

Tottenham War Memorial Early Childhood Centre

Governance and Management Policy

The Centre will provide a quality education and care service and will operate according to all legal requirements. It will make every effort to reflect the special nature of the community and encourage family input and consider family, children's and staff needs in the operation of the Centre. The approved provider will ensure that decisions are made in a legitimate way and in the best interests of the Centre.

Statutory and Legislation consideration:

Education and Care Services National Regulations
Corporations and Associations Law
Education and Care Services National Law Act

Aim:

The Centre will meet its legal and financial obligations by implementing appropriate governance practices that support our aim to provide high quality child care that meets the objectives and principles of the National Quality Framework, the National Quality Standard and the Early Years Learning Framework.

Governance is the system or process by which organisations are directed, controlled and held accountable to ensure that the right decisions are made. Our Centre recognises the importance of having a framework of rules, relationships, systems and processes within, and by which authority is exercised and controlled in the organisation. We view good governance and management as essential to our provision of quality education and care.

Our Centre is committed to ensuring good governance and accountability to its stakeholders by:

- Conducting our affairs legally, ethically and with integrity, ensuring compliance with all funding, regulatory and legislative requirements placed on the organisation;
- Remaining solvent and complying with all our financial obligations;
- Identifying organisational risks, legal obligations and managing these through policies and relevant processes; and
- Ensuring mechanisms are in place for fair and transparent governance.

Rationale:

The Centre understands it has legal responsibilities associated with setting up and operating the Centre. The Approved Provider/Management Committee has a legal responsibility to comply with:

- Family Assistance Law;
- Education and Care Services National Law;
- Accounting for Australian Government funds;
- Ensuring the fitness and propriety of the provider, including managing bodies, and any authorised person in day-to-day charge of the Centre;
- Any Australian Government funding agreements; and
- Ensuring that the Centre remains financially viable.

The Centre also understands the responsibility to maintain appropriate governance arrangements that reflect the legal status and authority to hold a provider and service approval, and to effectively manage the Centre. It is a general requirement of the Australian Government that the Centre meets the criteria of a community-based organisation incorporated under relevant state legislation.

Roles and responsibilities:

Role of the Management Committee

The management of our Centre is overseen by the Management Committee and they are accountable to members for the performance of the organisation. The Approved Provider has a range of responsibilities prescribed in the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, including keeping accurate records and retaining them for specified timeframes.

- The Management Committee has overall responsibility to members for the sustainability and relevance of the Centre.
- The Management Committee will direct its activities towards achieving the organisation's aims and implementing the organisation's Quality Improvement Plan by guiding and monitoring the organisation's business and affairs in line with the objectives as set out in the organisation's constitution and in line with the organisation's philosophy.
- In carrying out its responsibilities, the Management Committee undertakes to maximise the value and contribution of the organisation to the community, and to serve the interests of the organisation's members, employees, families and children using the Centre. In serving these interests there is an implicit understanding that the rights of the child are paramount in all decision making.
- The Management Committee is the employer of all staff in the organisation.
- They are also responsible for ensuring the financial viability of the Centre, overseeing control and accountability systems and supporting the Nominated Supervisor and staff in their roles and providing resources as appropriate for the effective running of the Centre.

Compliance Measures:

The Management Committee will ensure that mechanisms are in place such as compliance tools to assist them to assess that the organisation's policies are implemented.

Constitution:

The Management Committee will:

- Ensure that the organisation's constitution is always followed;
- Ensure that the constitution is reviewed at least every three years; and
- Ensure that each new member of the Management Committee is provided with a copy of the organisation's Constitution and Quality Improvement Plan on their appointment to the Management Committee.

The Management Committee:

- Is elected annually from Tottenham War Memorial Early Childhood Centre members under the rules of the Constitution of the Tottenham Preschool Kindergarten Association Incorporated.
- Promotes parental involvement in the Centre, where parents and carers are welcome to attend Management Committee Meetings and help in any way they can with fundraisers and working bees.
- To have voting rights parents or carers are required to become an elected member of the Management Committee at the Annual General Meeting.
- Manages and coordinates fundraising and expenditure.
- Keeps open lines of communication between staff and families.
- Discusses issues affecting the Centre.
- Contributes to developing strategies/ideas for the direction of the Centre.

Management Committee Powers:

The Management Committee:

- sets the strategic direction and monitors performance of the organisation
- will provide effective governance to ensure excellent overall management of the organisation's business and financial objectives.
- may delegate any of their powers (except for the power of delegation and responsibilities as Approved Provider) to a committee member, Nominated Supervisor, an employee or any other person.
- delegates the responsibility of implementing the strategic plan and day-to-day management of the organisation to the Centre's Nominated Supervisor.

In discharging its powers, the Nominated Supervisor and Management Committee members will be bound by the Association Act/Corporations Act, the Constitution and all policies of the Centre.

The Management Committee's authority includes:

- Overseeing the organisation including its control and accountability systems;
- Appointing and removing the Nominated Supervisor;
- Ratifying the appointment of all staff members;
- Developing organisational strategy and performance objectives;
- Reviewing, ratifying and monitoring systems of risk management and internal control, codes of conduct, and legal compliance;
- Monitoring the Nominated Supervisor's performance and implementation of strategies;
- Approving and monitoring financial and other reporting requirements;
- Authorising appropriate delegations within the organisation;
- Ensuring appropriate resources are available to carry out the organisation's functions; and
- Approving and monitoring the progress of major capital expenditure.

Risk management:

The Management Committee will:

- Ensure the organisation operates within a valid Constitution and that all governance and management practices of the Management Committee and staff align with the Constitution,
- Demonstrate achievement of this through accessible meeting minutes and Management Committee self-assessments,
- Assist committee members to receive ongoing support and professional development in the implementation of effective and evidence-based governance practice.

Code of conduct:

The Management Committee members will:

- Commit themselves to ethical, businesslike, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and professional decorum when acting as Management Committee members;
- Demonstrate un-conflicted loyalty to the interests of the organisation when acting as a Management Committee member;
- Avoid conflicts of interest with respect to their role;
- Annually disclose their involvement with other organisations or companies that currently do business or may do business with the organisation;
- Immediately disclose to the Management Committee all impending conflicts of interest. That member shall absent herself or himself without comment from both the deliberation and final decision-making;
- Not use information exclusive to Management Committee members for personal gain and will respect the confidentiality of all information obtained during meetings or through their role; and
- Respect confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature.

Responsibilities of the Centre:

For families:

- the provision of a quality education and care service;
- information about how the Centre is managed;
- opportunity to give input into management; and
- assurance that the Centre is financially viable and legally operated.

For staff:

- competent employers where there is efficient management and administration of the Centre; and
- management structure that allows for effective communication between management and staff.

For Management Committee:

- clarity of roles and responsibilities;
- competent management team;
- appropriate decision-making processes;
- compliance with all legal responsibilities; and

- continuity of management.

Role of the Management Committee:

- The Management Committee will make and ratify all decisions pertaining to the financial, legal, employment, and policy management of the service.
- This will be undertaken at Management Committee meetings. Dates are advised via Centre newsletters.
- The effectiveness of the Centre is dependent on a well-defined partnership between the Management Committee and the Nominated Supervisor. The partnership requires clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, and regular and open communication.
- The Management Committee will ensure that the requirements of the funding bodies are met, as set out in guidelines and funding agreements.
- The Management Committee will ensure that the Centre runs efficiently and effectively, ensuring ongoing viability.
- The Management Committee is bound by the Constitution of The Tottenham Preschool Kindergarten Association Incorporated.

Community Managed Centres:

- The Nominated Supervisor will participate in an ex-officio capacity in the meetings of the Management Committee. At these meetings the Nominated Supervisor will present a progress report including any concerns of different aspects of education and care and provide information to assist the Management Committee in its decision-making tasks. They will also provide staff perspectives, raise issues decided at staff meetings on behalf of the staff, and give feedback from staff meetings.
- Communication between the Management Committee and staff in relation to their work or the operation of the Centre will be via the Nominated Supervisor, or the Community Liaison Officer (nominated and elected from the Management Committee).
- The committee members will have due regard for the harmonious operation of the Centre when requesting access to the Centre's resources, records etc for fulfilling their committee responsibilities. All requests for access will be made through the Nominated Supervisor who will determine a mutually convenient time. The Centre's policy on *Confidentiality of Records* will be strictly observed.
- Confidentiality will be maintained at all levels by all committee members.
- Families will be encouraged to participate in sub-committees where they must present their recommendations to the Management Committee for endorsement prior to any action. Sub-committees cannot make decisions or act on behalf of the Centre without Management Committee endorsement.
- Management Committee members will be asked to identify their training needs and encouraged to attend relevant training to enhance their skills and participation in committee tasks.
- The Management Committee members should be aware of the *Dealing with Complaints and Feedback Policy* and should conflict arise the policy should be set in place and all steps adhered to.

Policies

The Management Committee will:

- Ensure that a comprehensive set of policies are in place as required under Education and Care Service Regulations and other Regulations and Laws that the Centre must comply with;
- Ensure that these policies comply with relevant legislation; and
- Update these policies on a regular basis.

Strategies for policy implementation:

- The Management Committee will ensure that the Centre is properly set up and operated in accordance with relevant legislation and in a financially responsible manner.
- The Management Committee will ensure all members of the Committee are orientated into the roles and responsibilities of maintaining the legal operation of the Centre.
- Families will be actively encouraged to participate in the management of the Centre through:
 - Participation in the Management Committee;
 - Providing feedback to management through surveys, and other communication strategies; and
 - Involvement in the Centre's activities, social and community events.

- The Management Committee is responsible to the regulatory authority for ensuring that the Centre operates in accordance with the conditions of approval. This includes:
 - Ensuring the presence of a Certified Nominated Supervisor;
 - The design, safety and maintenance of the premises;
 - Minimum number of staff and their qualifications;
 - That staff and other persons who have contact with children are fit and proper;
 - Number of children in attendance on any day does not exceed licensed number or staffing ratio;
 - Appropriate policies; and
 - Procedures and records in place.
- The Management Committee is responsible in notifying regulatory authority of any circumstances set down within the Education and Care Services National Law Act in relation to changes that may require amendments to provider approval, service approval, supervisor certificates or Nominated Supervisor status.
- The Management Committee is responsible for ensuring that effective strategies and resources are in place to allow the Nominated Supervisor to realistically achieve their role as required by the Education and Care Services National Regulation. This will include:
 - Facilitating effective communication between the Nominated Supervisor and the Committee;
 - The availability of adequate human and physical resources to meet the provision of Regulations such as effective policies and procedures;
 - The availability of adequate financial resources to meet the provisions of Regulations; and
 - The performance management and professional development of the Nominated Supervisor.
- The Nominated Supervisor is the person responsible for the effective supervision and control of the Centre, that is, the person who is present at the Centre to:
 - Effectively communicate with the Management Committee about strategic day-to-day operational matters and any matters that may affect the Management Committee's ability to comply with the regulations;
 - Professional development, supervision and performance management of staff;
 - Quality assurance of the development and implementation of the Early Years Learning Framework for the children attending the Centre;
 - Maintaining up-to-date policies and procedures as required by Regulations;
 - Maintaining at least the minimum staff-to-child ratios as required by Regulations;
 - Overseeing of effective excursion plans to ensure the safety of children attending the excursion;
 - Facilitating communication between staff and families;
 - Ensuring children's records such as enrolments, emergency contacts, medical and developmental progress, are kept up-to-date; and
 - Reporting allegations of abuse, injury or illness to the relevant child protection authority as required by Regulations.
- The Management Committee will ensure that the Centre's *Philosophy* reflects the needs and values of those people for whom the Centre exists e.g. children, families, staff and community. This will be done by evaluating the philosophy at least annually. The Management Committee will also ensure the operation of the Centre is consistent with the philosophy.
- Policies and procedures will be regularly updated to ensure they meet current needs. Ratified policies and procedures will be followed by everyone within the Centre.
- Decisions about the overall management of the Centre will be made in consultation with all stakeholders. This will be achieved through surveys, discussion with individuals, at Management Committee meetings, involvement in policy review and evaluation of the Quality Improvement Plan. The best interests of the Centre will always take priority in determining decisions.
- Responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Centre is delegated to the Nominated Supervisor. Any issue that the Nominated Supervisor is not confident in resolving or determines to be of significant nature will be brought to the attention of the Management Committee for discussion as soon as possible. Where urgent decisions need to be made at short notice the agreed procedure for dealing with urgent business will be followed.

Policy development and review process:

The Centre aims to provide effective management and a quality service through the ongoing development and review of policies. The Management Committee will ensure that all staff, volunteers, and families are aware of the existence of Centre policies and procedures and have access to the policy folder and these are also available to

Regulatory Authorities. The Approved Provider must also take all reasonable steps to ensure that written policies and procedures are followed.

Procedure for Policy Development and Review

The Centre undertakes an obligatory policy development and review as required, or earlier if any of the following occurs:

- An issue or problem arises that is not already addressed in a current policy;
- A current policy is not meeting the current needs;
- Daily operations of the Centre are unclear to staff, parents or management;
- Staff, parents or management are unsure what to do in certain situations; and
- There have been changes due to outside influences such as regulations.

Policy Strategies

- Policies support the Centre Philosophy.
- The Centre reflects values and beliefs, and these serve as a foundation for true quality and practice.
- Give staff members a framework for action.
- Decision-making is less complicated and more consistent.
- Policies act as guide for continuity in Centre management and operation.
- Policies developed by the Centre community reflect the principles and values of the community.
- Policies act as a guide in understanding what families can expect of the Centre, and an understanding of what the Centre will expect of families.
- Policies provide a guide for the Management Committee in decision-making and reinforcing good practice.
- Policies can be used as a tool for conflict management in promoting objective, fully informed resolution.
- Policies provide an opportunity for evaluation and assessment, where the Centre is functioning well and where improvement can be made.

Effective Policies

- Have a foundation in law, regulations and philosophy.
- Give attention to all aspects of the operation of the Centre.
- Considers the needs of all members of the Centre.
- Are clearly written and can be understood by all members of the Centre community.
- Are developed in consultation.
- Have clear guidelines for implementation.
- Are constantly reviewed and evaluated to ensure translation of policy into practice.

New policies will be developed by:

- A draft policy being written.
- The draft will be written by a combination of staff and Management Committee members, the composition of which is at the discretion of the Nominated Supervisor and Management Committee.
- Advice will be sought on any contentious issues, and to ensure that current regulations are met.
- A draft policy will be presented to and distributed to Management Committee members and interested parents prior to the next Management Committee meeting.
- At Management Committee meetings suggestions in respect to alterations, additions and omissions will be discussed and any alterations collated. The draft policy can then be moved for ratification. The policy can only be ratified by a majority decision.
- The ratified policy is to be inserted into the policy folder.
- The ratified policy will be distributed to the parent body.

The review of Policies will be based on the following criteria:

Is the policy operating effectively?

Does it include appropriate responses to individual incidents?

Does it meet the needs of the Centre?

Is it consistent with current Centre philosophy?

Is it consistent with current legislation, regulations, acts and standards?

- All new and reviewed policies must reflect the current philosophy of the Centre.
- Staff practices and/or procedures can be amended and ratified at staff meetings by Nominated Supervisor and staff. These practices/procedures will be made available to families and the Management Committee.
- Policies will be filed in a loose-leaf folder along with a copy of the Centre's philosophy. Policies will include a date of ratification.
- There are two policy folders which are to be kept at the Centre and are readily available to the staff, Management Committee and parents.
- The Management Committee will ensure that new committee members, staff and parents are made aware of the existence of the policy folder.
- Staff members are expected to read through any new or recently reviewed policies each month.
- Any staff member, Management Committee member and/or parents are welcome to make suggestions and discuss any concerns they may have regarding current policies. Policies, however, can only be altered by a majority decision at a designated Management Committee meeting after the correct review procedure has been followed.
- Parents and staff, through the Management Committee, are encouraged to be involved in the development and review of policies.
- All policies are to undergo regular review, or more frequently as the need arises. All changes to policies are to be recorded in the policy folder and include the date of ratification.
- As an ongoing practice, specific policies may be displayed from time to time on the notice board or sent to parents to highlight any relevant issues. This may be required if there is a recurrent problem arising or to highlight any specific current issue at the Centre.

Sources: DEEWR Child Care Service Handbook 2011-2012; Early Childhood Australia (ECA) *the Code of Ethics*; PSCA Policies in Practice policy template: Management and Governance, Community Child Care Co-operative policies

Ratified

Date.....

Updated October 2018

In accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the Centre will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.