

Only Early Learning Centre



Professional Development Policy

Policy Number 29

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Overview

Professional Development involves continuous learning that enables educators to affirm their existing understanding as well as acquire new knowledge and skills and remain up to date with evolving developments in the industry. Current research in the field of brain science and the developments of theoretical perspectives and approaches to Early Childhood Education are rapidly expanding the knowledge and theory base that educators can draw on to guide practice. Therefore, continuous Professional Development is vital within the Early Education and Care Industry.

Aim

Only Early Learning Centre aims to provide all educators with the opportunity to participate in Professional Development to allow educators to work towards continually improving the quality of the programs that are provided for children and their families.

Who is affected by this policy

Children
Educators
Staff
Management
Visitors
Families

Professional Development Opportunities

There are several ways in which professional development can be facilitated at Only Early Learning Centre, including:

- Off-site Professional Development courses or programs
- In-house Professional Development courses or programs
- Mentoring by Management or Senior Educators
- On-the-job training
- Special work assignments
- Conferences
- Webinars
- Support in further Education and Qualifications

Responsibilities of Management

Only Early Learning Centre Management recognises the critical role that managers have in creating a service culture that values Professional Development and using mentoring styles that support continual development. Management at Only Early Learning Centre will:

- Identify the Professional Development needs of each educator. This will be achieved by observing performance, undertaking formal and informal discussions and analysing performance.
- Be aware of new areas of development and in response to change effectively communicate this to educators.
- Ensure equity principles are upheld in providing educator access to professional development opportunities.
- Allocate adequate funding to the Professional Development of Educators.
- Follow up with all educators who attend Professional Development programs to assist in the transfer of knowledge and skills from the program, to the learning environment.

Professional Learning Plans

Each year, every educator at Only Early Learning Centre collaborates with a member of the Management Team to create a personalised Professional Learning Plan. The aim of these plans is to inspire educators, ensure that educators are continuously working towards better practice, to keep track of Professional Development opportunities and interests, motivate and mentor educators to develop themselves within the industry. Each Professional Learning Plan includes:

1. An Induction Checklist that is completed at the beginning of each year. This checklist includes ensuring that each educator:
 - a. Has access to QikKids for daily roll marking
 - b. Has access to Employment Hero and their Employment Hero is up to date
 - c. Current Qualification and Certificates are uploaded to Employment Hero correctly
 - d. Has an updated contract for the year
 - e. Has an updated Employment Description for the year
 - f. Has a Responsible Person agreement signed for the year
 - g. Has completed an updated Staff Details form
 - h. Has all information regarding any additional responsibilities they will have for the year
2. A Qualification Overview which will include information and expiry dates for:
 - a. Their current Early Education and Care Qualification
 - b. First Aid certification
 - c. CPR certification
 - d. Child Protection qualification
 - e. Working with Children's Check
3. Contract Variation information for the year including the variation requested, the date requested, whether the request has been approved or denied and any additional information.
4. Information regarding all Professional Development programs or courses attended throughout the year including the Course Name, date attended and whether a reflection has been completed.
5. Each Professional Development Course Reflection completed throughout the year.
6. All Positive Educator Recognition received throughout the year.
7. A record of all dates where which an educator met with a member of the Management Team to discuss their Professional Learning Plan.
8. The goals that have been identified through educator and management collaboration for educators to work towards throughout the year, including ongoing strategies to use.
9. An overview of the discussion points of each meeting between an educator and a member of the management team.

10. An overview of the discussion points of each meeting between an educator and the centre's Educational Leader.
11. An overview of any Performance Management Plans that the educator was involved in throughout the year.
12. An overview of any Serious Performance Management Plans that the educator was involved in throughout the year.

Educators will have a formal meeting with a member of the Management Team every 450 hours that they work.

Development Discussion/Staff Meetings

Only Early Learning Centre will hold an out of operational hours development discussion night or staff meeting every 6 weeks. These meetings are an opportunity for the employee team to come together to share information regarding the service. It is also an opportunity to discuss ideas or issues, discuss changes or potential changes, critically reflect and to upskill employees through in house training programs. Minutes are taken on each staff meeting. A dinner style meal is provided at each meeting.

*Note: Only Early Learning Centre out of operational hours meetings are not compulsory. All employees are encouraged to attend to gain further training, although they are not required to attend. Employees, therefore, are not paid to attend out of operation hours meetings. Where a meeting is compulsory, employees will be paid as per the National Award 2010.

Time in Lieu

Employees who attend out of hours, in house staff meetings, will receive Time in Lieu at time and a half, for their time. This time in lieu will be recorded by Management, and employees can request to take time in lieu in. This request must be done in advance.

Compulsory Meetings

In certain circumstances, compulsory staff meetings may be called by Management at Only Early Learning Centre. Reason's for a compulsory staff meeting could include, but is not limited to:

- A serious child protection situation
- Changes in Regulations, Law or the National Quality Framework
- Natural disasters
- Emergency situations
- Important Professional Development

In the event that employees are required to attend a compulsory staff meeting, they will be paid as per for the National Award 2010.

Early Childhood Teacher Accreditation

In New South Wales, all Early Childhood Teachers (ECT's) working in an Approved Centre-Based Early Education and Care Service must be accredited. The maintenance of accreditation requires a teacher to demonstrate how their practice continues to meet the Australian Professional Standards for Teaching at the relevant career stage. Each maintenance period is 5 years for full-time working ECT's and 7 years for part-time or casual working ECT's. During each maintenance period ECT's must:

- Demonstrate that their teaching practice continues to meet the standards through a range of professional activities and practices undertaken in the normal course of work.
- Complete at least 100 hours of Professional Development that includes at least 50 hours of New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA) Registered Professional Development.
- Pay the Annual Accreditation Fee and ensure that Working with Children Check clearance is current.

In the final three months of each maintenance period, ECT's must:

- Ensure all employment details are correct in the NESA online account.
- Declare that maintenance requirements have been met. An optional reflective statement can be submitted.

First Aid

As per the Education and Care National Regulations, Regulation 136, At least one staff member or nominated supervisor of the service who holds a current approved first aid qualification, must be on premises during the operational hours of the centre. All educators at Only Early Learning Centre are required as a part of this policy, to ensure that their First Aid HLTAID004 qualification is always kept up to date. This involves renewing the qualification every three years.

CPR

As per the Education and Care National Regulations, Regulation 136, At least one staff member or nominated supervisor of the service who holds a current approved first aid qualification, which includes an approved CPR qualification, must be on premises during the operational hours of the centre. All educators at Only Early Learning Centre are required as part of this policy, to ensure that their CPR HLTAID001 qualification is always kept up to date. This involves renewing the qualification every 12 months.

Child Protection

As per the Education and Care National Regulations, Regulation 84, The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that nominated supervisors and staff members at the service who work with children are advised of the existence and application of the current child protection law and any obligations that they may have under that law. All educators at Only Early Learning Centre are required as part of this policy, to ensure that their Child Protection CHCPRT001 training is always kept up to date. This involves renewing the qualification every 3 years.



Sources

Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011

84 Awareness of child protection law

136 First aid qualifications

National Quality Standards

4.2.1 Professional Collaboration

4.2.2 Professional standards

7.2.3 Development of professionals

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually. Review will be conducted by management, employees, parents and any interested parties.

Reviewed By: Alex Jury **Date:** 24th April 2020

Approved By: Kelly Williams

Date for Next Review: April 2021