



PRE-SCHOOL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

This collection of policies and procedures relates to the pre-school operations of Wild Cherry School, e.g. kindergarten services. It covers the following areas:

- (a) Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations
- (b) Dealing with Complaints
- (c) Dealing with Infectious Diseases
- (d) Dealing with Medical Conditions in Children, including Anaphylaxis
- (e) Delivery and Collection of Children
- (f) Emergency Management Plan
- (g) Enrolment and Orientation
- (h) Excursions
- (i) Fee Policy
- (j) Governance and Management of the Service
- (k) Hot Drinks Policy
- (l) Incident, injury, trauma and illness procedures - illness and emergency care
- (m) Interactions with children
- (n) Preschool Casual Relief Teacher (CRT) Procedure
- (o) Professional Development
- (p) Providing a Child Safe Environment
- (q) Staffing:
 - i. Code of Conduct for Staff
 - ii. Determining the responsible person
 - iii. Employment of Qualified Staff Policy
 - iv. Student teacher placement and volunteers in our Kindergarten

The Education and Care Services National Regulations and Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab, No Play) Act 2015 apply to Wild Cherry School's early childhood (kindergarten) services.

(a) Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations

A *Confidential Child Information Form (Related Document 6)* is completed on enrolment into the service. Parents provide all authorisations here regarding;

- persons authorised to pick-up the child
- consent for staff to seek, or where appropriate, administer such emergency medical treatment as is reasonably necessary
- emergency contacts in case of emergency and parents can't be contacted

For further authorisations, please refer to (f) Delivery and Collection of Children. *See also Wild Cherry School Confidential Child Information Form (Related Document 6).*

(b) Dealing with Complaints

Please refer to *Wild Cherry School's Grievance Policy for Parents (Related Document 15)*, a summary of which is included in the *School Handbook (Related Document 18)*, which is provided to parents upon enrolment and annually thereafter.

Displayed on the noticeboard outside the kinder room is the following:

If you have a question, comment or concern about your child, please discuss this with your child's teacher. It is important to make a time with them to discuss the matter privately. If the situation does not reach a satisfactory outcome with the teacher, please go to the office and ask to speak with the School Leader or make a time to speak further.

If a complaint alleges a compromise to the safety and wellbeing of a child or children, the School will notify the relevant regulatory authority as per *Education and Care Services National Regulations*.

(c) Dealing with Infectious Diseases

Parents will be notified as soon as practical, by phone, letter or through the fortnightly newsletter to advise of a notifiable infectious disease at the school or any other requirements in accordance with the Victorian Department of Health's exclusion table. Parents are asked to timely notify the school office if their child has an infectious disease.

Steps to be taken to prevent the spread of infectious diseases include:

- 1) the School keeping a record of the child's immunisation status on the enrolment form; and
- 2) the parents or authorised emergency contact of each child being notified of the occurrence as soon as practical.

Also see Wild Cherry School First Aid Policy (Related Document 14).

(d) Dealing with Medical Conditions in Children

Please refer to Wild Cherry School's First Aid Policy (Related Document 14) and Wild Cherry School Anaphylaxis policy (Related Document 2).

(e) Delivery and Collection of Children

When arriving each morning, children are signed into the pre-school Daily Attendance Book by their parent/guardian/carer. This includes time of arrival and name of the person who will collect the child.

When children are collected from the kindergarten the parent, guardian or person who has lawful authority to collect the child must sign the child out in the Pre-school Daily Attendance Book, including time of departure.

Parents or guardians wishing their child to be collected from the kindergarten by anyone other than themselves, are required to authorise that person in writing, including contact details and this is then kept in the child's file.

(f) Emergency Management Plan

Please refer to Wild Cherry School's Emergency Management Plan (Related Document 9) and Wild Cherry School's Critical Incident Plan (Related Document 7).

Emergency and evacuation procedures are rehearsed every three months.

(g) Enrolment and Orientation

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations and Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab, No Play) Act 2015* apply to Wild Cherry School's early childhood (kindergarten) service.

Enrolment can only be accepted upon receipt of an immunisation status certificate not older than 2 months within the date of the child starting the service.

Parents agree upon enrolment with their signature that a record of their child is kept by the school for the stipulated duration as per *Education and Care Services National Regulations*.

Please refer to Wild Cherry School's Enrolment Application Form (Related Document 10) and School Handbook (Related Document 18) for details.

In addition to the procedures set out in the school Enrolment Application Form and School Handbook, kinder parents and children will have an orientation day, in the fourth term the year before they commence, when the children are introduced to the kindergarten room and teachers, and parents are given the School handbook and advised what the child will need to bring.

Kindergarten parents also have another separate interview before commencement to talk about more specific health matters relating to the child, as well as the child's history and individual needs. This interview is held with preschool families at the beginning of each year.

(h) Excursions

Kindergarten students will not be taken on an excursion off the school property unless written permission has been provided by parents/guardians/carers. If teachers need to leave the kindergarten area, they are to bring medical forms, relevant first aid kit (including child's medications) and a mobile phone.

Please also refer to Wild Cherry School's Excursions and Camps policy and procedures (Related Document 11)

(i) Fee policy

Wild Cherry School will notify parents of children enrolled at least 14 days before making any change to the Fee Policy or Procedure or any changes that will affect the fees charged or collected.

Please refer to Wild Cherry School's Fee Policy (Related Document 13), Fee Assistance Policy (Related Document 12) and Kindergarten Fee Schedule (Related Document 16).

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy

The Kindergarten Fee Subsidy is applied to eligible families through a credit applied to the family's fee statements once the subsidy is received by the school.

Eligible families can access subsidies by providing enrolment information that indicates their eligibility. They are then advised their eligibility and their information is entered into the Kindergarten Information Management System (KIM) by the school's Finance Manager.

Exempting children from priority groups from enrolment fees

There are no current provisions for exemptions.

Kindergarten Operating Hours

Term Dates

Please see School Handbook (Related Document 18) for current details.

(j) Governance and Management of the Service

Please refer to the School Handbook (Related Document 18) for an understanding of the overall governance and management framework of the School.

Roles specifically to kindergarten are as follows:

<i>Early Childhood Teacher, VIT registered</i>
<i>Kindergarten Assistant/Co-Educator</i>
<i>Administration Support: Admin Assistant, Business/Finance Manager</i>
<i>Operational responsibility: School Leader</i>
<i>Governance: East Gippsland Steiner Education Group Inc.</i>
<i>Responsible Persons: as appointed</i>

All staff and student records are strictly confidential and held in safe and secure filing cabinets within the School and on a password protected computer system for the required periods as stipulated in the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*.

(k) Hot Drinks Policy

Staff will make hot drinks in the kitchen area only, away from children. Staff will consume hot drinks only in the kitchen or staff room/office area away from children.

This information will be passed on to any visiting volunteers or student teachers.

(l) Incident, injury, trauma and illness procedures - Illness and Emergency Care

See Wild Cherry School First Aid Policy (Related Document 14); and Accident, Incident and First Aid Register (Related Document 1).

(m) Interactions with Children

A calm, firm, non-judgemental manner is maintained throughout the day by both Teacher and Assistant/Co-Educator. The utmost care is taken to ensure the safety of all children and staff in attendance. The rhythm of the daily routine provides both security and nourishment for the child's being and is the single most effective aspect of the discipline process.

The kindergarten is a place where children can play safely and have the opportunity to assimilate their life experience in preparation for the transition to school. A broad range of social interactions and socialisation processes take place under careful supervision.

Discipline problems can reflect disturbances in the child's life or routine. Family illness, death, moving house, separation, a new baby etc. can have profound effects on the child's inner peace.

When an incident occurs or a discipline problem is apparent the following procedure is implemented:

1. The Teacher or Kindergarten Assistant/Co-Educator will interject with calm authority immediately.
2. Anything requiring first-aid is attended to.
3. A picture of what happened is established if the incident was not seen by either the Teacher or the Co-Educator, and both sides are heard.
4. Sympathy and empathy for all involved are acknowledged.
5. The child/children are gently reminded of the proper action and supported in adopting a more appropriate response.
6. The incident is recorded and parents are notified.

If an incident is recurring or persistent:

7. An alternative way of responding/reacting is demonstrated and encouraged.
8. The child is directed to an alternative activity (or place of rest, if rest is required) where close supervision can be maintained.

When behaviour is threatening or endangering the safety of others:

9. Either the Teacher or the Co-Educator support the child until they have calmed down.
10. Repeat steps 1-6.

When a child is consistently playing bully or victim the teacher will bring the behaviour to the parents' attention to gather a broader picture and develop a coordinated approach to working with the child.

If behaviour is consistently compromising safety of others or themselves either the parents or the emergency contact will be notified to collect the child as soon as possible.

Please also refer to Wild Cherry School's Behaviour Management Policy (Related Document 3) for managing persistent negative behaviour.

(n) Preschool Casual Relief Procedure

Early Childhood Teacher: The Admin Assistant maintains the list of casual relief teachers (CRT), who have undergone observation in the kinder classroom, have the necessary qualifications, and suitable VIT registration. Teachers contact the Admin Assistant, submit their leave form (if planned in advance), and the Admin Assistant organises the relevant replacement.

Kindergarten Assistant/Co-Educator: The Admin Assistant maintains the list of casual relief co-educators, who have undergone observation in the kinder classroom, have the necessary qualifications, criminal history check and a WWCC or equivalent. The Co-Educator contacts the Admin Assistant, submit their leave form (if planned in advance) and the Admin Assistant organises the relevant replacement.

It is the responsibility of the staff-member who is taking leave to fill in a Leave Application Form or timesheet book.

If a staff member requires unexpected leave outside office hours it is their responsibility where possible to organise a replacement, or to ask the Teacher/Co-Educator to organise if they are unable.

The relief staff then fill in the timesheet book for processing and payment by the Business/Finance Manager.

(o) Professional Development

The Early Childhood teacher and kindergarten assistant/co-educator attend weekly College of Teachers meetings, which include professional support and study.

Professional development days are held at the school at various times during the year.

Regional Steiner/Waldorf Kindergarten meetings are held once per term, where colleges from around Victoria meet at each other's services.

First Aid courses are attended by educators as required.

Opportunities are also taken to attend conferences held by such organisations as Steiner Education Australia, Australian Anthroposophical Medical Association, Kindergarten Parents Victoria, the Royal Children's Hospital, and Lady Gowrie Child Centre. A biennial Vital Years Conference is held on a rotational basis in different states throughout Australia.

(p) Providing a child safe environment

Wild Cherry School is committed to:

- providing adequate supervision of all enrolled children in all aspects of the service's program;
- ensuring all children are directly and actively supervised by educators employed or engaged by the service;
- maintaining a duty of care to all children;

- ensuring there is an understanding of the shared legal responsibility and accountability between, and a commitment by all persons to implement the procedures and practices outlined in this policy.

Supervision is critical in ensuring that children’s safety is protected in the service environment. All children must be adequately supervised at all times and in keeping with duty of care responsibilities.

Supervision strategies should be implemented to suit the service environment; educator knowledge and skills; the age mix, dynamics and size of the group of children being supervised, as well as the activities being undertaken. A risk management process should be used to identify high-risk activities, potential risks during excursions, water-related hazards, etc., and strategies implemented to minimize hazards and ensure children’s safety at all times. Supervision procedures are to be evaluated regularly.

Adequate, effective and active supervision requires educators to make ongoing assessments of the child and the activities in which they are engaged.

Educator-to-child ratios do not determine what is considered adequate supervision. Adequate supervision means that an educator can respond and intervene immediately, including when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation.

Every child is to be monitored actively and diligently. This means knowing where children are at all times. Active supervision requires focussed attention, intentional observation and physical positioning of educators combined with knowledge of individual children’s development and abilities.

Effective supervision also requires educators to be actively involved with children, planning thoughtfully and making decisions throughout the day to enable appropriate supervision strategies.

A flexible approach that considers context and contingency is essential, particularly at end-of-day procedures, excursions and regular outings, transporting children, and rest times.

Responsibilities relating to the Supervision of Children Policy

Approved Provider/Licensee

- Ensure that relevant educators have required qualifications.
- Ensure a minimum of two educators are rostered on duty at all times children are in attendance at the service.
- Ensure that children attending the service are adequately supervised at all times they are in the care of that service.
- Consider the design and arrangement of the service environment to support active supervision.
- Manage the risks of abuse or harm to each child, including fulfilling duty of care and legal obligations to protect children and prevent any reasonable, foreseeable risk of injury or harm.
- Identify high-risk activities, including through a risk management process, and implement strategies to improve children’s safety e.g. increasing adult-to-child ratios above regulatory requirements.
- Ensure supervision standards are maintained during educator breaks, including during lunch breaks.

- Provide safe play spaces for children, which allow for adequate supervision, including safe fall zones, good traffic flow, maintenance of buildings and equipment, and minimising trip hazards.
- Report to the responsible person where circumstances: do not allow for adequate supervision, require maintenance to the building and/or equipment, and provide tripping hazards
- Provide relief staff lists.
- Develop and implement procedures to inform relief staff about the supervision strategies outlined in this policy.
- Notify the Regulatory Authority within 12 hours of any serious incident, complaint alleging the health, safety or wellbeing of a child has been compromised or that a law has been breached.
- Reporting notifiable incidents to WorkSafe Victoria.
- Evaluate supervision procedures regularly in consultation with Responsible Person.

Responsible Person

- Ensure that educators have required qualifications.
- Ensure a minimum of two educators are rostered on duty at all times children are in attendance at the service.
- Ensure volunteers, students, visitors and support people are not responsible for the supervision of children.
- Consider the design and arrangement of the service environment to support active supervision.
- Maintain safe play spaces for children, which allow for adequate supervision, including safe fall zones, good traffic flow, maintenance of buildings and equipment, and minimising trip hazards.
- Identify high-risk activities, including excursions, through a risk management process, and implement strategies to improve children's safety e.g. increasing adult-to-child ratios above regulatory requirements.
- Ensure supervision standards are maintained during educator breaks, including during lunch breaks.
- Report to the Approved Provider/Licensee if additional supervision is required and provide rationale.

Educators

- Provide active and adequate supervision.
- Be alert to, and aware of, risks and hazards and the potential for incidents and injury throughout the service and not just within your own immediate area. Use active and diligent supervision skills to reduce or prevent incident or injury to children and adults.
- Manage the risks of abuse or harm to each child, including fulfilling duty of care and legal obligations to protect children and prevent any reasonable, foreseeable risk of injury or harm.
- Develop procedures to ensure that all children are accounted for, by referring to attendance records at various times throughout the day, and the accurate identification of each child, both before and after outdoor activities.
- Adjust supervision strategies to suit the service environment, educator skills, and age mix, dynamics and size of the group of children being supervised and the activities being undertaken.
- Maintain a duty of care to children at all times (including when the child is on the premises but not signed into or out of the service and the parent or person delivering or collecting the child is responsible for supervising that child).

- Work as a team to supervise children’s daily departure from the service and be aware of the person who has authority to collect the child.
- Inform parents and volunteers at the service about the *Supervision of Children Policy* and the ways that they can adhere to its procedures.
- Ensure children are prevented from leaving the service unaccompanied or from accessing unsupervised/unsafe areas of the service.
- Decide when to interrupt and redirect children’s play to ensure safety at all times.
- Identify opportunities to support and extend children’s learning while also recognising their need to play without adult intervention.
- Conduct and record daily safety checks of the environment to assess safety and to remove hazards.
- Arrange the environment (equipment, furniture and experiences) to ensure effective supervision while also allowing children to access quiet/private spaces.
- Provide direct and constant supervision when a child is near water.
- Conduct a risk assessment prior to an excursion, regular outing and service event to identify risks to health, safety or wellbeing, and specify how these risks will be managed and minimised.
- Follow the incident reporting and escalation and notify the Responsible Person in the event of a serious incident or notifiable complaint. Examples include when a child appears to be missing or is unaccounted for, or a complaint has been made alleging the health, safety or wellbeing of a child has been compromised.
- Assist the Responsible Person to evaluate supervision practices regularly.
- Supervise children’s daily departure from the service and be aware of the person who has authority to collect the child.

Parents

- Ensure educators are aware that your child has arrived at or departed from the service.
- Ensure that doors and gates, including playground gates, are closed after entry or exit.
- Be aware of the movement of other children near gates and doors when entering or exiting the service.
- Enable educators to supervise children at all times by making arrangements to speak with them outside program hours.
- Supervise own children before signing them into the program and after having signed them out.
- Supervise other children in their care, including siblings, while attending or assisting at the service.

Please also refer to Wild Cherry School’s Child Safe policy (Related Document 5) and Child Safe Code of Conduct (Related Document 4).

(q) Staffing

(i) Employment of Qualified Staff Policy

Wild Cherry School employs appropriately qualified early childhood teachers and educators or approved equivalent (according to the Education and Care Services National Regulations) in its preschool classes.

Teachers will be also asked to work from a Steiner/Waldorf curriculum. Educators must develop good anthroposophical practice and be willing to expand their knowledge and understanding of Steiner Early Childhood education as required.

In line with the Education and Care Services National Regulations, all staff are required to hold current

registration in Early Childhood with VIT and co-educators holding at least a Cert III in Children’s Services, a current Working with Children Check and a current Criminal History Check before being employed.

All staff must update their Level 2 First Aid, Asthma and Anaphylaxis training every three years and update their CPR qualification annually.

(ii) Code of Conduct for Staff

Please refer to the school’s Child Safe Code of Conduct (Related Document 4) and staff Code of Conduct found in the Staff Handbook (Related Document 19).

(iii) Determining the responsible person

The responsible person in day-to-day charge is the teacher responsible for the children’s service as outlined below:

Day	Responsible person
Monday	Not in operation
Tuesday	Not in operation
Wednesday	Early Childhood Teacher
Thursday	Early Childhood Teacher
Friday	Early Childhood Teacher

If the responsible person is absent on any given day, the person responsible will be the Kindergarten Assistant/Co-Educator, or the School Leader. The name of the responsible person on any given day is displayed on the notice board at the service entrance.

The person in day-to-day charge consents to the placement in writing. Reasonable steps are undertaken to ensure the person has adequate knowledge and understanding of the provision of education and care to children and an ability to effectively supervise and manage an education and care service.

(iv) Student teacher placement and volunteers in our Kindergarten

We will give priority to student teachers undertake their teaching rounds in our pre-school who are undertaking studies in Steiner Education, so that there are not too many people coming into the classrooms.

Once accepted by the school, the volunteer or trainee teacher is asked to sign the visitor’s book at the office each time they attend and to also fill out a *Volunteer Information Sheet (Related Document 20)* recording the volunteer/trainee teacher’s full name, date of birth, address, contact details and a copy of their Working with Children Check.

While on observation or teaching rounds the student teacher will at all times be under the supervision of the Kindergarten teacher. Student teachers shall be invited to partake in the pre-school program and be guided by the teacher when working or engaging with the children.

AUTHORISATION

Board Secretary
East Gippsland Steiner Education Group Inc.
Date authorised: 19 February 2019

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 1) Accident, Incident and Illness Register
- 2) Anaphylaxis Policy
- 3) Behaviour Management Policy
- 4) Child Safe Code of Conduct
- 5) Child Safe Participation and Empowerment Policy
- 6) Child Safe Policy
- 7) Child Safe Reporting Policy
- 8) Child Safe Risk Management Plan
- 9) Confidential Child Information Form
- 10) Critical Incident Plan
- 11) Dress Code Policy
- 12) Emergency Management Plan
- 13) Enrolment Application Form
- 14) Enrolment Policy
- 15) Excursions and Camps Policy and Procedures
- 16) Fee Assistance Policy
- 17) Fee Policy
- 18) First Aid Policy
- 19) Grievance Policy for Parents
- 20) Head Lice Policy
- 21) Kindergarten Health & Safety Policy
- 22) Schedule of Fees - Kindergarten
- 23) School Handbook
- 24) Staff Handbook
- 25) Supervision of Kindergarten Children Policy
- 26) Volunteer Information Sheet