

Code of Conduct Policy

We believe in forming an inclusive and welcoming environment and workplace by providing experiences that motivate and facilitate personal growth and development for staff and educators. The values that underpin our work ethic include equality, respect, integrity and responsibility.

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements		
4.1	Staffing arrangements	Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development
4.1.2	Continuity of staff	Every effort is made for children to experience continuity of educators at the service
4.2	Professionalism	Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical
4.2.1	Professional collaboration	Management, educators and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills
4.2.2	Professional Standards	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships

Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership		
7.1.1	Service philosophy and purpose	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations. 7
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision making and operation of the service.

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law	
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures

Related Policies

Privacy and Security Policy
Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy
In-Service and Staff Development Policy
Grievance Policy (staff)
Child Protection Policy
Respect for Children Policy
Responsible Person Policy

PURPOSE

Our Service aims to establish a common understanding of work place standards expected of all employees of the Service. We aim to ensure positive working relationships are formed between all educators and management, promoting dignity and respect by avoiding behaviour which is or may be perceived as harassing, bullying or intimidating. Educators and management will always conduct themselves in an ethical manner and strive to make all interactions positive and compliant in accordance with the Service's philosophy.

SCOPE

This policy applies to staff, management and visitors.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Educators and Staff, Volunteers and Students will adhere to the Early Childhood Australian Code of Ethics, National Regulations and Quality Standard and Service policies and procedures at all times, promoting positive interactions with the Service and the local community.

1. Respect for people and the Service

- Employees and Management are committed to the Service philosophy and values, inclusive of best practice in early childhood education and building positive partnership with children, families and staff.
- Effective, open and respectful reciprocal communication and feedback between employees, children, families and management is conveyed
- It is important to treat colleagues, children and families with respect. Bullying or insulting behaviour, including verbal and non-verbal aggression, abusive, threatening or derogatory language or intimidation towards other employees, children, visitors or families is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Employees are committed to valuing and promoting the safety, health and wellbeing of employees, volunteers, children and families.
- Employees are committed to an Equal Opportunity workplace and culture which values the knowledge, experience and professionalism of all employees, team members and managers, and the diverse heritage of our families and children.

2. Expectations of Employees

- Employees will ensure their work is carried out proficiently, harmoniously and effectively. They will act in a professional and respectful manner at all times whilst at work, giving their full attention to their responsibilities and adhering to all Service policies, procedures, laws, regulations and National Quality Standard.
- Employees will act honestly and exercise attentiveness in all Service operations. They will carry out all lawful directions, retaining the right to question any direction which they consider to be unethical. If uncertain they can seek advice from the Nominated Supervisor, Approved Provider or the Ombudsman.
- Employees will have a solid understanding of the Service's policies and procedures, if uncertain about the content of any policy or procedure with which they must comply; employees should seek clarification from the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.
- Management will inform employees about essential information and make documents readily accessible to them.
- Employees will be courteous and responsive when dealing with colleagues, students, visitors, children and families.
- Employees will work collaboratively with colleagues
- Employees will be mindful of their duty of care towards themselves and others
- Employees will be positive role models for children at all times
- Employees will respect the rights of all children
- Employees will respect the confidential nature of information gained about each child participating in the program.

3. Expectations of Coordinators, Leaders and Management

In addition to the above responsibilities, Coordinators, Leaders and management are expected to:

- Promote a collaborative and interconnected workplace by developing a positive working environment where all employees can contribute to the ongoing continuous improvement of the room and Service.
- Promote leadership by working with employees to improve professional development and growth
- Provide ongoing support and feedback to employees
- Model professional behaviour at all times whilst at the Service
- Implement supportive and effective communication systems, consulting employees in appropriate decision making.
- Take appropriate action if a breach of the code of conduct occurs
- Share skills and knowledge with employees
- Give encouragement and constructive feedback to employees, reflecting the value of different professional approaches

4. Reporting a breach in the code of conduct

- All employees are required by law to undergo a Working with Children Check, which is verified by the employer
- If employees become aware of a serious crime committed by another person, they are required to report it to management
- All employees must report possible risk of harm to children or young persons to management.
- Employees will report any concerns they may have about inappropriate actions of any other employee that involves children or young people to management

5. Managing Conflict in the workplace

- Management will remain objective and impartial when managing conflict in the workplace
- Management have a responsibility to address a possible breach of the code of conduct by any employee as soon as you become aware of the breach.
- Allegations will be investigated and can result in remedial action, or disciplinary action ranging from a caution to dismissal.
- Management will consider all relevant facts and make decisions or take actions fairly, ethically, consistently and with appropriate transparency. If they are uncertain about the appropriateness of a decision or action they will consider:
 - whether the decision or conduct is lawful
 - whether the decision or conduct is consistent with our policies and objectives
 - whether there will be an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest involving obligations that could influence the business relationship or conflict with business duties

6. Adhering to Service confidentiality

- Unless authorised to do so by legislation, employees must not disclose or use any confidential information without appropriate approval
- All employees are to ensure confidential information must be not accesses by unauthorised people
- Employees will adhere to the Service's 'Privacy and Confidentiality Policy'.

7. Baby- Sitting

- We do not provide babysitting services outside normal operating hours

- Should employees undertake private babysitting arrangements with families, our Service takes no responsibility for any private arrangements between staff members and family. However, we do expect staff to inform the Service if they are babysitting or caring for a child that attends the Service.
- We require employees and families to sign a copy of the Code of Conduct, which will we keep on file for the child and staff member
- We have rigorous recruitment and suitability processes in place to ensure that we employ competent and professional members of staff and maintain our duty to safeguard children whilst on our premises and in the care of our staff. We have no such control over the conduct of staff outside of their position of employment. Parents should make their own checks as to the suitability of a member of staff for babysitting.
- We will not take responsibility for any health and safety issues, conduct, grievances or any other claims arising out of the staff member's private arrangements outside of the Service hours. The member of staff will not be covered by the Service's insurance whilst babysitting as a private arrangement.
- Out-of-hours work arrangements must not interfere with the staff member's employment at the Service.
- All staff are bound by contract of the Service's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy, where they are unable to discuss any issues regarding the Service, other staff members, parents or other children.

8. Record Keeping

- Employees and Management will maintain full, accurate and honest records as required by national regulations
- Managers have a responsibility to ensure that employees comply with their record keeping obligation outlined in the Records Keeping Policy.

9. Duty of Care

- Management and employees have a responsibility to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others at the workplace to enable compliance with the work health and safety legislation.
- Duty of Care relates to both physical and psychological wellbeing of individuals
- Management and employees have a duty of care to take reasonable care for the safety and welfare of children and young people in care. Thus taking all reasonable action to protect children and young people from risk of harm that can be reasonably predicated.

10. Social Media

- The Service offers to its current families and staff members a Facebook page as a communication tool. The administrator of the account is the Service's Nominated Supervisor.
- Only current families and staff may have access to the page as the page is locked as 'Privacy type: Closed: Limited public content. Members can see all content.'
- The description is: Description: This Facebook group is for staff and families of children attending 'name & location of Service'. The intention is that this group will allow you to: Keep in touch with what's happening at the Service. Connect with other parents and share your thoughts about programs, policies and procedures.

- The Administrator controls the content on the page and ensures that the postings are relevant and respectful of the Service, the children, the staff, families and greater community.
- Staff members that have a personal Facebook account are not permitted to post any negative comments relating to the Service, children, colleagues or families. If they choose to 'like' the Service's page they have a responsibility to ensure that their profile picture is always an appropriate representation of an early childhood Educator. If it is not, we request that they do not 'like' the page.
- Staff members are to use their own personal discretion when adding a family of the Service as a 'friend' on Facebook. The Service **does not recommend** staff to add families of the Service as they will be seen still as a representative of the Service and held to the Service's Code of Conduct on all posts on their private 'wall' if families have access.
- Families are asked in our Social Media policy to respect that staff may have a personal policy on adding families due to their professional philosophy and that the Service does not recommend staff to have families as friends on their private account.
- Staff members are not permitted to request the 'friendship' of families from the Service.

11. Use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco

- Smoking is NOT permitted in or on surrounding areas of the Service. It is expected that the odour of cigarette smoke will not be detected on an employee's clothing. If an employee is found smoking on the premises, that employee may be terminated. Our Service supports the [Smoke Free Environment Act 2000](#). The company and its employees will follow all conditions outlined in this act.
- Our Service is bound by the Education and Care National Regulations. As such, alcohol, drugs or other substance abuse by employees can have serious adverse effects on their own health and the safety of others. As such, all employees must not:
 - Consume alcohol nor be under the influence of alcohol while working
 - Use or possess illegal drugs at any workplace; nor
 - Drive a vehicle, having consumed alcohol or suffering from the effects of illegal substances
 - Bring alcohol or any illegal drugs on the premises
- If a co-worker suspects another to be affected by drugs or alcohol, they must inform the Nominated Supervisor immediately. No employee will be allowed to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Employees undergoing prescribed medical treatment with a controlled substance that may affect the safe performance of their duties are required to report this to the Nominated Supervisor.
- All issues pertaining to these matters shall be kept strictly confidential. A breach of this policy may initiate appropriate action including the cancellation of employment

12. Dress Code

- All employees must adhere to our dress code supplied during induction including the display of their name badge whilst on shift. Enclosed shoes must be worn at all times, no high heels or wedges. Clothes must be suitable for movement, active play and messy play. No offensive logos or political statements are to be worn.

13. Personal Hygiene

All employees are to adhere to the following standards:

- Shoes are enclosed with flat soles for safety

- Jewellery – one (1) earring per ear (small studs).
- Long hair is to be clean and neatly tied back. Ensure hair does not hang in your eyes
- Makeup is to be light and natural
- Fingernails are to be clean and well groomed
- Nail polish cannot be bright or chipped
- Good oral hygiene and grooming is essential

14. Personal Phone Calls/Mobile Phones

- Employees are not authorised to use the Service’s phones for personal reasons unless in the case of an emergency.
- No personal mobile phones are to be used or carried during working hours. No personal mail or deliveries should be directed to the Service
- Educators and staff are not to contact families or children of the Service for personal reasons

15. Service Email

- Email is to be used only for company usage, not for private communications.
- Passwords and access privileges are treated as strictly confidential to the Educator issued with that access or persons delegated to know and use that access in the normal course of operation. It is the responsibility of the authorised user to take fair and reasonable steps to ensure the passwords and other forms of access are held safe.

Dismissal

All staff members are made fully aware that the following breaches of the Code of Conduct and role responsibilities may lead to termination of employment:

- Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Refusal to complete required additional training
- Possessing or selling drugs at the Service
- Immoral, immature or indecent conduct while at the Service
- Inappropriate use of company equipment
- Refusing to work as directed
- Possessing a dangerous weapon while at the Service
- Bringing disrepute to the Service
- Bringing disrepute to the relationship between a family and the Service
- Disclosure of confidential information
- Falsifying documentation
- Associating with families
- Taking, abusing or destroying company property
- Interfering with work schedules, falsification of reports, documents or wages information
- Failure to report for work
- Walking off the job
- Failure to follow policies and procedures
- Vulgarity, disrespectful conduct to families, management or colleagues
- Making or publishing false, vicious or malicious statements about any client, employee, supervisor, the company or its services
- Failure to hand in lost property is regarded as stealing and dismissal will follow. Lost property is to be handed to the Nominated Supervisor.

Disciplinary Action

All staff members are made fully aware that continued abuse of the following might result in disciplinary action. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- Unauthorised absence
- Having personal visitors whilst on shift
- Continued personal phone calls
- Unauthorised solicitation or distribution of money or materials
- Poor work standard
- Carelessness
- Low level of enthusiasm
- Lack of personal cleanliness
- Failure to report health, fire or safety hazards
- Repeated tardiness

Code of Conduct Agreement

I have read and understood the Services Code of Conduct, and agree to abide by the provisions set out in the Code of Conduct at all times. Failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action or dismissal.

Name:

Signature:

Position:

Date:

Jurisdiction specifications for each state

Victoria (VIC)

For working with check information, refer to website:

<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/>

Source

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority.
- Child Safe Standards (VRQA)
- An Overview of the child safe standards (DHHS Vic)
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations
- ECA Code of Ethics.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard.
- Anti-Discrimination Act
- Fair Work Act
- Industrial Relations Act
- Work Health and Safety Act
- Ombudsman Act
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act
- Revised National Quality Standard 2018

Review

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
January 2017	Minor changes made	January 2018
October 2017	Updated the references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard	January 2018
January 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Minor changes made to support operational delivery- Related policy section added	January 2020