



Endorsed: October 2020

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Educator Code of Conduct Policy

We believe in maintaining an inclusive and welcoming environment that motivates and facilitates personal growth and development for educators. The values that underpin our work ethic include equality, respect, integrity, and responsibility. Our service is committed to adhering to the Early Childhood Code of Ethics (2016) which is based on the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991) and provides a framework for reflection in regard to the ethical responsibilities of education and care professionals.

Our Out of School Hours Care Service is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that promotes the safety of all children and embeds the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. All staff and volunteers are responsible for promoting a culture of safety and wellbeing to minimise the risk of child abuse or harm to children whilst promoting children's sense of security and belonging.

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.
7.1.3	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

83	Staff members and family day care educators not to be affected by alcohol or drugs
84	Awareness of child protection law

168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed

RELATED POLICIES

Child Protection Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Management of Grievances Educator Interactions with Children, Families and Staff Policy Confidentiality Agreement	Professional Development Policy Record Keeping and Retention Policy Staff Selection Policy Staff Educator Professionalism Technology and Media Policy Staffing Arrangements Policy
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Purpose

We aim to establish a shared understanding of workplace standards and ethics 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 at all times conduct themselves in an ethical manner and strive to ensure that all interactions are positive and respectful and in accordance with the service's philosophy.

Our service takes every reasonable effort to accommodate the diversity of all children in—embedding the National Child Safe Principles into our organisation and service operations. We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We recognise the importance of and responsibility for, ensuring our Service provides a safe and supportive environment which respects and fosters the rights and wellbeing of children in our care. We are dedicated in promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

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 Standards, Child Safe Standards service policies and procedures at all times, promoting positive interactions both within the service and the local community.

Respect for people and the service

- Employees and Management are committed to the service philosophy and values, inclusive of best practice in school age education and care and building positive partnership with children, families and staff.
- Our service has developed a *Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing* to demonstrate a strong culture of child safety within the service.
- 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.
- Employees and management promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights.
- Employees and management promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds to support children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights.
- Employees and management promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability

Expectations of Employees

Employees will:

- Adhere to the *Educators Code of Conduct Policy*
- Ensure their work is carried out proficiently, harmoniously, and effectively. They will display 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, Child Safe Standards, laws, regulations, and National Quality Standard.
- 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.
- Have a solid understanding of the service's policies and procedures, Child Safe Standards and the Early Childhood Association Code of Ethics. 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.
- Participate in all-mandatory training, including updating of Child Protection training every 12-24 months.
- Be courteous and responsive when dealing with colleagues, students, visitors, children and families.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues and recognise and value diversity.
- Be mindful of their duty of care towards themselves and others.
- Be positive role models for children at all times.
- Respect the rights of all children.
- Respect the confidential nature of information gained about each child participating in the program.

- Engage in critical reflection to inform individual and collective decision making and ensure continual improvement including a review of Child Safe policies and procedures.

Employees will not:

- Use abusive, derogatory or offensive language
- Engage in conduct that is detrimental to the professional standing of our service, is improper or unethical, is an abuse of power, or harasses, discriminates against, victimises, humiliates, intimidates, or threatens other educators, staff members, volunteers, or visitors at the service, either directly or indirectly via information technology such as email, text or social media. Additionally, they will not support those who do this.
- Condone or participate in illegal, unsafe or abusive behaviour towards children, including physical, sexual or psychological abuse, ill-treatment, neglect or grooming.
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
- Fail to report information to the approved provider if they know a child has been abused.
- Engage in unwarranted and inappropriate touching involving a child.
- Persistently criticise and/or denigrate a child.
- Verbally assault a child or create a climate of fear.
- Encourage a child to communicate with them in a private setting.
- Share details of sexual experiences with a child.
- Use sexual language or gestures in the presence of children.
- Discriminate against any child, because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability.
- Put children at risk of abuse- refusing food/play, making threats, exposing children to inappropriate language or material (movies, internet, photos).
- Show preferential behaviour towards any child.
- Accept an offer of money, regardless of the amount.
- Seek or accept a bribe.
- Acquire personal profit or advantage because of their position (e.g., through the use of service information).
- Exchange any property of the service for own use unless properly authorised.
- Approach other employees, managers or visitors directly on individual matters that are irrelevant to them.
- Engage in any action in breach of our Confidentiality Agreement, including but not limited to disclosure of confidential service or customer information, or the improper or illegal use of that confidential information. Authorised persons will only access confidential information for the purpose intended.
- Engage in or support any action in breach of service policies and/or procedures.

Expectations of Leaders and Management

In addition to the above responsibilities, 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 service.
- Promote leadership by working with employees and providing opportunities for professional development and growth.
- Provide flexible opportunities to ensure all employees can participate in staff meetings and professional development.
- Provide ongoing support and feedback to employees.
- Keep employees informed about essential information and any relevant changes and make all documents readily accessible to them.
- Ensure copies of the Early Childhood Code of Ethics and National Child Safe Standards are available to staff and families.
- 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, respecting the value of different professional approaches.
- Follow recruitment policies and procedures to ensure all potential candidates undergo appropriate background checks, including Working with Children Checks.
- Model and provide guidance to educators and staff to ensure compliance with a zero tolerance of racism within the service.

Reporting a breach in the code of conduct

Our service aims to foster a culture of transparency and accountability while supporting employees to report any reasonable suspicion of reportable matters of improper, illegal or misconduct within the service to management including, but not limited to:

- breaches of the service code of conduct or service policies
- breaches of Education and Care Services National Law or Regulations
- breaches of legislation or law
- criminal activity
- corruption
- conduct that poses a danger or harm to any person/s
- harassment or discrimination
- improper or misleading financial practices

Our service will implement protective practices to ensure employees identity is not compromised or disclosed, where applicable, following a report of a reportable matter including storage of documents in a secure and

confidential manner and ensuring access to confidential documents is restricted to authorised personnel only. Once a report has been made the matter may be investigated through a formal investigation.

- All employees are required by law to undergo a Working with Children Check (WWCC) which is verified by the employer.
- All employees are required to provide a National Police Clearance
- If employees become aware of a serious crime committed by another employee, they are required to report it to management.
- As mandatory reporters, all employees must report possible risk of harm to children or young persons to management and/or Child Protection authority.
- Employees will report any concerns they may have about inappropriate actions of any other employee that involves children or young people to management.
- The Approved provider/management will report any allegations or child related misconduct as per their legislative requirements (this may include reporting the matter to the Police, Department of Communities and Justice and the Office of the Children's Guardian in NSW).

Managing conflict in the workplace

- Adhere to the *Management of Grievances Policy*.
- Management will remain objective and impartial when managing conflict in the workplace.
- Management has a responsibility to address a possible breach of the code of conduct by any employee as soon as they are 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 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 Service 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.

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 that confidential information is not accessed by unauthorised people.
- Employees will adhere to the service's Confidentiality Agreement which they will sign.

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 Record Keeping and Retention Policy.

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 and service policies and procedures.
- Duty of Care relates to both physical and psychological wellbeing of individuals.
- Management and employees must provide adequate supervision of children at all times and ensure the health, safety and welfare of children and young people in their care. This includes taking all reasonable action to protect children and young people from risk of harm that can be reasonably predicted.

Social media

- The service offers its current families and staff members a closed Facebook page – Samuel Gilbert OOSH Families.
- Only current families and staff may have access to the page as the page is locked as a closed group. The management committee and an allocated educator will manage this group and all content.
- 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 Management Committee and a nominated educator 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 who 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 an appropriate representation of an education and care Educator. If it is not, we request that they do not 'like' the page.
- Staff members are not permitted to request the 'friendship' of families from the service.

Personal calls/mobile phones/Smart watches

We are mindful that educators have a duty of care to ensure children are protected from potential risk of harm. It is imperative that all employees of the Service provide children with their full attention, ensuring supervision is maintained and remains on the children.

- Employees or staff are not authorised to use the service's phones for personal reasons unless in the case of an emergency or with permission from management.
- No personal mobile phones are to be used, checked or brought on the floor during working hours. Exemption may be permitted if permission is sought from the Centre Manger or Responsible Person.

- Mobile phones are to be kept inside employee's bags which will be placed in a designated, secure location for safe keeping.
- Employees are not permitted to use smart watches to access emails/SMS and social media during working hours. Smart watches are only to be used for viewing the time.
- If it becomes apparent that employees are using their Smart watches to check and respond to messages during shifts, they will be asked to either leave them at home or place in a designated locker / secure location until the end of their shift.
- Personal mobile phones and smart watches may be used during shift breaks when employees are free from work and supervision duties. They are not to be used in general sight of children, unless a situation arises where there is an emergency.
- This behaviour may warrant a formal warning.
- Personal mobile phones are not to be used to take photos of children as this is a breach of children's privacy. (Service mobile phones or iPads may be used if it's for the purposes of 'observations' etc.)
- Children are at no time to be given access to staff mobile phones.
- No personal mail or deliveries should be directed to the service unless prior approval has been granted by the nominated supervisor/management.
- Employees are not to contact families or children of the service for personal reasons.
- If, for personal reasons, educators needs to remain contactable from someone outside the service, they should ensure that the situation is explained to management and that the service's primary contact details are passed on to the persons/family outside the service.

Use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco

- Smoking or vaping is NOT permitted in or on surrounding areas of the service as per the Department of Education policy.
- It is expected that the odour of cigarette or vape 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.
- If a contractor is viewed to be vaping or smoking on the school site this is to be communicated to the school executive as soon as possible.
- 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.
 - Drive a vehicle, having consumed alcohol or suffering from the effects of illegal substances, or
 - Bring alcohol or any illegal drugs onto the premises.

- If a co-worker suspects a colleague 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. Consideration will be given as to whether the particular medication affects the person's capacity to provide education and care to children.
- All issues pertaining to these matters shall be kept strictly confidential. A breach of this policy may initiate appropriate action including the termination of employment.

Dress code

- All employees must adhere to our uniform/dress code supplied during induction including the display of their name badge whilst on shift.
- Shorts must be knee length or below and must be black, navy or denim. Track pants will be permitted if they are neat and tidy, and maintain a professional image. The Centre Manager will advise the staff member if they are not appropriate.
- Enclosed shoes must be worn at all times (strictly no high heels, thongs, or wedges).
- Clothes must be suitable for free movement, active play, and messy play.
- Follow Sunsmart guidelines.
- No offensive logos or political statements are to be displayed on clothing.

Personal Hygiene

All employees are to adhere to the following standards:

- 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.
- Employees will follow appropriate oral hygiene practices.
- An appropriate deodorant/antiperspirant will be worn.
- Strong perfumes will not be worn as they may cause allergic reactions in children.

Service email

- Email is to be used only for company usage, not for private communications.
- Passwords and access privileges are strictly confidential and to be used only by 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.
- Employees are to be aware that their service email account may be accessed by Management at any time.

Dismissal

All staff members are made fully aware that the following breaches of the Code of Conduct and role responsibilities may result in disciplinary action which 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 and/or resources.
- Refusing to work as reasonable directed.
- Possessing a dangerous weapon whilst at the service.
- Bringing disrepute to the service.
- Causing disruption or discontent in the relationship between a family and the service.
- Disclosure of confidential information.
- Falsifying documentation.
- Associating with families without disclosing this information with management.
- Taking, abusing, defacing, or destroying company property.
- Interfering with work schedules.
- Falsification of reports, documents, or wages information.
- Failure to report for work without notice.
- Walking off the job.
- Failure to follow policies and procedures.
- Vulgarity or disrespectful conduct to families, management or colleagues.
- Making or publishing false, vicious, or malicious statements about any employee of the service, or the service itself.
- Failure to hand in lost property (this is regarded as stealing): Lost property is to be handed to the Nominated Supervisor.
- Unable to maintain or hold a current Working with Children Check Clearance.

Disciplinary Action

All staff members are made fully aware that continued abuse of the following may result in disciplinary action.

These include, but are not limited to the following:

- Unauthorised absence.
- Consistent or ongoing late arrivals and/or unauthorised extended breaks.
- Having personal visitors whilst on shift.
- Continued personal phone calls.
- Carrying a personal mobile phone whilst on shift/accessing smart watches other than checking the time.
- Using a personal mobile phone or device to take photographs of the children.

- Unauthorised distribution of service resources or materials.
- Consistent or ongoing poor work standard.
- Carelessness in the performance of duties.
- Consistent or ongoing low level of enthusiasm.
- Lack of personal cleanliness and hygiene.
- Failure to report health, fire, or safety hazards.

Evaluation/ Continuous Improvement

The services Educator Code of Conduct Policy will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis in conjunction with children, families, educators and staff.

Code of Conduct Agreement

I have read and understood the service’s Educator 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	

Source

Anti-Discrimination Act. See <https://raisingchildren.net.au/disability/disability-rights-the-law/law/anti-discrimination-laws> for Acts for specific Australian states and territories.

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australia Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). *Guide to the National Quality Framework.*

Australian Human Rights Commission <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/childrens-rights>

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth).

Government of South Australia Human Services [Child safe environments](#)

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

NSW Government [Office of the Children’s Guardian](#) *Code of Conduct- a guide to developing child safe Codes of Conduct.* (2020).

Ombudsman Act 2001 (Cth).

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (Cth).

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth).

Workplace Relations Act 1996 (Cth).

Child Care Desktop policies