Holiday Programme - Acting Programme Lead Position Description

About our Holiday Programme

Autism Experiences Wellington (AEW) runs school holiday programmes for autistic children and young people (up to age 18) in the Wellington region.

We typically run four Holiday Programmes each year, during the school holidays. Our January programme runs for around two weeks, with the April, July and September/October programmes generally running for one week during the first week of the school holidays.

Our programmes provide a safe, supportive and fun environment where children and young people can take part in activities, outings and experiences with support from staff who understand and respect their individual needs, strengths, communication and choices

We run separate Junior and Senior Programmes to reflect the different ages, interests and support needs of our participants. We take a neuro-affirming approach and aim to provide opportunities for choice, participation, connection and enjoyment.

About the Role

The Acting Programme Lead provides temporary day-to-day leadership of an AEW Holiday Programme when the usual Junior or Senior Programme Lead is unavailable.

This may be for part of a day, a full day or several days during a Holiday Programme. The Acting Lead will usually be an experienced member of the programme team who is familiar with AEW, the children or young people attending, and how the Holiday Programme operates.

The role is focused on safely running the programme during the period they are in charge. The Acting Lead works from the programme plan, staffing arrangements, RAMS and other requirements already established for the programme.

They are not expected to take on the Programme Lead's wider responsibilities for overall programme planning, recruitment, budgeting or programme close-out unless this is specifically agreed with AEW.

While acting in the role, the Acting Programme Lead is responsible for the safe and well-organised day-to-day running of the programme and is the main point of coordination for programme staff.

This means:

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- making sure participant needs are understood and participants remain appropriately supported and supervised
- making sure AEW's 1:1 staffing model is maintained and staff understand what they need to do
- following, and making sure programme staff follow, AEW policies, procedures and agreed processes, including the AEW Holiday Programme Operations Manual and the agreed programme plan and RAMS
- responding to AEW requests for information, decisions or action within the timeframe given
- making sure required programme and compliance activities arising during the period of responsibility are completed and recorded
- raising significant issues, changes or concerns with AEW promptly
- providing a clear handover when the period as Acting Lead ends, including any outstanding actions or matters requiring follow-up.

The Acting Lead is accountable for the programme during the period they are in charge. Anything that cannot reasonably be completed before that period ends must be clearly identified and handed over to the Programme Lead or AEW.

Working Arrangements

The Acting Programme Lead role applies only for the period agreed with AEW. Some handover or follow-up work may also be required immediately before or after that period.

This position is paid by the hour. All required work will be paid in accordance with your employment agreement. AEW will give reasonable notice wherever possible when Acting Lead cover is required.

Key Responsibilities

Area	Responsibilities
Programme Handover	1. Wherever practicable, receive a handover from the Programme Lead or AEW before taking responsibility for the programme. 2. Understand the programme plan, activities and outings for the period you are leading. 3. Understand staffing arrangements, participant needs, relevant RAMS, emergency arrangements and any current issues or matters requiring particular attention. 4. Raise any questions or gaps with the Programme Lead or AEW before taking over where possible.

Programme Delivery	1. Lead day-to-day delivery of the programme during the agreed period and make on-the-ground operational decisions as required. 2. Make sure participants are appropriately supported and supervised and AEW's 1:1 staffing model is maintained. 3. Follow the agreed programme, RAMS and safety arrangements. The Acting Lead is not responsible for creating or routinely updating RAMS. 4. Respond to changing risks and adapt or stop activities where needed for participant needs or safety. Escalate anything requiring further review.
Staff Leadership & Coordination	1. Make sure staff understand the plan for the day, their responsibilities and who they are supporting. 2. Provide day-to-day direction, briefings and support to programme staff. 3. Address immediate staffing gaps or issues and contact AEW where additional support or a decision is required. 4. Raise significant performance, conduct, attendance or staffing concerns with AEW promptly rather than attempting to manage longer-term employment matters.
Safety & Safeguarding	1. Monitor hazards and changing risks and make sure agreed controls are followed. 2. Respond to incidents, accidents, emergencies and safeguarding concerns in line with AEW requirements. 3. Make sure required incident, medication, safety and other records arising during the period of responsibility are completed accurately. 4. Contact AEW promptly about significant incidents, safeguarding concerns or other matters requiring escalation.
Records & Programme Requirements	1. Make sure required programme and compliance activities arising during the period of responsibility are completed and the required records are accurate and complete.

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	2. Provide all records from the period of responsibility to the Programme Lead or AEW when handing back the role. 3. Raise any missing records, incomplete requirements or other issues with AEW as soon as they are identified.
Communication & Coordination	1. Maintain clear and respectful communication with children or young people, families, staff and AEW. 2. Respond to AEW requests for information, decisions or action within the timeframe given. 3. Raise issues, concerns or potential delays early where AEW support or action is needed.
Programme Wrap-up & Handover	1. Provide a clear handover to the Programme Lead or AEW when the period as Acting Lead ends. 2. Identify and hand over any outstanding actions, incomplete records, incidents, participant or staff matters, safety concerns or other matters requiring follow-up. 3. Flag any activities, safety issues or RAMS from the period of responsibility that may need further review. The Acting Lead is not responsible for the Programme Lead's overall programme close-out unless specifically agreed with AEW.

Reporting & Relationships

Reports to	AEW Executive Committee (Chair) or delegate
Leads	Staff working within the Holiday Programme
Works alongside	Holiday Programme Junior/Senior Lead and AEW team
Key AEW contacts	AEW Programme Administrator / Secretary / Treasurer

Person Specification

Essential

- Experienced AEW Holiday Programme staff member, or equivalent relevant experience
- Neuro-affirming and person-centred approach to supporting autistic children and young people
- Confident supporting autistic children or young people with different communication and support needs
- Able to provide clear direction and support to other staff
- Calm and practical when plans change or issues arise
- Able to identify and respond appropriately to safety and safeguarding concerns

- Reliable, responsive and accountable during the period of responsibility, with the ability to follow through on required actions and clearly hand over anything outstanding.
- Knows when an issue needs to be escalated rather than managed alone
- Meets all required children's worker safety checking requirements

Desirable

- Previous experience supervising or leading staff
- Familiarity with AEW's Holiday Programme procedures, RAMS and emergency arrangements
- First aid certificate

Holiday Programme Acting Lead Checklist

This checklist must be read alongside the Acting Programme Lead Position Description and current AEW Holiday Programme Operations Manual. During the period they are responsible for the programme, the Acting Lead is expected to follow AEW's agreed processes and requirements.

Stage		Requirement
When taking over	☐	Handover received from the Programme Lead or AEW.
	☐	Programme plan, activities and outings for the period understood.
	☐	Staffing and participant allocations confirmed, including AEW's 1:1 staffing coverage.
	☐	Key participant needs, current issues and any matters requiring particular attention understood.
	☐	Relevant RAMS, safety controls and emergency arrangements reviewed.
	☐	AEW contact and escalation arrangements confirmed.
While Acting Lead	☐	AEW's 1:1 staffing model maintained and staffing gaps or absences addressed.
	☐	Participant attendance and required sign-in/sign-out completed each day.
	☐	Collection and departure arrangements followed.
	☐	Staff briefed and clear on responsibilities, participant allocations and relevant safety requirements.
	☐	Participants appropriately supported and supervised.
	☐	RAMS and agreed safety controls followed, with changing risks managed.
	☐	Activities changed or stopped where they cannot be carried out safely.
	☐	Incidents, accidents, near misses, medication/treatment and other required information recorded accurately as they occur.
	☐	Safeguarding concerns, serious incidents and other significant concerns escalated to AEW promptly.
	☐	Staff issues requiring AEW involvement raised promptly.

	☐	Required programme records completed accurately and kept up to date during the period of responsibility.
When handing back	☐	Required records from the period of responsibility provided to the Programme Lead or AEW, with anything incomplete clearly identified.
	☐	Incidents, participant or staff matters, safety concerns and outstanding actions handed over.
	☐	Any matters requiring further follow-up clearly identified.
	☐	Activities, safety issues or RAMS requiring review identified.

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