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RECORD MANAGEMENT, EMAIL RETENTION AND ARCHIVING POLICY

QUALITY AREA 7: LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE MANAGEMENT

Document # QA7-R1

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service
7.1.1	Service philosophy and purpose	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operation
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood and support effective decision making and operation of the service
7.2	Leadership	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community
7.2.1	Continuous improvement	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place
7.2.2	Educational leadership	The educational leader is supported and leads the development and implementation of the educational program, assessment and planning cycle
7.2.3	Development of professionals	Educators, coordinators and staff members performance is regularly evaluated and individual plans are in place to support learning and development

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law	
55	Quality improvement plans
74	Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program
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RELATED LEGISLATION

ChildCare Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017	Family Law Act 1975
A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999	Word Health and Safety Act 2011
Family Assistance Law – Incorporating all related legislation for Child Care Provider Handbook in Appendix G http://www.dese.gov.au/resources-child-care-proividers/resources/child-care-provider-handbook	

Scope

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Centre

Introduction

WECC has a duty to keep adequate records about educators, families, children and business transactions in order to operate responsibly and legally.

WECC will protect the interests of the children and their families and educators, including appropriate privacy and confidentiality. WECC will also protect the integrity of business records by keeping appropriate and accurate records for the required periods set down by law.

The rise to predominance of electronic communication mandates electronic message management systems comparable to existing hard copy filing systems.

All material, electronic or otherwise, created by educators and volunteers of Woden Early Childhood Centre (WECC) in the course of their employment or accessed by educators on WECC equipment is the property of WECC.

Goals

We aim to maintain and manage appropriate records in a private and confidential manner, working in accordance with legislative requirements and best practice.

To help educators determine what information sent or received by email or our OWNA application should be retained and for how long, this policy identifies the broad categories of electronic messages processed by the WECC system and sets out the factors to be considered in setting practice guidelines to be adopted in each case.

Strategies

All WECC email information shall be categorised into four main classifications with retention guidelines:

1. Administrative correspondence (4 years)
2. Fiscal correspondence (4 years)
3. General correspondence (1 year)
4. Ephemeral correspondence (retain until read, then file appropriately or destroy).

1. Administrative correspondence

WECC administrative correspondence includes, though is not limited to, confidential management information, educator-related information, and project-related correspondence.

2. Fiscal correspondence

WECC fiscal correspondence includes all information related to revenue and expense for the organisation.

3. General correspondence

WECC general correspondence covers information that relates to customer interaction and the

operational decisions of the organisation. Individual educators are responsible for email retention of general correspondence where this is likely to be of continuing usefulness.

4. Ephemeral correspondence

WECC ephemeral correspondence is by far the largest category and includes personal email, email dealing with the work of the day, and email containing information outdated by events. Educators must either delete or file (either a hard or soft copy) this correspondence appropriately after reading.

Further classifications may also be created with their own retention guidelines, including (but not limited to):

* Instant Messenger correspondence

WECC Instant Messenger general correspondence may be saved with logging function of Instant Messenger, or copied into a file and saved. Instant Messenger conversations that are administrative or fiscal in nature should be copied into an email message and sent to the appropriate email retention address.

* Correspondence of legal significance

When legal proceedings are in process particular considerations apply to document retention. It is the responsibility of the Nominated Supervisor or Director to inform educators should these considerations be applicable and to circulate amongst educators any relevant changes in policy and procedures. Such notification will be made via a written notice in the staff room. Educators will be advised verbally of the notice's placement and will be encouraged to read it.

The creation of further classifications, such as those outlined above, will be at the discretion of the Nominated Supervisor or Director, or the Educational Leader under the guidance of the Nominated Supervisor or Director.

It will be the responsibility of the Nominated Supervisor or Director to maintain a backup portable hard drive from the WECC email server.

Archiving Records

Archives refer to a collection of records that have been created during the development of the inventory (references, methodological choice, expert comments, revisions, etc.), as well as document the location where these records are kept.

- record relating to former enrolled children are archived in a safe and secure location
- information about where archived records are stored is kept at WECC
- records that are no longer required to be kept by WECC. These may include but are not limited to:
 - minutes of general and special meetings
 - minutes of Management Committee meetings
 - important correspondence received and sent
 - annual reports
 - business plans
 - marketing plans

Refer to the *Privacy and Confidentiality* policy regarding the collection, storage and access to personal information provided to WECC.

The following records are to be retained in a secure location at WECC:

- child assessments or evaluations for delivery of the educational program (three (3) years after the child's last day of attendance)
- an incident, injury, trauma and illness record (keep until child is twenty-five (25))
- medication records (keep until the end of three (3) years after the child's last attendance)
- staff records
- record of volunteers and students
- records of the Responsible Person at WECC
- record of educators working directly with children
- record of access to Early Childhood Teachers
- children's attendance record (keep until the end of three (3) years after the child's last attendance)
- child enrolment records (keep until the end of three (3) years after the child's last attendance)
- record of WECC's compliance with the Law

- a record of Responsible Person placed in day-to-day charge of the education and care service
- death of a child whilst being educated and cared for (keep until seven (7) years from child's death)

Records to be kept in relation to the Nominated Supervisor

- the full name, address and date of birth
- evidence of any relevant qualifications held by the Nominated Supervisor
- if applicable, evidence that the staff member is actively working towards that qualification. If this is the case, the following must be recorded :
 - proof of enrolment
 - documentary evidence that the staff member has commenced the course, is making satisfactory progress towards the completion of the course, is meeting the requirements of maintaining the enrolment
 - for staff members who are working towards the completion of a Diploma level education and care qualification, proof that they hold an approved Certificate III level education and care qualification or has completed the units of study in an approved Certificate III level education and care qualification determined by ACECQA
- evidence of any approved training (including first aid training) completed by the staff member
- the identifying number and expiry date of the Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Card
- if applicable, the identifying number and expiry date of their current teacher registration from state

Records to be kept in relation to the Educational Leader:

- the name of the educator who is designated to this role

Records to be kept in relation to Volunteers and Students:

- the full name, address and date of birth of each student or volunteer
- the Approved Provider must also keep a record for each day on which the volunteer or student participates in WECC, the date and hours of participation

The following records must be kept in relation to the Responsible Person:

- the staff record must include the name of the responsible person at WECC for each time that children are being educated and cared for by WECC

The following records must be kept in relation to Educators working directly with children:

- the name of each educator
- the hours that each educator works directly with children
- a staff roster or time sheet stating educators working hours/shift

The following records must be kept in relation to access to Early Childhood Teacher/s:

- the period that an Early Childhood Teacher is working with WECC in accordance with the times frames set out in the *Staffing Arrangements* policy
- the periods that the Early Childhood Teacher is working directly with children and not working directly with children
- the Approved Provider of a Centre-based Service that provides education and care to 25 or more children preschool age or under must ensure that a record is kept of the period that an early childhood teacher attends WECC

Records relating to Enrolled Children:

- documentation relating to child assessments or evaluations for delivery of the education program, including:
 - assessments of the child's developmental needs, interests, experiences and participation in the education program
 - assessments of the child's progress against the outcomes of the educational program
 - current immunisation record

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record:

- details of any incident in relation to a child or injury received by a child or trauma to which a child has been subject while being educated and cared for by WECC. The following must be included:
 - the name and age of the child

- the circumstances leading to the incident, injury or trauma
- the time and date the incident occurred, the injury that was received or the child was subjected to the trauma
- details of any illness which becomes apparent while the child is being educated and cared for by WECC.

The following must be included:

- the name and age of the child
- the relevant circumstances surrounding the child becoming ill and any apparent symptoms
- the time and date of the apparent onset of the illness
- date when child was last at WECC

- details of the action taken by WECC in relation to any incident, injury, trauma or illness which a child has suffered while being educated and cared for by WECC.

The following must be included:

- any medication administered, or first aid provided
- any medical personnel contacted
- details of any person who witnessed the incident, injury or trauma
- the name of any person who the education and care service notified or attempted to notify of any incident, injury, trauma or illness a child has suffered at WECC and the times and date of the notification and notification attempts
- the name and signature of the person making an entry in the record and the time and date that the entry was made
- this record must be recorded as soon as is practicable, but not later than twenty-four (24) hours after the incident, injury, trauma or onset of illness occurred

Medication record

- the name of the child
- the authorisation to administer medication signed by a parent or a person named in the child's enrolment record as authorised to consent to administration of medication
- the name of the medication to be administered
- the time and date the medication was last administered
- the time and date or the circumstance under which the medication should next be administered
- the dosage of the medication to be administered
- the manner in which the medication is to be administered
- if the medication is administered to the child:
 - the dosage that was administered
 - the manner in which the medication was administered
 - the name and signature of the person who administered the medication
 - the name and signature of the witness to the administration of the medication

Record of attendance for enrolled children

- the full name of each child attending WECC
- the date and time each child arrives and departs
- the electronic name of: (this is done through pin protected software)
 - the person who delivers and collects the child when they arrive and depart or;
 - the Nominated Supervisor or Educator

Child enrolment records

- the full name, date of birth and address of the child
- the name, address and contact details of:
 - each known parent of the child
 - any person who is to be notified of any emergency involving the child if any parent of the child cannot be immediately contacted
 - any person who is an authorised nominee
 - any person who is authorised to consent to medical treatment of, or to authorise administration of medication to the child
 - any person who is authorised to authorise an educator to take the child outside the education and care service premises
 - details of any court orders provided to the Nominated Supervisor or Director relating to powers, duties,

- responsibilities or authorities of any person in relation to the child or access to the child
- o gender of the child
- o language used in the child's home
- o cultural background of the child and parents
- o any special considerations for the child (e.g. cultural, religious, dietary requirements or additional needs)
- o authorisations signed by a parent or a person named in the enrolment record as authorised to consent to the medical treatment of the or Nominated Supervisor to seek:
 - o medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service
 - o transportation of the child by any ambulance service
- o authorisation to take the child on regular outings
 - the name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service
- o the child's Medicare number
- o details of any specific healthcare needs of the child including any medication conditions or allergies including whether the child has been diagnosed as at risk of anaphylaxis, including a copy of the Medical Management Plan
- o the immunisation status of the child
- o a notation that states that a staff member has sighted a child's health record

A record of WECC's compliance with the Law

- o details of any amendments of the Service Approval made by the Regulatory Authority including:
 - o the reason stated by the Regulatory Authority for the amendment
 - o the date on which the amendment took, or takes, effect
 - o the date (if any) that the amendment ceases to have effect
- details of any compliance direction or compliance notice issued to the Approved Provider in respect of WECC, including:
 - o the reason stated by the Regulatory Authority for issuing the direction or notice
 - o the steps specified in the direction or notice
 - o the date by which the steps specified must be taken
 - this information must not include any information that identifies any person other than the Approved Provider
 - a record of certified supervisors placed in day to day charge of the education and care service

The Approved Provider must ensure that the documents referred to above in relation to a child enrolled at WECC are made available to a parent of the child on request. In line with this, if a parent's access to the kind of information referred to in this documentation is limited by an order of a court, the Nominated Supervisor must refer to the court order in relation to the release of information concerning the child to that parent.

The record of compliance referred to above must be available for access on request by any person.

Displaying information

The Nominated Supervisor or Director will display the following prescribed information required by the Education and Care Services National Law, in a prominent position at or near the main entrance to WECC:

- Provider Approval information
- Service Approval information
- Nominated Supervisor information
- any Service waivers or temporary waivers held by WECC
- hours and days of operation of WECC
- name telephone number of the person at WECC to whom complaints may be addressed
- name and position of the responsible person in charge of WECC
- contact details of the Regulatory Authority
- notice regarding enrolment of a child at WECC at risk of Anaphylaxis (if applicable)
- notice of an occurrence of an infectious disease of WECC (if applicable)

Maintaining records

WECC will maintain an efficient record keeping system by adhering to the following strategies:

- setting up an organised filing system
- documenting what records are kept, what they contain, where they may be accessed, and by whom
- updating records regularly
- ensuring records can be understood by all authorised persons
- establishing strategies to check accuracy of records
- cross referencing records to ensure all required information is kept
- documenting where backup records are stored

Confidentiality and Storage of records

Records made by WECC will be stored in a safe and secure location for the relevant time periods (Appendix 1) and only made accessible to relevant individuals.

WECC will retain records for the periods required in accordance with:

- Taxation Laws – records kept for five (5) years
- Fair Work Act – employee records kept for seven (7) years
- Family Assistance Law – records kept for three (3) years
- Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations

If a service is transferred under the law, documents relating to a child must not be transferred without the express consent of the child's parents.

The Approved Provider will ensure that information kept in a record is not divulged or communicated through direct or indirect means to another person other than:

- the extent necessary for the education and care or medical treatment of the child to whom the information relates
- a parent of the child to whom the information relates, except in the case of information kept in a staff record
- the Regulatory Authority or an authorised officer
- as expressly authorised, permitted or required to be given by or under any Act or Law
- with the written consent of the person who provided the information

Access and security

Security of records will be maintained through:

- using secure computer passwords that are regularly changed
- using lockable filing cabinets or cupboards
- installing a monitored security system
- following procedures to check individual's identity before granting access to records
- storing records in an area that is away from those who do not need to access it
- storing backups of important records in a secure place off site
- discussing security procedures regularly with educators

During orientation WECC will provide relevant information to educators and families about which records are kept and how they are protected within WECC.

- a Privacy and Confidentiality Statement will be included on all forms that require families to provide personal information
- clear guidelines on who has access to what records will be provided by WECC for educators and families. These guidelines will be available at all times at WECC
- records relating to enrolled children are maintained in an up to date form in a secure area at WECC
- these records are only accessed by authorised personnel or the enrolled child's family
- records relating to educators qualifications, evidence of enrolment in training, Working with Vulnerable People Checks/Cards, medical clearances and timesheets will be maintained and provided to the Regulatory Authority on request

Legislation and government requirements

- children's needs – records pertaining to children's health, learning, behaviour and other sensitive issues are only accessed by authorised people, and are used solely to support the child's learning and wellbeing
- family's needs – private information given to WECC re income levels, family arrangements, etc. is kept confidential. Families are advised of what details are recorded about them and their children. Families are able to access their own personal records
- educator's needs – personal records, details and appraisals are treated as confidential. All educators are advised of what is recorded about them and are able to access records that contain information about them
- management needs – maintenance of all records to be kept by law will be facilitated through the safe storage of records for the required period. No unauthorised access to records will be permitted

Storage

It shall be the responsibility of the Nominated Supervisor or Director to maintain a backup portable hard drive from the WECC email server.

Evaluation

WECC ensures that privacy and confidentiality are maintained in regard to Record Management, Retention and Archiving. WECC will ensure that all records that are required are current and up to date.

Related policies / documents

- *Enrolment and orientation*
- *Induction of new educators*
- *Privacy and confidentiality*
- *Privacy and confidentiality statement*
- *Staff recruitment*
- *Technology*
- *Withdrawal and termination of an enrolment*

Statutory legislation and considerations

- Privacy Act
- Taxation Laws
- Family Assistance Law
- Fair Work Act
- Education and Care Services National Law
- Education and Care Services National Regulations

Sources and references

- Australian Taxation Office - <https://www.ato.gov.au/General/Other-languages/In-detail/Information-in-other-languages/Record-keeping-for-small-businesses/>
- Child Care Service Handbook 2017-2018 - https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/childcareservicehandbook201718_0.pdf
 - Section 4.9 Information Management
 - Section 5.4 Key obligations imposed on approved child care services under family assistance law
 - Section 5.5 Cooperation with authorised officers under the Act
 - Inspection of records and monitoring of compliance
 - Section 6.10 Reporting of vacancy data
 - Section 9 Reporting enrolment information
 - Section 10 Reporting attendance information
- Early Childhood Australia (ECA) Code of Ethics
- Fair Work Ombudsman – Record Keeping and Pay Slips Fact Sheet - <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/templates-and-guides/fact-sheets/rights-and-obligations/record-keeping-pay-slips>
- The Business of Childcare, Karen Kearns
- Australian Legal Information Institute – www.austlii.edu.au
- National Childcare Accreditation Council – www.ncac.gov.au

Policy Review	February 2022	Ratified Date	Next Review Date
Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined 'Record Management Policy' and 'Retention and Archiving Policy' • Sources checked and updated • Minor punctuation and wording edits • Format edits • Added review box with modifications and updated 	May 2022	May 2025
Policy Review	August 2019	Ratified Date	Next Review Date
Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing Policy 	Aug 2019	Aug 2022
Policy Review	August 2018	Ratified Date	Next Review Date
Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing Policy 	Aug 2018	Aug 2019

Authorisation

Paul Halloran
 President
 2021-22 WECC Management Committee

