



Governance, Records Management and Confidentiality

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Aim: To ensure the manner in which Governance, Management and Confidentiality of all records and information held in The Meeting House Kindergarten is known to families and staff and restricted to authorised persons only.

Background Information: The Education and Care Services National Regulation requires that a preschool service shall have guidelines to ensure confidentiality of specific records and information regarding children and their families utilizing the service together with the preschool's staff and their families.

Relevant Legislation: Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, Education and Care Services National Regulation, The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998.

Note: In this policy "staff" refers to staff employed by The Meeting House Kindergarten.

Governance

- The Meeting House Kindergarten has been approved as a provider of an Education and Care Service under the Education and Care Services National Regulation.
- The Meeting House Kindergarten has a Nominated Supervisor (Preschool Director) appointed by The Meeting House Inc. Committee and approved as a suitably fit and qualified person to be in charge of the services' daily operations by the Department of Education and Communities. Nominated Supervisors will be offered and required to accept this nomination at time of employment.
- Where the Nominated Supervisor is present he/she will automatically be designated as the person responsible for the preschool at the given times that he/she is on the premises. When the Nominated Supervisor is not on site, the name of the person in charge for the day will be displayed on the wall.
- Staff must sign a history of compliance to be the person in day to day charge.
- The preschool will display information for families, community members and authorised officers indicating the person(s) in charge of the service at any one time.
- The staff sign in and out sheet will serve as a formal record of which staff member was the 'responsible person' on any given day.

Development and implementation of policies

The Meeting House Kindergarten will develop and keep up to date policies as required under the Education and Care Service National Regulation and The Personal Information Protection Act 1998. These policies will be reviewed and where deemed appropriate provided to staff and families for consultation. Preschool staff and educators will undergo an induction process on employment that will provide them with opportunities to read and understand all policies and procedures to ensure commitment and compliance.

Where there is a required amendment to The Meeting House Kindergarten's fee's policy required under the National Regulation that may significantly affect the fees or the manner in which the fees are collected, or the service is operated, the preschool will provide all families of the service with at least 14 days' notice. Where there is a perceived risk to the safety, health or wellbeing to children then policy and procedure change may occur without notification with information to follow as soon as practicable.

Confidentiality - Information relating to families and children

Information in relation to children and families is not to be divulged or communicated directly or indirectly to any person other than:

- (a) to the extent necessary for the education and care or medical treatment of the child to whom the information relates;
- (b) a parent of a child to whom the information relates, except in the case of information kept on a staff records;
- (c) the regulatory authority or an authorised officer;
- (d) if expressly authorised, permitted or required to be given by or under the Act or Law;
- (e) with written consent of the person who provided the information. (Education and Care Services National Regulation)

Information and records pertaining to families and children will be kept secure in a locked office at the preschool.

- Permanent staff will have access to children's enrolment information, family contact details, medical information and developmental records as required.
- When an intervention service is assessed as necessary to work with families enrolled at the preschool, parents will be requested to provide written permission for those services to share information and discuss matters concerning the safety and well-being of the child and family with the Preschool Director/Nominated Supervisor and appropriate staff.
- Only the Preschool Director, The Preschool Administration Officer, or their delegate, will have access to any financial information pertaining to any family utilising the preschool.
- Casual employees will not have access to these records, with the exception of accessing children's enrolment forms in the event of an emergency.
- Parents can access documentation of the daily diary and observations pertaining to their child through the Appessment if they have signed in the Appessment form, giving permission to access.
- Staff are not to give out details of children who are enrolled, or in attendance at the preschool, other than to approved persons. No information will be given over the phone unless to an approved person who is known to the staff member. If a request is made by a person who claims to have authority for obtaining information about a child, but is not known by the staff member, then no information will be given until that person verifies their identity in person.
- Often parents wish to contact other parents to organise social occasions for their children. Parents may place their own details on the "Parent Contact Sheet" and sign the permission section to allow this information to be shared. Staff must not under any circumstance pass on contact details without that parent's permission.
- Staff will not divulge any information regarding children, families, other staff or the service they may become privy to in the course of their duties at the preschool. As a part of their normal work practices, staff will always remain conscious of the presence of others when discussing information.
- The Preschool Director must provide access to the personal information retained on a family if requested to do so by that family or by order of the court e.g. subpoena.

- The preschool will maintain and keep up to date a record of attendance by children at the service. As a minimum this will be in the form of daily sign in and out sheets.

Records Management (to be read in conjunction with the Records Management Policy).

Information Relating to Staff

- Members of Staff are to complete the staff sign in and out sheet completing all relevant columns when they commence their shift and complete their shift.
- Personal information and records regarding staff are held by The Meeting House Inc.'s Senior Co-ordinator in a locked and secure office and are subject to the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998
- Limited essential information regarding staff is to be securely stored by the Preschool Director/Nominated Supervisor within the preschool. This will include copies of qualifications, and certificates and any other records deemed necessary by the licensing and quality assurance authorities as essential to the operation of the preschool.
- Personal contact details of staff will be securely stored in the office and accessible only by permanent staff.
- Staff are not to discuss personal details about other staff with families.

Information relating to service operations

The preschool will develop and maintain policies that promote the health, safety and well-being of children attending and will ensure that copies of those policies are made available at the premises for inspection by parents.

The service will develop and maintain, as a minimum those policies so determined to be essential under the Education and Care Services National Regulation.

Retention and Storage of Records

The Approved Provider (The Meeting House Inc. Kindergarten) will retain the following information as required under the Education and Care Services National Regulation

1) Records relating to the Incident, illness, injury or trauma to a child:

Where the incident, injury, illness or trauma relates to the death of a child the records for that child must be retained until the end of the 7th year following the death.

Where a record relates to an incident, illness, injury, or trauma suffered by a child whilst being provided care at the preschool, or an incident that occurred as a result of being provided with care, records are to be kept until the child is 25 years of age.

Such records are initially retained for a period of 3 years at the service and thereafter maybe stored at an approved storage location.

Examples of such records may include:

- Medication forms,
- Medical records,
- Incident, injury, illness or trauma reports

Records relating to a Child's Enrolment at the service will be retained for 3 years after the last date on the record. These may include:

- Attendance records
- Excursion forms
- Child enrolment forms

- Documentation of Children

Records relating to the Nominated Supervisor or staff member will be retained for a period of 3 years after the last date on that record.

Examples of these records may include:

- Staff attendance records
- Record of educators working directly with children
- Records of “responsible persons”
- Volunteer and student’s attendance

Parents are able to access information on their child at any time whilst the information is held at the service. Prior notice will be required if parents wish to access their child’s information once it has been moved to Archives.