Policy: Governance and management of the service, including confidentiality of records

Site Governance

Site Governance is the partnership between Mount Compass Preschool Centre’s local community as represented on its Governing Council, and the site leader (Director) working together to develop the future directions for the site. Jointly they monitor and report progress to continually enhance the performance of Mount Compass Preschool Centre and the achievement of its children.

In order to assist Governing Council members and potential members, DECD has developed guidelines that provide advice on the structure, membership, roles and functions of Councils and their committees, meeting procedures, constitutions and support available. This can be found at: http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/SiteGovernanceGuidelines.doc This policy is based on those guidelines.

Site Governance occurs at the planning, monitoring and reporting levels, and is achieved through a partnership between the governing council and the site staff.

All Governing Councils operate with a signed Constitution and behave in line with the Code of practice.

What is Site Governance?

Governance refers to the systems and processes by which strategic directions, policy and the future vision of a school/preschool are decided, monitored, reviewed and reported against to continually enhance the performance of a school/preschool and the achievement of its students.

Site Governance is founded on a Legal Framework including the Education Act 1972, the Children’s Services Act and the Administrative Instructions and Guidelines.

Site Governance in preschools is the joint responsibility of the governing council and the preschool director. Governance also involves accountability to both the local community and the Minister.

In addition, preschools are a part of a public education system and bound by system policies and procedures. The director is held accountable for these.

The decisions of a governing council must:

- represent the views of the local community about the priorities and educational needs of the children in those communities;
- support the preschool director to carry out their accountability to the Chief Executive.

Staff Communication Processes with Governing Council

The Governing Council (and each individual member) formally communicates with the staff of the Mount Compass Preschool through the Director. However, the Director may delegate another staff member to deal with or assist the Governing Council, its Sub-Committee or individual members, either generally or on particular matters. Notwithstanding such delegation, the Director remains responsible for the actions and performance of all staff members.

Mutual respect should exist at all times between Governing Council members and staff, and recognition be given of the complementary roles of each. The Governing Council should seek and respect the advice of staff members, but must at all times make its own considered decisions upon the issue.

Any Governing Council or individual member’s complaint regarding any Mount Compass Preschool staff member must be facilitated through the Director.
Individual Roles within the Governing Council

The following is an outline of the roles of the Governing Council. Please keep in mind these roles may vary from year to year according to the needs of Mount Compass Preschool:

**Chairperson**
The Chairperson requires an awareness and an understanding of the needs of children and families and the role of the preschool within the community.
The Chairperson has the task of making sure the council is running smoothly and is achieving its aims.
Key responsibilities include:-
- Being spokesperson for the preschool, representing the preschool in the community and with the council.
- Making sure the twice a term council meetings are held and subsequent meetings organised in advance.
- Proper notice must be given and a quorum of members must be present. (A quorum is a specific number of members required to be present at a council meeting and is defined in the constitution or rules of the preschool).
- Develop the agenda in consultation with other committee members and the director
- To chair meetings: this entails working through the agenda, prioritising agenda items if time is limited, ensuring discussion remains relevant, and full and balanced participation in each meeting by members.
- Provide and co-ordinate other reports required (e.g. director’s, treasurer’s).
- Communicate regularly with other members of the council and staff, keeping-on-track tasks that have been allocated, ensuring committee members are kept informed and involved between meetings.
- Making sure all decisions made at meetings are followed through.
- Acting on behalf of the council in between meetings.
- Lead recruitment and orientation processes of new Council members with the Centre Director

An involved Chairperson can give the director and staff a great deal of support and practical help. Where a good rapport exists between chairperson, committee, director and staff, the preschool overall is stronger and better.
While the role of the chairperson tends to be an all-encompassing role, help and support of fellow council members can be enlisted in any area. The Chairperson should delegate and co-ordinate tasks into achievable action.

**Secretary**
The secretary is responsible for keeping the records of the preschool (other than financial) and for dealing with the correspondence.
These tasks include:-
- Keeping a current list of committee members, including emails, addresses and contact numbers
- Keeping accurate records (minutes) of all meetings - A.G.M., Council, and Parent meetings.
- Typing up and distributing copies of minutes before the next meeting, in accordance with procedures determined by the current Council.
- Reporting all incoming and outgoing mail / correspondence and pointing out any that might need special or urgent attention.
- Responding to any correspondence required or directed by the committee.
- Be responsible for keeping the committee files in order and up to date.

**Treasurer**
The treasurer has responsibility for overseeing financial management and keeping the council informed of the financial state of the preschool.
Tasks for which the treasurer is responsible include:-
The monitoring of the budget with Chairperson and Director e.g. making sure finances are planned in advance.

Liaising with the Finance Officer and the presentation of financial reports at regular meetings (A.G.M., Council) e.g. record and report at every meeting all monies in / out and balance of Preschool funds using reports prepared by the Finance Officer.

Presentation of a detailed report and results of annual audit.

Arranging change of signatures with the bank, after election of the new council.

Supporting other committee members, staff and Preschool events when required or needed.

Write receipts for fees payments made in cash; count and deposit cash fee payments in the Mt Compass Preschool’s account. All accounting must take place at the preschool.

**General Council Members**

These members are responsible for attending meetings to participate in decision making processes and support the other Council Members and Preschool staff where possible.

**Roles and Responsibilities for the confidentiality of records**

Everyone working for the Department for Education and Child Development, including Schools, Preschools and Regional Offices, is responsible for creating and maintaining records of the activities of their Agency. Including DECD, Executives, Managers, Staff, Contractors, and Record Management Services.

**Director’s responsibilities are:**

- the implementation of and adherence to the departmental records management policy and practices throughout the Agency
- the allocation of appropriate resources to achieve adequate records management
- the coordination and implementation of training to all personnel
- identifying and maintaining recordkeeping systems, keeping in mind the Agency's recordkeeping requirements, the nature of its records and ensuring their integrity over time
- establishing and maintaining public access determinations for records in the custody of State Records
- establishing and maintaining security access delegations the establishment of risk management strategies and disaster recovery plans for business-critical systems and records
- establishing and maintaining an ongoing disposal program in their business areas
- the identification and provision of adequate storage facilities for business records, both physical and electronic, temporary and permanent value
- setting a good example to personnel and raising awareness of records management practices

**Staff member’s responsibilities are:**

- practicing adequate records management of official records including the creation, maintenance, disposal, access and capture into corporate record keeping systems
- appropriate management of the Agency’s records in their custody
- complying with departmental policies, procedures, standards and guidelines for records management
- being aware that the records that they create in the course of business are the property of the Department for Education and Child Development

For further information on roles and responsibilities refer to DECD Records Management Reference Guide:

Roles and Responsibilities

Endorsed by Staff and Governing Council, June 2014

To be reviewed: June 2016