

Qualified Staff Policy (including emergency relief teachers)

1. Policy statement

Values

This centre is committed to:

- The employment of qualified staff with a range of relevant qualifications and experience to provide an educational program, which meets the needs of all children and families using the centre.
- The employment of qualified staff, which meet the requirements of the Children's Services Regulations 1998, and within both unfunded and funded kindergarten programs, the DHS *Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria 2006-2009*. Purpose

This policy will provide guidelines for the employment of qualified staff, which meet the requirements of the Children's Services Regulations 1998 and the DHS *Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria 2006-2009*. Scope

This policy applies to staff and the committee/board of Boroondara Preschool.

2. Background and legislation

- *Children's Services Act 1996*
- Children's Services Regulations 1998

Regulation 20(2)(c) requires centres to have a policy with respect to the employment of qualified staff.

3. Definitions

ECA: Early Childhood Association

DHS: Department of Human Services

Qualified staff: A staff member who holds a qualification that is acceptable under regulation 25 of the Children's Services Regulations 1998.

4. Procedures

The committee/board is responsible for:

- Employing staff that hold a qualification assessed as equivalent to those included in the *Schedule of Early Childhood Qualifications – Victoria – Children's Services Regulations 1998, June 2004*. This is available at www.dhs.vic.gov.au/qualifications; or hold a qualification recognised under regulation 56 of the Children's Services Regulations 1998.
- In funded kindergarten programs, employing qualified staff that meet the requirements of the DHS *Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria 2004-2006*.
- Referring applicants with overseas and interstate qualifications not included on the schedule of recognised qualifications, for assessment by ECA for suitability.
- Ensuring that an original police records check (not more than six months old) is considered by the licensee representative, primary nominee or nominee, before staff commence work at the centre (regulation 27).
- Ensure details of the police records check are recorded on the staff record as per the requirements of regulation 19(d).
- Ensuring a relief staff member's police check is considered on an annual basis and recorded as per the requirements of regulation 19(b).

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- Ensuring a certified copy of qualifications for each staff member is kept in the staff records (refer to regulation 19).
 - Ensuring any qualified staff working in the centre has a current 'Working With Children' check.

Emergency relief teachers – funded kindergarten program

If a teacher with an approved early childhood teaching qualification cannot be found the committee/board will contact the DHS regional office and inform whether it has:

- Cancelled the session; or
- Engaged a qualified person, in accordance with the Regulations; or
- Engaged a person with a primary teaching qualification in accordance with the qualified staff exemption in emergency periods (DHS *Children's Services Guide*, Practice Note).

A sign will be displayed in the main entrance informing parents/guardians that the kindergarten program will not operate but a qualified person has been employed which meets the requirements of the Children's Services Regulations 1998 and the *Children's Services Act 1996* to operate a licensed children's centre.

5. Related documents

- DHS *Children's Services Guide*, www.dhs.vic.gov.au/earlychildhood
- DHS, *Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria 2006-2009*.
- Recruitment guidelines and policies (*KPV Employer Management Manual 2006*).
- List of approved qualifications is located at www.dhs.vic.gov.au/qualifications

6. Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the Boroondara Preschool committee/board, at the committee/board meeting on 14th July 2008.

7. Review date

This policy shall be reviewed annually; or earlier if legislative changes are introduced.

The next review date is 14th July 2009.

8. Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes the committee/board will:

- Check qualified staff records on an annual basis to ensure staff are employed in line with all legislative requirements as outlined in the policy.

The Children's Services Regulations 1998, regulations 25 and 56, describe who may be employed as a qualified staff member.

To be employed in a funded kindergarten program, qualified staff members must be qualified teachers holding an approved early childhood teacher qualification. A list of approved early childhood teacher qualifications is available at www.dhs.vic.gov.au/earlychildhood.

Three-year-old programs

This program is not funded and qualified staff who meet the requirements of regulation 25 or regulation 56 of the Children's Services Regulations 1998 can be employed. If the centre employs qualified staff who meet these requirements this will be reflected in the name of the program and how the program is advertised. The centre will be providing a three-year-old program as opposed to a three-year-old kindergarten program.

If a centre wishes to employ a qualified staff member who meets the requirements of the DHS *Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria 2004-2006* to deliver the three-year-old kindergarten program the policy will need to be varied. For example:

"The centre will employ qualified early childhood trained teachers who meet the requirements of the DHS *Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria 2006-2009* within both funded and unfunded kindergarten programs".

Equivalent qualifications

Particular qualifications may not be found on the listing of approved qualifications and the listing of approved early childhood teacher qualifications.

If the qualification is not on the list, Early Childhood Australia (Vic) Inc (ECA) will assess the qualification for equivalence and provide a recommendation to the Department of Human Services. ECA *Qualification Assessment Forms* and *Information Sheet* can be obtained from the DHS website or by contacting the ECA.

Resources

Early Childhood Australia (Vic) Inc
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03 9427 8474

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