

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to make sure that staff responsible for recruitment, induction and training of staff and volunteers at The Centre for Volunteering (The Centre) uphold our child safe recruitment, induction and training practices.

The policy sets out the processes for child safe recruitment of staff and volunteers for any child-related roles. The policy also includes the induction process for new recruits and volunteers, and further training that may be required at times for all staff, including volunteers. This is to make sure they continue to have the required skills to prevent risk of harm to children¹.

Scope

This policy is for staff undertaking recruitment of staff or volunteers for child-related roles. Staff includes managers; supervisors; full-time, part-time or casual, temporary or permanent staff; job candidates; student placements, contractors, and sub-contractors at The Centre.

The child safe recruitment and induction processes set out in this policy must be applied to anyone we are considering for a child-related role at The Centre.

This includes roles that involve any of the following:

- supervising children;
- being alone with children or engaging with them in a way that is not observed or monitored;
- taking part in activities with children away from the organisation's usual location;
- having access (online or paper based) to a child's or children's personal and/or confidential information;
- transporting children, and
- having any other type of unmonitored contact with children.

Processes for Child Safe Recruitment for Staff and Volunteers

Staff

Include our commitment to child safety in our advertising

Relevant job advertisements include details about The Centre's commitment to being child safe. We let potential staff members know at the outset that we uphold children's rights and take implementation of the Child Safe Standards seriously, and that everyone who works with children must have a cleared Working with Children Check (WWCC). We provide a link in the job advertisement to our Statement of Commitment to Child Safety.

Conduct a robust interview process for new employees

At The Centre we conduct a robust interview process. This involves:

- Setting up an interview panel:** we decide who will take part in the selection process to help pre-assess the applicants and conduct the interviews;
- Short-listing:** we pre-assess applicants' suitability to work with children and develop a short list;

¹ For this policy and associated documents and procedures, a child is a person aged zero to 18 years.

- c. **Having the interview:** we decide on the questions we want to ask. For child-related roles, questions will generally focus on the applicants' experience working in previous child-related roles
- d. **Assessing candidates and making the final selection:** the panel discuss the interviews and make notes on strengths and weaknesses to help them decide on the best candidate.

Check references

Each candidate must provide the details of two referees.

At least one of the referees should be someone from their most recent role.

Referees should have directly supervised or managed the applicant in a professional capacity. If the applicant has never worked before or has just left school, character references may be acceptable. However, these should not be from family members or be given as much weight as professional references.

We ask each referee whether they see any issues with the applicant working with children.

Screen and verify applicants' Working with Children Check

In NSW all adult workers in child-related work, paid or unpaid, must hold a WWCC clearance or a current application for a WWCC clearance (unless they are subject to an exemption²).

If a new employee holds a volunteer WWCC clearance, and begins a paid child-related work, it is a legal requirement that the employee upgrade their WWCC clearance from volunteer to paid within 30 days of beginning the paid work.

Employers have legal obligations around working with children. It is against the law to engage anyone in child-related work without a WWCC. If a staff member or volunteer requires a WWCC, there are actions our organisation must take.

Before commencing employment, The Centre will make sure the applicant has a cleared WWCC and it is verified on the [Office of the Children's Guardian's website](#).

The Centre keeps records for each verified staff member and volunteer including:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- WWCC number
- Verification date
- Verification outcome
- Expiry date of WWCC
- Whether the staff member or volunteer is in paid or volunteer work.

² Exemptions include:

- under 18s
- workers visiting NSW for a short time
- parents and close relatives volunteering at their children's usual school and extra-curricular activities. There are 3 specific instances when close relatives **do** need a Check when they are volunteering at school or activities:
 1. providing personal care for a child with disability
 2. participating in a formal mentoring program
 3. at an overnight camp for children.

The Centre continues to monitor and act to:

- keep all staff and volunteers' WWCC details up to date;
- remind staff and volunteers to renew which they can do up to 3 months before their WWCC expires, and
- remove anyone whose WWCC status is barred, interim barred, whose WWCC cannot be found or has expired from child-related work. The Centre can only employ people who have an Application number or WWCC clearance in child-related work.

Undertake a Broader National Criminal History Check or Other Checks for Specific Roles or Circumstances

A police check (broader national criminal history check) may also be required for some applicants. This includes applicants who have spent more than 6 months overseas in their previous role or are applying for the following roles that include the following:

- supervising children;
- being alone with children or engaging with them in a way that is not observed or monitored;
- taking part in activities with children away from the organisation's usual location;
- having access (online or paper based) to a child's personal and/or confidential information;
- transporting children; and
- having any other type of unmonitored contact with children.

An NDIS Worker Screening Check (NDISWC) is required for individuals in certain roles related to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). These roles include:

- Those likely to require 'more than incidental contact' with NDIS participants.
- Those involved in the delivery of 'specified supports and services'.
- Those classified as 'key personnel'.
- Workers of registered NDIS providers in risk-assessed roles.
- Sole traders, contractors, or self-employed workers.

Volunteers

Before commencing, volunteers working or interacting directly with children at The Center must also have a cleared and verified Working with Children Check, unless they are exempted. This will follow the processes set out above for new staff.

The Centre undertakes informal interviews with new volunteers, as part of our screening process. This follows the general principles outlined above for staff.

Volunteers should also provide at least one referee – ideally someone who has worked with them in a previous role (paid or unpaid). We check with the referee whether they have any issues with the person working with children.

If the Centre is Notified if a Staff Member or Volunteer is Barred from Working with Children

It is an offence to allow a barred person to work with children and they must be removed from child-related work.

A person is barred from working with children if the Office of the Children's Guardian has determined that the person is a risk to working with children.

When the Office of the Children's Guardian bars a person at The Centre from working with children, they will contact the person registered as The Centre's 'contact person' – which was determined when The Centre initially registered as an employer in the WWCC system – currently the Deputy CEO. The purpose of the initial contact is to determine whether the staff member is still employed by The Centre (or volunteering with us), and whether they are working with children.

Centre staff will respond to this request promptly and accurately.

If The Centre confirms that the staff member or volunteer is currently working at The Centre and in a child-related role, the Office of the Children's Guardian will issue a formal written notification advising The Centre to remove the staff member/volunteer from working with children.

Once this has been received, The Centre will take immediate action and respond to the Office of the Children's Guardian in writing, confirming that the staff member/volunteer has been removed from working with children.

A record must be kept of all actions taken by The Centre. This information will be treated confidentially and only the people in the organisation who need to know will be advised.

Child safe induction

At The Centre we recognise that making sure a staff member or volunteer is safe and suitable to work with children is an ongoing process. Inductions for staff and volunteers include:

- an overview of all our child safe documents, including our Child Safe Code of Conduct (to be read and signed), the Child Safe Risk Management Plan and our Child Safe Reporting Policy, ensuring that that new staff and volunteers are advised of their reporting obligations and how to identify and raise a child safety concern;
- ensuring new recruits complete required child safe training (see below), and
- monitoring and supervision.

We support new recruits and volunteers with appropriate instruction and feedback when needed, including regular oversight as they become familiar with the new role.

There is also a 6-month probationary period for all staff and volunteers to make sure they are a good fit with our organisation.

Child safe training

New staff and volunteers, in child-related roles, will be required to complete the Introduction to Child Safe Standards online session, offered through the [Office of the Children's Guardian](#).

More in-depth specific Child Safe training is available through the Office of the Children's Guardian. Training includes both eLearning and online sessions. Further training requirements can be determined by the staff member/volunteer and their manager depending on their role in the organisation.