators in mentoring students.
- Promote reflective practice and professional learning.
- Assist students to understand curriculum decision-making.
- Encourage professional discussions and critical reflection.

Educators
Will:

- Provide direct supervision.
- Act as positive professional role models.
- Support students' learning and development.
- Provide constructive feedback.
- Ensure volunteers understand their responsibilities.
- Immediately report concerns regarding conduct or child safety.

Students and Volunteers
Will:

- Participate professionally and respectfully.
- Follow educator directions.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Work within the scope of their placement.
- Ask for guidance when unsure.
- Comply with all service policies and procedures.
- Demonstrate behaviours consistent with the Child Safe Standards.

Volunteers
Will:

- Follow educator instructions.
- Remain under supervision.
- Respect children's rights and privacy.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Report concerns immediately.
- Follow the Code of Conduct and Child Safe Standards.

Glen Iris child care and kindergarten in practice

At Glen Iris child care and kindergarten, students and volunteers are welcomed as valued members of our learning community. We recognise that quality placement experiences help build the future early childhood workforce while also enriching our educational program through new ideas, enthusiasm and collaboration.

Before commencing, every student and volunteer completes an induction that includes the service philosophy, Child Safe Standards, Code of Conduct, emergency procedures, confidentiality requirements and expectations for professional practice. They are introduced to educators, routines and learning environments to ensure they feel supported and prepared for their role.

Each student is partnered with an experienced educator who provides mentoring, guidance and regular feedback throughout their placement. Volunteers are supervised at all times and participate in meaningful experiences that support children's learning while remaining within the scope of their role.

Our leadership team regularly reflects on placement experiences to ensure students, volunteers, educators and children all benefit from positive, respectful and well-supported partnerships.

CHILDREN'S VOICE IN ACTION

Children benefit from engaging with students and volunteers who build respectful, caring and responsive relationships.
Children's voices are supported when students and volunteers:

- Listen to children's ideas and interests.
- Follow children's lead during play and learning experiences.
- Respect each child's individuality, culture and identity.
- Encourage children's confidence and participation.
- Support children's independence while recognising when educator assistance is required.
- Promote safe, respectful and inclusive interactions.

Educators remain responsible for ensuring children's rights, wellbeing and voices remain central throughout all interactions involving students and volunteers.

EXCEEDING PRACTICE

Glen Iris child care and kindergarten views student placements as opportunities to strengthen both individual professional growth and the quality of the service.

Beyond meeting legislative requirements, we provide structured mentoring, reflective discussions and opportunities for students to actively participate in curriculum planning, observations, critical reflection and professional conversations. Students are encouraged to link theory to practice while developing confidence within a supportive team environment.

Educators also reflect on their mentoring practices, recognising that supporting future professionals strengthens leadership capability, promotes continuous improvement and contributes to the ongoing development of the early childhood profession.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Glen Iris child care and kindergarten is committed to continually improving the experiences provided to students, volunteers and educators.
This policy will be reviewed through:

- Feedback from students and volunteers.
- Mentor reflections.
- Discussions with training organisations.
- Leadership meetings.

- Professional learning.
- Quality Improvement Plan goals.
- Changes to legislation and recognised best practice.
- Feedback from educators and families where appropriate.

Continuous improvement ensures placement experiences remain safe, meaningful, professional and aligned with the service's philosophy and commitment to quality education and care.

RELATED LEGISLATION

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

- **s.162** – Health, safety and wellbeing of children.
- **s.167** – Protection from harm and hazards.
- **s.168** – Education and care service policies and procedures.
- **s.169** – Policies and procedures to be followed**.**

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

- **Reg. 149** – Volunteers and students.
- **Reg. 151** – Record of educators working directly with children.
- **Reg. 168** – Education and care service policies and procedures.
- **Reg. 169** – Policies and procedures to be followed**.**

National Quality Standard
Quality Area 4 – Staffing Arrangements

- QA4.1.1 – Organisation of educators.
- QA4.2.2 – Professional standards.

Quality Area 7 – Governance and Leadership

- QA7.1.2 – Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) 2026

- Practice Principles for Learning and Development.
- Collaborative Leadership and Teamwork.
- Respectful Relationships and Responsive Engagement.

Victorian Child Safe Standards
This policy supports:

- **Standard 2** – Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in leadership, governance and culture.
- **Standard 4** – Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- **Standard 6** – People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
- **Standard 11** – Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Staffing Arrangements Policy
- Responsible Person Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Orientation of Educators, Students and Volunteers Procedure
- Workplace Health and Safety Policy

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The following documents support the implementation of this policy:

- Student and Volunteer Induction Checklist
- Student Placement Agreement
- Volunteer Register
- Working with Children Check Register
- Confidentiality Agreement
- Code of Conduct Acknowledgement
- Staff and Student Orientation Records
- Professional Learning Records
- Quality Improvement Plan

EVIDENCE OF PRACTICE

Glen Iris child care and kindergarten demonstrates this policy through:

- Comprehensive inductions for all students and volunteers.
- Current Working with Children Check records where required.
- Signed confidentiality and Code of Conduct agreements.
- Allocated educator mentors for student placements.
- Ongoing supervision and mentoring.
- Regular feedback and placement evaluations.
- Documentation of reflective discussions and professional learning.
- Continuous review through the Quality Improvement Plan.

REFLECTION & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Critical reflection supports high-quality placement experiences and strengthens our child-safe culture.

Reflective questions include:

- Do students and volunteers feel welcomed, supported and well prepared?
- Are mentoring practices building confidence and professional capability?
- Are supervision arrangements effective and consistent?
- How do students and volunteers contribute to children's learning and wellbeing?
- Are our induction processes comprehensive and current?

- How do we ensure students and volunteers understand and uphold the Child Safe Standards?
- What improvements can further strengthen our placement program?

Outcomes from these reflections inform professional learning, mentoring practices, policy review and the Quality Improvement Plan.

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Date Approved	Approved By	Summary of Changes
1.0	July 2026	Centre Director	Initial policy developed as part of the Glen Iris child care and kindergarten Governance, Policy and Procedures Manual. Developed to align with the Education and Care Services National Law, National Regulations, National Quality Standard, VEYLDF (2026) and Victorian Child Safe Standards.