

GOVERNING COUNCIL POLICY

The Governing Council provides families and the local community with the opportunity to participate in the management and structure of the Service. When they are involved in decision-making processes, families and the community are more likely to understand the scope of the Service's organisation and activities, local issues and priorities, policies and procedures and assist in the continual improvement of the quality of education and care provided to children within the Service.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service.
7.1.1	Service philosophy and purposes	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations.
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.1.3	Roles and Responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood and support effective decision making and operation of the service.
7.2	Leadership	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.
7.2.1	Continuous improvement	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.
7.2.2	Educational leadership	The educational leader is supported and leads the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
55	Quality Improvement Plans
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

RELATED POLICIES

Child Safe Environment Policy	Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
Code of Conduct Policy	Social Media Policy
Family Communication Policy	Staffing Arrangements Policy
Grievance Policy	Work Health & Safety Policy
Governance Policy	Writing and Reviewing and Maintaining Policies

PURPOSE

We are committed to providing a strong Governing Council team who are aware of their roles and responsibilities to the Service, children, families, educators, and community. The Governing Council will adhere to Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations and the National Quality Standard, ensuring positive working relationships are formed. The Governing Council will maintain their professionalism at all times, performing in an ethical manner, which is reflective of the Service’s philosophy.

SCOPE

This policy applies to management, educators, and families of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

A Governing Council provides a means to give families a say in what happens within our Service. We believe in providing families with the opportunity to work in partnerships with our management team to assist in making decisions about how our Service is operating, including policy review and practice which is reflective of our Service’s philosophy.

The Governing Council is elected each year at our Annual General Meeting (AGM). The members of the Council include: Executive Council (Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary), Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Director, parent representatives, and two staff representatives.

The Governing Council has an overall responsibility for the sustainability and relevance of the Service. The Council provides effective governance to support the operation of our quality education and care Service and actively supports families to meaningfully engage with the Service philosophy, policies and procedures and provide feedback to ensure continual improvement.

IN RELATION TO THE SERVICE:

- Council members must ensure they take their role and responsibilities seriously

- all members must adhere to the Service's *Code of Conduct* and *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
- all members of the Governing Council must have a valid Working with Children Check/Vulnerable Person check or Criminal History check (where relevant)
- each new Council member will receive an induction as per the *New Council member induction checklist* (see: *Appendix 1*)
- Service management will email details of Council meeting schedules, agendas, and minutes to all families who request this information.
- the Governing Council will be involved in conjunction with families and Educators in the development and review process for all policies and procedures
- the Governing Council will reflect upon and provide feedback on the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) documenting continuous improvement
- the Governing Council will ensure all ideas and concerns are recognised and addressed in a professional and timely manner
- the Service management will encourage family participation in the Governing Council to represent the family body of the Service
- written information regarding the Service's management structure will be available to families at all times.
- whilst the Nominated Supervisor is responsible for the day to day running of the Service, it is to be in accordance with the decisions of the Governing Council providing they comply with all regulations and standards
- the members of the Governing Council, (other than the Nominated Supervisor and staff representatives), are elected by those families who attend the Service. Families may join the Council at any time throughout the year.
- all families are encouraged to attend the Governing Council meetings and may vote on motions
- meetings are held monthly on the first Tuesday of the month from 7:00pm to 8:30pm.
- a copy of the minutes of Governing Council meetings is available to all families on the notice board in the foyer and will be uploaded to the OWNA app
- notices and agendas of forthcoming meetings are posted on the notice board
- families may request minutes, meeting schedules, and/or agendas to be emailed if more convenient
- the Governing Council will be made aware of the Service's grievance policy and procedure.

FUNCTIONS OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

The Governing Council sets the strategic direction of the Service and is responsible for the overall operation of the Service.

Essentially, the Governing Council has four vital functions and Council members contribute to one or more of these functions, depending on their interests and skills:

- **Finance:** day to day finances, administration issues, employee duties, general organisation; annual budget, financial statements; legal requirements; insurance policies; reporting requirements to Government bodies- (CCS); fundraising
- **Communication:** Publicity and public relations, keeping the Service’s community informed of Council decisions, new policies, events, etc.
- **Future planning:** Being actively involved in the Service’s Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and the Professional Development Plan for Service staff.
- **Policy development:** Formulating and updating the Service’s policies, procedures, and philosophy as required, in conjunction with the Nominated Supervisor, staff, and families.

The complete set of policies is available from the Nominated Supervisor at any time. Families are encouraged to consult these regularly.

SOURCE

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
 Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2009) *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*.
 Community Early Learning Australia
 Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
 Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011).
 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).
 Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).
 Network of Community Activities <http://networkofcommunityactivities.org.au/management-matters-management-Councils/>
 Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	DEEMBER 2020	NEXT REVIEW DATE	DECEMBER 2021
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor edits • sources checked for currency 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix added: New Council Member checklist 	
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
DECEMBER 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional inclusions in purpose of policy Related policies added Working With Children Check inclusion additional points added to sections 	DECEMBER 2020
DECEMBER 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reference to existing <i>Governing Council induction checklist</i> incorporated. Additional information added to points. 	DECEMBER 2019
OCTOBER 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard 	DECEMBER 2018
SEPTEMBER 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor changes made to policy 	DECEMBER 2018
NOVEMBER 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Format created and policy created 	SEPTEMBER 2017

Appendix 1:

NEW COUNCIL MEMBER INDUCTION CHECKLIST

INFORMATION

The following information has been explained to new Council member/s

- the history of the Service
- the role of Council and its authority within the Service
- the structure of the Council (e.g. positions held)
- Council members' roles and duties
- new member's role and duties
- the legal structure of the Council
- legal obligations and liabilities of the Council
- financial status and spending plans
- current and upcoming projects
- current issues (if applicable)
- current sub-Councils operating

The new member has:

- been introduced to senior management
- been introduced to other Council members
- been introduced to key Service staff (e.g. Nominated Supervisor/Director)
- had a tour of the Service (if unfamiliar)
- been provided with a mentor
- signed and returned a confidentiality agreement
- signed and returned the Code of Conduct

The new member has received:

- rules or constitution of the Council
- documented Council policies and procedures
- a document stating the terms and conditions of appointment
- a document stating the roles, duties, and responsibilities of the position
- a list of current Council members and their contact details
- a schedule of upcoming meetings (date, time, and venue)
- minutes of previous meetings
- last annual report

In relation to the service, the new member has received or has access to:

- the Service philosophy
- policies and procedures
- Belonging, Being and Becoming: EYLF*

MEMBER NAME			
MENTOR NAME			
INDUCTION PROCESS CARRIED OUT BY		SIGNATURE	

I _____, confirm that I have undertaken the new Council member induction for Roxby Downs Children's Centre, and understood the information provided to me.

I have received all documentation as per the Induction Checklist.

I understand it is my duty to:

- Act in good faith and for proper purpose
- Act with care, skill, and diligence
- Ensure confidentiality
- Not dishonestly use position or information for personal use, and
- Avoid conflicts of interest.

Member's signature: _____

Date: _____

Declaration adapted from information provided by Justice Connect, 2017