Procedure 1.05.29 Staff absences

Introduction

Bega Valley Shire Council education and care services will meet the National Regulation requirements for qualified staff and child-staff ratios at all times of operation.

For 2012, these are:

- 1: 4 educators for children under 2 years
- 1: 8 educators for children 2 – 3 years
- 1: 10 educators for children 3 – 5 years
- 1: 15 educators for children of school age
- 1 qualified early childhood teacher each day when there are more than 29 children in attendance
- 2 qualified early childhood teachers each day when there are more than 39 children in attendance. A designated Responsible Person/ Certified Supervisor will be on the premises at all times of service operation.

Strategies

Planned Absences

Planned absences include Annual leave, Long service leave, Rostered days off, and Study leave.

All Educators and Staff will:

- Submit leave forms in advance and have them approved by the Nominated Supervisor prior to booking holidays. All approval of planned leave will be subject to the operational requirements of the education and care service. Approval may not be granted if there are insufficient replacement staff with equivalent skills, knowledge or qualifications to enable the service to meet statutory obligations. Leave will not be approved unless all forms have been submitted. For further information consult Bega Valley Shire Council policy 5.04 Conditions of Employment. Check that approved leave and replacement staff have been included in the roster, and advise the Nominated Supervisor immediately of any gaps.

- Provide any significant hand-over information to the Educational Leader, Nominated Supervisor or relevant replacement person. This information should include updates on any ongoing issues that affect the operation of the education and care service, or the children, families, staff or others using the service.

Unplanned Absences

Unplanned absences include Sick leave, and Bereavement leave.

All Educators, Staff, Students, Volunteers and others will:

- Ensure they have an up-to-date list of appropriate phone contact numbers for their education and care service.
• Notify the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person of an unplanned absence as soon as possible. This means SPEAKING DIRECTLY WITH A PERSON:
  o Ring the education and care service and speak with the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person prior to 4.00 on the day before they will be away
  o Ring the education and care service and speak with the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person prior to service closing on the day before they will be away
  o Ring the designated Nominated Supervisor at home before 7.30 pm on the evening before they will be away.
• All educators and staff MUST SPEAK directly to a person to advise of an absence.
• Complete the required forms for the absence as soon as practicable and attach any required evidence to support the absence
• Submit the required forms and evidence to the Nominated Supervisor for approval prior to forwarding to Human Resources.

Unplanned Emergency Absences
Unplanned emergency absences include unexpected illness or accident on the day they are rostered to work.
All Educators, Staff, Students, Volunteers and others will:
• Ensure they have an up-to-date list of appropriate phone contact numbers for their education and care service.
• Ring the Responsible Person for the education and care service at home or at the service at least 1 hour prior to your shift commencement time on the day they are scheduled to work.
• Provide information to the Responsible Person that will help in decision making about covering the absence. This information may include details of their shift, the length of their absence
• Follow instructions given to cover the absence. This may include being asked to call a designated reliever.
• All educators and staff MUST SPEAK directly to a person when advising that they will be away.
• Complete the required forms for the absence as soon as practicable and attach any required evidence to support the absence
• Submit the required forms and evidence to the Nominated Supervisor for approval

Recruitment
The Authorised Provider and Nominated Supervisor will:
• Ensure strategies are in place to continue service operations to cover all planned and unplanned staff absences
• Report any break in service operations due to planned or unplanned staff absences to the Department of Education and Communities.
• The Nominated Supervisor will
• Monitor available relief staff and ensure there are sufficient people with suitable knowledge, experience and qualifications to meet the operational requirements of the education and care service
• Advise the Approved Provider in a timely manner if there is a need to recruit additional relief and casual staff to meet the operational requirements of the education and care service
• Advise the Approved Provider of any absences that impact the continued operations and service delivery of
the education and care service
• Provide the Approved Provider with recommended strategies for managing the impact on the continued
operation and service delivery of any absences.
• Implement and manage recruitment processes that have been approved by the Provider.
• Manage staff absences to ensure all education and care services comply with operational and statutory
requirements for staffing
• Write any changes to staff hours of work and attendance on the displayed roster and update each roster
monthly using ‘track changes’ prior to registering the document in Bega Valley Shire Council records systems.
• Advise the Educational Leader or Responsible Person of any changes to staff hours of work or attendance as
soon as practicable

Evaluation
All education and care services meet the statutory requirements for staff and educators in attendance at the
service at all times.

Statutory legislation and considerations
• Education and Care Services National Regulations, 2011.

References
• Bega Valley Shire Council, Business continuity plan, 2011. Online access, June: www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au