

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S CENTRE
OBSERVATION AND RESEARCH POLICY

AIM

To ensure that research conducted within the La Trobe University Community Children's Centre is of benefit to and extends the development of the children and their community.

To support the development of Early Childhood Education nationally and internationally.

To enhance the professional development of Centre staff.

To ensure that research conducted within the Centre is consistent with the philosophy and values about the care and education of children.

To maintain ethical standards

The Centre welcomes students to our team. The Centre accepts students seeking practical experience and those undertaking research projects each year from a variety of Educational Institutions.

Practicums and Observational visits are arranged in consultation with the Manager, Field Supervisors (a person who has achieved a minimum two year qualification and is employed by the Centre), along with personnel from the relevant Educational Institution.

Student visits to the Centre for practicums or observational projects are arranged to minimise any disruption to the operation of the Centre. Students are expected to maintain a professional attitude at all times and demonstrate a work ethic equivalent to that reflected in the Centre Philosophy and other such documentation as is provided by the Centre.

To ensure an understanding of expectation by both Centre personnel and students, undertaking practicums or observational projects, guidelines have been developed and are as follows:

1. The Manager, or her nominated representative, will provide and discuss with each student a package of information about the Centre.
2. Students are to work the same roster as the Field Supervisor.
3. Students must have written work up to date and available for Field Supervisors each day.
4. Students must contact the Centre if absent.
5. Students are to have two hours planning/preparation time each week with the Field Supervisor.
6. Students are also provided with an hour at the end of each day to complete written tasks/preparation. (they must not leave the Centre.)
7. Students will be supervised at all times by Centre personnel.
8. Communication between Centre personnel and students is encouraged at all times.

Allowing students to utilise our Centre, keeps us informed of new ideas and developments affecting both the children and service provision, whilst also further promoting the reputation of the Centre.

The activities indicated above are considered to be part of the normal operation of the Centre and will be arranged by the Manager.

Specific consent will be sought from parents for the participation of individual children in research projects, photographs, video recording, audio recording or motion film. The research projects may involve interviews, completion of questionnaires, or systemic observational record-taking of individual children. In such cases parents will receive a request for permission for their children's participation via individual consent forms as well as information about the project.

Procedure

1. All applicants must complete a Centre Research Application form (APPENDIX A)
2. The full application to the appropriate Ethics Committee with Ethics Committee approval must be attached to the application. The application must be submitted to the Centre Manager. Applications will not be considered without this documentation.
3. Applications must be submitted 7 working days prior to the Centre's Staff Development Team (SDT) meeting. The SDT meets on a fortnightly basis.
4. The Staff Development Team will discuss the application and will then consult with all Early Childhood staff who will be required to be involved in the research.
5. Staff and parents have the right not to participate or withdraw at any time. If all staff and parents do not wish to participate in the research the applicant will be notified as soon as possible.
6. If staff and parents agree to the research proposal and are satisfied that all their questions have been addressed by the applicant, SDT will forward the application with a recommendation to the Children's Centre Management Committee (CCMC). This committee meets in the fourth week of each month. (See Appendix B, dates)
7. The applicant will be contacted within 2 weeks of the CCMC meeting with a written response to the application.
8. Where a research project involves staff participation through
 - Administration tasks
 - Interviews
 - Research meetings with staff
 - Accompanying a child, the researcher will need to reimburse the centre for relief costs.

The current rate for the cost of relief staff (\$30.00 per hour) or staff overtime will be charged to the researcher.

9. Children will not be permitted to be taken out of their room without the presence of a staff member from their section. That staff member will remain with the child/children and will accompany them back to their room when the research is complete.
10. Children will not be permitted to be involved in the research without signed informed consent from their parent/s or legal guardian 5 days prior to conducting research. It is the responsibility of the researcher to collect the consent forms and hand them to the Manager prior to conducting research.
11. Children will not be offered a reward for participation in the research project.
12. Applicants will be required to provide their own equipment and resources. If the applicant wishes to use the Centre resources permission must be granted from the Manager prior to conducting the research.
13. The applicant will provide at regular intervals during the research written feedback to the Centre about the research conducted. On completion of the research the Centre will be provided with a written report of the outcome of the research. The researcher will also provide any articles pertaining to the research to the Centre.
14. Where a person converts their research from Masters to PHD during their data collection, or during their time at the centre, the researcher will submit the conversion report to CCMC for approval.
15. In the event where the researcher needs to collect extra data a written agreement must be obtained from the Manager.
16. If there are any questions or concerns arising out of the research project from any of the parties involved they are to be forwarded to the Manager.
17. Video and audio recordings, photographs, or motion film must be securely stored with the researcher. This material must not be used for any other purpose than specified in the research protocol. Subjects may request this material be destroyed at any point in the research time frame and at any time subsequent to the research project concluding.

**Approved: 309th Meeting, 29th May 2001.
Minute No. 309.03.v**

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Updated 20/2/08

***LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S CENTRE***

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APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH

**LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S CENTRE
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

1.5 ARE ANY OF THE SUBJECTS IN A DEPENDENT RELATIONSHIP WITH ANY OF THE RESEARCHERS, (PARTICULARLY THOSE INVOLVED IN RECRUITING FOR OR CONDUCTING THE PROJECT?)

YES

NO

(If YES, has this been identified through the ethics committee, and please explain the relationship and the steps to be taken by the researchers to ensure that the subject's participation is purely voluntary.)

1.6 RESEARCHER'S EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS.

1.7 ARE THERE LIKELY TO BE ANY DIRECT BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS FROM THIS RESEARCH?

YES

NO *(If YES, please describe)*

1.8 WILL CENTRE STAFF BE PARTICIPATING IN THE RESEARCH:

YES

NO *(If YES, will this be outside normal duties, please supply details of how this will be funded)*

1.9 WHAT REQUIREMENTS ARE NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THE RESEARCH (space, equipment, centre staff etc.,)

1.10 JUSTIFICATION FOR RESEARCH AND EXPECTED LONG TERM OUTCOMES:

Please provide the following:

- a) a brief description of the current research being undertaken in this field;*
- b) a justification as to why this project should proceed given current research in the field;*
- c) an explanation of any expected/potential benefits to the community which are likely to result from this particular research project? How are these significant?*

1.11 HOW AND WHEN WILL YOU REPORT BACK TO THE MANAGER, CHILDREN'S CENTRE STAFF AND FAMILIES ON THE PROGRESS OF THIS RESEARCH

2. STAFF DEVELOPMENT TEAM COMMENTS:

2.1 DOES THE RESEARCH SUPPORT THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE SERVICE?

YES

NO *(If YES, how?)*

2.2 WILL THE RESEARCH EXTEND STAFFS' THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE?

YES

NO *(If YES, please supply details)*

2.3 HAVE STAFF AGREED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH?

YES

NO *(If NO, please supply details.)*

3. CHILDREN'S CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE'S COMMENTS

The Author, Jenny Reynolds, wishes to acknowledge the support of the University of Melbourne, Children's Services in preparing this document.

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Thursday, June 14, 2001
Updated 20.2.2008

Appendix B

I have listed below the scheduled dates and venues for the Children's Centre Management Committee meetings for 2008 for your information.

Tuesday 19 February 2008 – Klettner Room, Union Building

Wednesday 19 March 2008 – Union Boardroom

Wednesday 30 April 2008 – Union Boardroom

Wednesday 28 May 2008 – Union Boardroom

Wednesday 25 June 2008 – Union Boardroom

Wednesday 30 July 2008 – Union Boardroom

Wednesday 27 August 2008 – Union Boardroom

Wednesday 24 September 2008 – to be advised

Wednesday 29 October 2008 – Union Boardroom

Wednesday 26 November 2008 – to be advised

All meetings will commence at 9:15 a.m.

J. Reynolds,
Manager,
Family and Children's Services