

4.7 Code of Conduct

Policy: Our Education and Care services is committed to a code of professional conduct, upholding ethical principles and professional standards that guide decision-making and practice at the service.

This includes a system of ethical inquiry to provide a basis for reflection on how to relate to and contribute to the education and care community in which we actively participate. Our service will uphold the highest standards in ethical conduct in accordance with the ECA Code of Ethics (2016) The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and service philosophy and policy.

Related Legislation

Education and Care National Law Act 2010

Education and Care National Regulations: 168 (2)(i)(i)

Resources

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) www.acecqa.gov.au

Early Childhood Australia – www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics 2016

Australian Government Department of Employment – <https://www.employment.gov.au>

Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangement –Standard 4.1, 4.1.1, 4.1.2

Goals

What are we going to do?

Our service uses this code as a basis for evaluating professional conduct, and as a reference tool for the thought processes that inform pedagogy, including actions and reactions towards professional conduct, relationships, views, influence and position within communities and society. Ethical conduct guides the behaviour and decisions within the service and is underpinned by respect for, and the valuing of children, families, educators and staff, and the extended service community.

Strategies

How will it be done?

The professional conduct of our team, in relation to one another, the children and their families, the community, and the Education and Care Services sector is based on the following set of expected standards of professional conduct:

- administer an approved education and care service in compliance with the National Quality Framework;
- operate within a family and child centred context;
- engage in reflective, ethical, and sustainable decision making.

Early Childhood Australia's (ECA) Code of Ethics (2016)

Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics (2016) is integral to our service as it guides the ethical principles and professional standards of conduct towards children, families, colleagues, communities, students, employers, educators, and the conduct of research.

Our service accepts professional ownership of ECA's Code of Ethics (2016) and formally acknowledges that the ECA's Code of Ethics (2016) provides us with:

- A basis for critical reflection about our ethical responsibilities;
- A guide for professional behaviour;
- Principles to inform individual and collective decision-making.

These standards of professional conduct are supported by, and should be read in

conjunction with:

- National Quality Framework document suite as made available through the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority;
- Statement of Philosophy;
- Operational policies and procedures, which provide a framework for accountable and responsible professional practice.
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Approved Provider

- Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011 at all times.
- Ensure all Educators and staff are made aware of their obligations through personal discussions, staff meeting activities and opportunities to critically reflect upon ethical practice.

Nominated Supervisor

- Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011 at all times.
- Ensure all educators and staff are made aware of their obligations through personal discussions, staff meeting activities and opportunities to critically reflect upon ethical practice.
- Ensure decision making processes are clear and transparent.
- Ensure there is a copy of the ECA Code of Ethics displayed in a prominent place within the service for educators/staff and families to access.
- Ensure that there are times when all educators can participate in staff meetings to discuss and reflect on the practices within the service in relation to continuing improvement.

Early Educators and Responsible Person

- Educators and staff will be familiar with the legislation and statutory documents that apply to their role with children, families and other staff in the centre.
- Educators and staff will be familiar with the ECA Code of Ethics and service philosophy.
- Maintain their knowledge of the broad legislation and conventions that apply to their role with children, families and their team.
- Demonstrate an ongoing engagement with the principles outlined in The Early Years Learning Frameworks and the ethical requirements in the National Quality Standards.
- Use staff meetings to critically reflect on practices in relation to continuing improvement.
- Engage respectfully and collaboratively within the team.
- Ensure a professional relationship is maintained with all educators while demonstrating integrity, honesty and mutual respect.
- Recognise and value diversity and knowledge amongst team members.

Families

- Respect confidentiality at all times.
- Give feedback in relation to educators' professional conduct to the Approved Provider as necessary.
- Act in a professional manner whenever they are involved in the programs provided by the service.
- Communicate to Responsible Person or staff any individual requests regarding staff/educators' code of conduct.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every 18 months. Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.