



*“Staffing Solutions
for the Early Childhood Sector”*



**2013
POLICIES & PROCEDURES
MANUAL**

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INTRODUCTION



Thank you for choosing to enquire about or use our service. This handbook is designed to be kept at the Centre and referred to as required by both the Centre and the relievers. It sets out the basic policies and procedures we adhere to, and our expectations of the Centres and the relievers.

By engaging a reliever through ECE Consultants, Centres are agreeing to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in this manual. Please take special note of the sections “Selection & Supervision of Relievers”, “Timesheets & Invoices” and “Terms & Conditions”. Please also refer to the guidelines for relievers in our “Handbook for Relievers”.

BACKGROUND

ECE Services and Staff Ltd, trading as ECE Consultants, is a 100% New Zealand owned and operated family run relieving agency that specializes in ECE teachers and educators. ECE Consultants was established in 2001 in response to requests for a centralised pool of quality, vetted, temporary staff.

Since 2001 ECE Consultants has grown from a small owner operator enterprise to a limited liability company working with Centres not only in Hamilton, but also in the greater Central North Island region.

As part of our objective of supporting the wider interests of the ECE whānau ECE Consultants also organize or facilitate other activities e.g. co-ordinating network meetings, Centre open days, and offering workshops for professional development. Additionally we send a newsletter to interested Centres every four to six weeks. These activities are on a not for profit basis and any Centre is welcome to be involved with these regardless of whether or not they are using our chargeable services.

PHILOSOPHY

ECE Consultants aims to provide early childhood Centres with reliable, experienced, relievers at affordable rates. We also endeavour to provide relievers with diverse, flexible and rewarding employment opportunities.



SELECTION & SUPERVISION OF RELIEVERS

Prospective relievers are interviewed, and required to provide referees.

Relievers who **do not** hold a recognised NZ teaching qualification or NZ Teachers Council Registration are Police vetted through the Licensing & Vetting Service Centre in Wellington.

Unregistered relievers are not referred to Centres until satisfactory referee reports and Police vetting checks have been completed.

In the case of qualified Early Childhood Teachers, certified copies of qualifications and registration details are kept on file and made available to the Centres in which they are working.

NZ Teachers Council Registered Teachers are not required to complete the Police Vetting form as this is carried out as part of the registration process.

We cannot stress strongly enough that Centres need to ensure that relievers are supervised by Centre staff. Relievers are not always aware of potential hazards and safety procedures in a particular Centre. Relievers are provided as team members and should work alongside existing permanent staff.

Relievers should not be expected to deal with parents, especially in delicate situations including accidents, complaints, and health issues. Centres need to ensure that staff who are competent to represent the Centre at a managerial level are on duty at all times.

There is a wide range of experience levels amongst our ECE relievers. Even though we are confident of their suitability to work with young children, there is no way of briefing them on every possible scenario within a centre.



REGISTRATION & BOOKING PROCEDURES

To register with ECE Consultants just give us a call. There is no requirement for you to use our services exclusively, in fact we see ourselves as complimentary to any arrangements your Centre may currently have for organising relievers. Once registered, our booking procedure is simple.

We have competent office staff on hand to process your requirements. Give us a call, or send an email or text, and let us know the days, times and which area (e.g. age group/ room), of your Centre the reliever will be required for. You also need to let us know if you require a qualified and registered reliever or an unqualified reliever. If you would like us to call you back at an after hours number, please also advise the number.

- Phone – as we have a 24 hour seven day a week telephone PA service, calls can be made at any time of the day or night.
 - Office hours start around 6.30 a.m. Normally when you call the office one of our staff will answer the phone.
 - If our phones are engaged then there is the facility to leave a detailed message. We check our voice mail frequently and will let you know we have your call and are actioning it.
 - If you call outside of office hours and our PA answers the phone please leave enough information for us to make a new booking, or change an existing booking, even if we are not able to contact you when we call you back.
 - On Sunday evening we action any requests that have come in over the weekend.

- Emails – while we check these regularly, please don't use this medium for urgent bookings.

- Text – anytime is fine.

We always endeavour to acknowledge texts, emails and voicemails so you know we are working on your request. If you have not heard from us in a reasonable period of time please call us again in case we did not receive your request.

Extending a Booking

If you have a reliever working for you and find you need a reliever for the next day,

or later in that week, and would like that particular reliever, please phone our office and let us know. We will happily oblige. **Please don't organise it directly with the reliever without telling us.**

Cancelling or Changing a Booking

If you have made a booking and wish to cancel it, please ensure you give us a minimum of 2 hours notice. If a reliever is already on their way, we cannot cancel the assignment. You will be expected to pay the reliever fee and a minimum of 3 hours wages for that reliever.

If early into a shift, you find your numbers are lower than expected, or you are overstaffed and no longer require your reliever, our policy is that you pay them for a minimum of three hours. **Please ring us as soon as you realise this situation has occurred, as we may be able to send the reliever to another Centre and waive your booking fee.**

Please be aware that some of our relievers are full time relievers. They depend on full time hours, so please don't book a reliever for a whole day if you are aware you may not need them. We carefully place relievers based on a number of factors including Centre preferences, continuity for the Centre and the reliever's availability.

TIME SHEETS & INVOICES

Relievers are required to fill in and sign timesheets for each assignment. Please call the ECE office for a copy of our standard timesheet, or it can be downloaded from the 'Resources' page on our website (www.ececonsultants.co.nz).

Timesheets need to be faxed, emailed or phoned through to our office on Friday or by noon each Monday at the latest.

Invoices are prepared from the timesheets. For a copy of our current Pricing Structure please call the ECE office.

Invoices are due for payment within 7 days. We prefer payment to be by automatic payment – our bank details are: **02-0300-0103669-000**

Please remember to put the Centre name as a reference on your payment, invoice numbers are also helpful.

RELIEVER PAY RATES

Relievers are paid a preset rate according to their qualifications, level of training and experience.

Reliever wages are reviewed regularly and feedback from Centres is vital for this process.

INTRODUCTION FEES

At times we are able to find permanent teachers and educators for Centres. This is not our core business, but if we have someone suitable to your needs we will happily arrange interviews for you and work with you to fill your vacancy.

We are happy to advertise any permanent full-time or part-time positions you have for qualified or unqualified staff in our reliver newsletters, which we publish every four to six weeks. Please call or email the office if you wish to advertise a position.

From time to time permanent placements arise from successful temping assignments. A particular reliver may have been in your Centre, and you find they work well with your team. If a vacancy arises and you offer them a position, or would like to offer them a position, please give us a call.

We invest a lot of time and money in the employment of, and resources for, our relievers.

We charge an introduction fee for relievers we have introduced to a Centre who subsequently offers the reliver a position of any kind, including ongoing relieving or a permanent placement (Refer item 10 Terms and Conditions).

We also charge a fee if a multi-Centre company offers a reliver a position of any kind, including ongoing relieving, or permanent placements in any of their Centres.

Our introduction fee is designed to recover the cost to ECE Consultants of replacing a valued staff member and is well below recruitment company rates. Please see our Pricing Structure for details.

HEALTH & SAFETY

It is expected that Centres will meet all legislative requirements including health and safety and Ministry of Education requirements.

Centres are expected to ensure that relievers are fully informed of existing safety procedures, hazards and policies for both staff and children within the Centre.

Child Safety

Centres need to ensure that relievers are aware of any special procedures for play and other equipment, or any issues relating to particular children that may be applicable. You may, for example, have an issue with a child who bites, or is particularly aggressive. If you have strategies in place to deal with particular children please ensure the relievers are aware either of the strategies or the fact that they should not deal with the particular children concerned.

Reliever Safety

If a reliever is injured while working in your Centre please let us know immediately and send us a copy of the incident report.



If a reliever has to leave work part way through a shift as a result of a work place accident, you may be expected to pay for the remainder of the shift. This will be negotiated with you depending on the length of the shift, and the nature of the accident.

Centres are expected to have adequate first aid kits available to treat any minor medical matters.

As a general rule relievers should never be left alone with children in areas where they are unable to be supervised. This may include a sleeproom that is tucked away down a hall. Relievers are aware of this policy and should always be vigilant about ensuring they are visible and in a public place, while still being helpful to the Centre.

Examples of this may be: relievers are fine changing nappies and assisting in the bathroom when the Centre is carrying out routine bathroom duties. However, if the children are all outside and one child needs to be changed, and the building is empty, it is preferable that the person taking the child in to be changed is a permanent member of staff rather than a reliever.

If relievers are required to supervise sleeping children it may be preferable for them to sit in the doorway, especially if they are alone. This will ensure that they are visible to other staff and parents as they are coming and going.

Relievers should be mindful of safety at all times; however, Centres are responsible for ensuring relievers are aware of all the hazards which have been identified within the Centre. These may include slippery surfaces, uneven surfaces, etc.

WORK BREAKS

While every Centre operates its own system for its staff, we have in the past found that relievers are sometimes overlooked in the break process.

We request that Centres follow the following schedule for breaks:



All hours of work should be continuous from the time of starting each day without any breaks other than, a rostered paid ten minute morning and afternoon refreshment break daily for each reliever, and a rostered ½ hour break for lunch daily between the hours of 11am and 2.30pm for each reliever.

No reliever should be required to work longer than three hours without a refreshment break or five hours without a meal break. The meal break can be extended or reduced by mutual agreement between the Centre and the reliever.

Split shifts are not advisable; however, we recognise that at times this may be an option which suits all parties involved, mutual consent must be given by all parties involved.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Our policy on behaviour management states that smacking, rough handling, shaking, squeezing, pulling, or pushing are not acceptable. Children should not be physically forced to perform a task or activity. ECE Consultants does not condone any physical, mental, emotional or verbal abuse. This is never appropriate or acceptable.

While ECE Consultants recommend positive reinforcement and role modelling approaches, relievers are directed to follow the Centre's policy on behaviour

management. Please make sure you let relievers know if you have particular issues like children with special needs, health issues, or challenging behaviours, as these can be difficult situations for relievers to negotiate especially when they are unfamiliar with your Centre policies.

HELP OUR RELIEVERS TO HELP YOU

Please remember that being a reliever is not easy. It's difficult to walk into a Centre with lots of new faces and names to learn. Different Centres have different policies and procedures, and it takes time for relievers to become familiar with the differences and commonalities of the various Centres.

Relievers are there to help you. Please be respectful of their different needs, knowledge and experience levels. They should be treated the same as any other member of the team, not delegated all the less desirable jobs. We expect that they will be involved with all the daily tasks including food preparation, cleaning, tidying, and interacting with the children.

If a reliever doesn't enjoy working with your Centre, they may request not to be placed there in future. We respect the reliever's wishes in these cases. If we find that we are receiving an undue amount of negative feedback about your Centre, we will contact you and let you know so that you are aware of the situation.

Have patience, give them positive feedback and be gentle with criticism. Remember that what is appropriate in one Centre may be frowned upon in another. You can make all the difference between a reliever having a good experience or a negative one by ensuring they feel welcomed and comfortable.

FEEDBACK, QUERIES & COMPLAINTS

For all general queries and bookings please contact our office. For specific concerns, complaints, or constructive feedback please phone, email or text Rachael or Stephen.



We take our responsibility for placing relievers in your Centre extremely seriously.

Any feedback from your Centre is appreciated, whether on one of our appraisal forms or over the phone. Please also do not hesitate to contact us if a situation arises which you feel should be brought to our attention.

We have a standard appraisal form for your convenience. If you do not already have a copy, give us a call, or download a copy from the 'Resources' page on our website (www.ececonsultants.co.nz).

If you have concerns about a reliever's behaviour or conduct or you are just unsatisfied with a particular reliever, please contact us immediately. We keep a record of relievers you do not wish to have back in your Centre.

If any reliever receives a negative appraisal report from a Centre we review their status based on previous feedback and the nature of the issues raised. If several negative appraisal reports are received relievers are removed from our list.

Any issue involving a serious breach of basic safety protocol will result in a reliever being removed from the list immediately.

Any serious complaints are handled on a case-by-case basis.

Your feedback helps us determine if we are meeting your needs. Please do not feel uncomfortable about giving us feedback. If you have an issue or an idea we want to hear from you. Feedback enables us to improve our service to you.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

We are always looking forward and working on ways to make our service better for both Centres and relievers.



If you have any ideas for long-term improvements, we would love to hear about them.



TERMS & CONDITIONS

April 2013

1. **BACKGROUND**

- (a) ECE Services and Staff Ltd (“ECE Consultants”), provide temporary staff (“Relievers”), to early childhood Centres (“The Centre or Centres”) on temporary assignments (“Assignments”),
- (b) By engaging a Reliever from ECE Consultants, The Centre accepts these Terms and Conditions.

2. **ADDITIONAL AND IMPLIED TERMS**

- (a) These terms and conditions (subject to any variation under clause 2c) are the terms agreed in respect of each Assignment and comprise all of the terms, representations and warranties between the parties and supercedes all prior discussions and agreements covering the subject matter of this agreement.
- (b) All implied terms, conditions and warranties are expressly excluded from this agreement to the fullest extent permitted by law.
- (c) All representations, warranties or commitments made by a Company agent or representative must be first authorised in writing by a manager or person of authority in ECE Consultants. ECE Consultants shall not be bound by any unauthorised statement.

3. **LIABILITY**

ECE Consultants makes every effort to ensure that there is a high standard of skills, integrity and reliability from temporary staff, and to provide staff in accordance with assignment details. However,

- (a) The Centre will supervise, direct and control the manner and conditions of work a Reliever will perform while on Assignment.
- (b) ECE Consultants are not responsible for any acts and omissions of any Reliever whether wilful or negligence, and whether occurring on or off the premises of The Centre or the place of performance of assignment.
- (c) ECE Consultants will not be liable under any circumstances whatsoever for any loss, damage or expense suffered by the Centre arising from or in any way connected with the actions of Relievers on Assignment to the Centre.
- (d) The Centre must use their best endeavours to not place Relievers in a position where allegations of impropriety or inappropriate behaviour can easily be made against Relievers (i.e. Relievers should always be visible and supervised, never left alone with children).

- (e) ECE Consultants will obtain confirmation of registration and ECE qualifications where applicable, but will not be responsible for the validity or accuracy of such documents.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION

- (a) The Centre agrees to provide a safe workplace for Relievers and will comply with all legislative and regulatory requirements relating to employees, including but not limited to health and safety, human rights and the Employment Relations Act 2000.
- (b) The Centre shall not allow any Relievers to carry out work on site or use equipment considered unsafe by any party, or where the Reliever does not have previous experience.
- (c) The Centre shall notify ECE Consultants of any injuries to Relievers and notify the relevant Authority of any serious harm.
- (d) If the Reliever is injured or subject to any breach of any statute while on Assignment with the Centre, The Centre will indemnify ECE consultants in respect of any liability resulting from the injury, or breach, including (but not limited to) any claims brought by the Reliever against ECE Consultants arising out of their employment relationship (i.e. under the Employment Relations Act 2000);

5. NATURE OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIEVER AND THE CENTRE

- (a) The parties agree that ECE Consultants employs Relievers and that those Relievers while on Assignment do not become employees of the Centre.

6. PAYMENT

- (a) The Centre agrees to pay ECE Consultants fees as set out in the current Pricing Structure. ECE Consultants Pricing Structure is subject to review bi-annually. Any changes to the Pricing Structure will be notified in writing with at least 1 months notice.
- (b) The Centre agrees to pay all ECE Consultants invoices within 10 days of receipt of the invoice. Late penalty fees in accordance with ECE Consultants Pricing Structure may apply if invoices remain outstanding.
- (c) ECE Consultants may withdraw any of its Relievers on Assignment with the Centre at any time if the Centre does not comply with the Terms and Conditions of this agreement.
- (d) A claim or dispute raised by the Centre does not entitle the Centre to off set against, or withhold payment of, any money owed to ECE Consultants.

7. GUARANTEE

Should a Reliever be found unsatisfactory by the Centre on reasonable grounds within three (3) hours of the start of an Assignment and ECE Consultants is informed within that time, ECE Consultants will use its best endeavours to replace the Reliever, at no extra charge.

8. SUBSTITUTION OF A RELIEVER

ECE Consultants, in its sole discretion, may substitute one Reliever for another on any Assignment.

9. DETAILS OF ASSIGNMENT

The Centre agrees to provide ECE Consultants the following details relating to each Assignment before the Reliever starts work on the Assignment;

- (a) The required qualification level of the Reliever; and
- (b) An indication of where the Reliever is to perform the work; and
- (c) An indication of the hours to be worked by the Reliever.

No Reliever shall be required to use his or her own vehicle, or act as the designated driver of a vehicle supplied by the Centre, for the purposes of an Assignment.

10. FURTHER ASSIGNMENT

If within six months of the completion of an Assignment, or the most recent referral of a Reliever to the Centre, the Centre;

- (a) engages the Reliever as an employee (including as a Reliever), or as an independent contractor; or
- (b) introduces the Reliever to another person or organisation and that person or organisation engages the Reliever as an employee (including as a reliever), or as an independent contractor;

then the Centre will incur the Introduction fee calculated in accordance with ECE Consultants Pricing Structure.

11. CANCELLATION OF ASSIGNMENT

The Centre will give a minimum of 2 hours notice if they wish to cancel an Assignment.