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STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW POLICY

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

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National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership		
7.1.1	Service philosophy and purposes	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality 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 and assessment and planning cycle
7.2.3	Development of professionals	Educators, co-ordinations 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	
118	Educational Leader
126	Centre-Based services – general educator qualifications
136	Approval of qualifications
138	Application for qualification to be assessed for inclusion on the list of approved qualifications

Introduction

Woden Early Childhood Centre (WECC) recognises the important of a formal communication process between educators, their supervisors and the Nominated Supervisor or Director in relation to the educators' ongoing support and professional development requirements. The professional development of educators impacts on job performance and is a key component of the provision of high-quality education and care programs for children and their families.

Scope

This policy applies to staff, management and educators of the Service.

Goals – What are we aiming to do?

Professional development allows individuals to build and improve their knowledge and skills within the early childhood industry whilst keeping up to date with current research and recommended practice.

The Early Childhood Education Sector continues to grow and change. These changes impact on licensing and assessment requirements as well as our interactions and documentation of individual children. To comply and improve we implement procedures for identifying areas in which our educators and staff can enhance skills and knowledge in the early childhood industry through relevant and effective professional development and training. We aim to review and update individual professional development plans based on performance appraisals detecting strengths, interests and goals.

WECC will:

- recognise educators' achievements in their work and identify areas of strength
- consider ways to improve the skills, knowledge and effectiveness of educators
- identify opportunities to develop skills.
- develop an effective and efficient training and development plan for educators
- link WECC's goals effectively to educator development

Strategies – How will it be done?

The Early Childhood Australia (ECA) Code of Ethics suggest that in relation to being professional, educators will take responsibility for articulating their professional values, knowledge and practice and the positive contribution to the early childhood profession. Educators will engage in critical reflection, ongoing professional learning and support research that builds knowledge and that of the profession.

Management will ensure:

- the roster supports at least one educator who holds a recognised and current first aid qualification including CPR, child protection, asthma and anaphylaxis training
- a budgeted amount is available to provide relevant training to educators and staff
- to record all professional development completed by educators and staff and pass on relevant material to enhance skills and knowledge
- the Nominated Supervisor undertakes professional development in accordance with National Regulations and the individual professional development plan
- provide a variety of professional development for educators and staff which includes: current research and readings, team meeting discussions, in-house training, networking, conferences, etc.
- educators and staff have the opportunity to experience working with different age groups. This shall be

achieved through rotation of educators and staff at the beginning of each calendar year. However, rotation may occur at other times of the year when necessary. Individual needs will be considered when rotation occurs, but the final decision should not hinder other staff members from the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge

- continuity of care for the children will be the primary consideration when moving staff to different rooms. Where possible, one person familiar to the children will remain in the room (Personal note: I really value this point! Especially for the baby-toddler kids where peer to peer relationships are still developing.)
- mentoring programs and management support networks are in place for educators and staff to ensure guidance and inspiration
- they are positive role models for educators and staff
- educators are supported to attend professional development by committing time and resources in order to develop new skills and knowledge

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- ensure child protection training is valid and updated every 12-18 months to maintain skills and knowledge required by National Regulations and best practice
- hold a current first aid (including CPR), asthma and anaphylaxis training at all times
- attend a minimum of 4 professional development courses over a 12-month period
- be a positive role model for educators and staff
- collaborate with the Educational Leader to identify training needs across the services and source appropriate training and mentoring for educators
- ensure strategies are implemented by educators to make practical use of the information gained from professional development

Educators will:

- keep up to date with Child Protection training ensuring currency and compliance
- hold a current first aid (including CPR), asthma and anaphylaxis training at all times
- attend a minimum of 4 professional development courses over a 12-month period
- seek assistance and direction from WECC's Educational Leader regarding the in-services and training

Examples of professional development resources and experiences:

- networking with other services & professionals
- in-service or external training (workshops, courses)
- sharing information gained from formal studies
- learning and skills sharing
- visitors from local areas
- mentoring and coaching programs
- self-paced training packages
- hands on job training
- conferences
- meeting discussions
- reading professional publications and websites
- engage in professional reflection (journals)
- viewing professional DVD's
- readings

The Nominated Supervisor or Director always expects educators to perform their duties to the best of their ability and to undertake their role in a professional manner. In return, WECC supports all educators in their growth as professionals within WECC. Therefore, professional development is viewed as a joint responsibility of educators and WECC.

Open and on-going communication between educators and their supervisors about their work and their development as professionals occurs throughout the year. This can happen through a range of opportunities such as training, access to resources and mentoring, as well as through informal feedback and discussion and formal supervision sessions, such as the Staff Development Review (SDR) process.

This communication is viewed as a positive process that is focused on enhancing professional practices within WECC and growing the professional capacities of educators. The SDR is an important tool for continuous quality improvement. It is a two-way process and the formal SDR process is a summary of most issues and needs identified during the previous year by the staff member, their supervisor and the Nominated Supervisor or Director, plus plans for the coming year.

Procedures

Overview of the process

- during induction, educators are told about the SDR document and process
- SDRs are undertaken annually
- educators are given the SDR form a week before the agreed discussion time
- at the discussion meeting, both parties work through the SDR questions and the Nominated Supervisor or Director records the issues and details are discussed – usually a combination of comments made by the educator both on the form and during the discussion onto an integrated form
- identify and record any issues of disagreement on the integrated form
- each party signs their original form
- record whether a review of the process or content of the SDR by a Management Committee member is requested, by whom and why it is requested
- unless another review is requested, the original copy is placed in the educator's personnel file to inform subsequent reviews
- a copy of the SDR document is provided to the educator
- all discussion and documents relating to the SDR are confidential

Review by the Management Committee

- the President of the Management Committee selects a Committee representative to undertake the SDR review process, if this has been requested
- this representative will view all the documents and considers the reason/s for the request
- if the request for review is agreed to, the representative makes a time to meet with both educators together
- both educators are present to discuss their perspective on the SDR and the Committee Representative completes another and final SDR document, which all parties then sign
- any decision made by the Committee representative will be final and no further avenues of internal review will be possible

Evaluation

A commitment by WECC educators to ongoing professional development is the key to effective and continuous improvement and the provision of a quality education and care service. Engaging in professional development helps to identify areas of strengths and areas requiring improvement.

Related policies /documents

- *Code of conduct*
- *Harassment-free workplace*
- *Induction of new educators*

Statutory legislation and considerations

- Nil.

Sources and references

- ECA Code of Ethics
- Australian Children's Education & Quality Care Authority
- Guide to the National Quality Standard

Authorisation

Jennifer Hayes

President

2019 WECC Management Committee