

Staff- Code of Conduct policy

Policy Statement

Our service has adopted the *Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics* as the basis for our Code of Conduct for staff. We acknowledge and thank 'Early Childhood Australia' and all those involved in the writing of the *Code of Ethics* for their time, research, dedication, professionalism and willingness to share their hard work with all children's services professionals.

Links to Education and Care Centres National Regulations 2018, National Quality Standard 2018

Regs

- 82 Tobacco, drug and alcohol- free environment
- 84 Awareness of child protection law
- 155 Interactions with children
- 168 Education and care services must have Policies and procedures

- 170 Policies and procedures to be followed

NQS

- 4- Staffing Arrangements (4.1, 4.1.2, 4.2, 4.2.1, 4.2.2)
- 7 – Governance and Leadership (7.1.1, 7.1.3)

Principles that inform our Policy and Procedures

We aim to establish a common 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 are in accordance with the Service's philosophy.

Our OSHC 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.

The approved provider, nominated supervisor, educators, staff, volunteers, and students will adhere to the Early Childhood Australian Code of Ethics, NSW Education and Care Services National Regulations and the National Quality Standard, Child Safe Standards and Service policies and procedures at all times, promoting positive interactions both within the Service and the local community.

Expectations of Leaders and Management

In addition to general staff responsibilities, leaders and management are expected to:

- Create a positive, collaborative workplace where all staff feel supported and can contribute to ongoing improvement of the Service.
- Provide guidance and mentoring by encouraging professional growth and development opportunities.
- Ensure staff have fair and flexible access to meetings, training, and professional development.
- Promote open and respectful communication, including clear expectations about the Right to Disconnect provisions under the Fair Work Act (e.g. when staff may be contacted outside normal hours in genuine emergencies).
- Provide regular support and constructive feedback to staff.
- Keep staff informed of essential information, changes, and updates, and ensure policies, procedures, and resources are easily accessible.
- Ensure copies of the ECA Code of Ethics and National Child Safe Principles (or state equivalent) are available to both staff and families.
- Model professionalism at all times while representing the Service.
- Encourage staff participation in decision-making and maintain transparent communication systems.
- Take appropriate and timely action in response to breaches of the Code of Conduct.
- Share knowledge and expertise to support staff capability.
- Follow recruitment procedures, ensuring background checks (including Working with Children Checks) are completed.
- Model and enforce a zero tolerance approach to racism and discrimination.

Reporting a Breach of the Code of Conduct

Fun 4 U Helensburgh OSHC is committed to a culture of accountability and transparency. Staff are supported to report any suspected misconduct, including but not limited to:

- Breaches of the Service's Code of Conduct or policies.
- Breaches of Education and Care Services National Law or Regulations.
- Criminal activity, corruption, or other unlawful behaviour.
- Conduct that places any person at risk of harm.
- Harassment, bullying, or discrimination.
- Improper or misleading financial practices.

Protection for Staff Who Report

- Reports will be handled confidentially, with staff identities protected wherever possible.
- Records of reports will be securely stored and access limited to authorised personnel.

- Where required, reports will be investigated through a formal process.

Mandatory and Legal Reporting Obligations

- All employees must hold a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC), which will be verified by management.
- Prospective employees must complete a Prohibition Notice Declaration.
- Staff must immediately notify management if their WWCC or clearance status changes.
- As mandatory reporters, all staff, students, and volunteers must report any suspected risk of harm to children or young people to management and/or the relevant Child Protection authority.
- Management will escalate allegations of misconduct or harm in line with legislative requirements, which may include reporting to Police, the Department of Communities and Justice, and/or the Office of the Children's Guardian (NSW), or the equivalent body in other states/territories.

Managing Conflict in the Workplace

Management will:

- Address complaints in line with the Dealing with Complaints Policy.
- Remain objective, impartial, and fair when handling conflict.
- Respond promptly to potential breaches of the Code of Conduct.
- Investigate all allegations and, if substantiated, take appropriate action (which may include remedial steps, disciplinary action, or termination of employment).
- Ensure all decisions are made fairly, ethically, consistently, and transparently.

Confidentiality

- Staff must not share or use confidential information without appropriate authorisation.
- Information can only be shared lawfully to promote child wellbeing or safety, in line with legislation (e.g., CISS, FVISS, MARAM in Victoria).
- Confidential documents must be stored securely and protected from unauthorised access.
- All staff must comply with the Service's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

Dress Code

- All employees must adhere to our uniform which includes a red top with Fun 4 U's logo and their own black pants/shorts of their choosing. The uniform is supplied during induction including the display of their name badge whilst on shift.
- 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.
- 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.

Appropriate use of communication and social networking sites

- As a Child Safe Organisation, our OSHC Service has the responsibility to ensure children and educators are protected from harm when they engage in with digital technology including social media
- Strict guidelines for the use of social media are outlined in our *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments policy*
- The OSHC Service offers its current families and staff members a Facebook page as a communication tool. The administrator of the account is the Service's nominated supervisor.
- 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 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 a school aged care 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 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.

Personal Phone calls/Mobile Phones/Smart Watches

- 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
- children are at no time to be given access to staff mobile phones
- if, for personal reasons an employee 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 OSHC Service.
- no personal mobile phones are to be used, checked or brought on the floor during working hours.

- 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 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.

Use of Alcohol, Drugs, Vapes and Tobacco

- Smoking or vaping is NOT permitted in or on surrounding areas of the OSHC 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/vaping on the premises, that employee's employment may be terminated. Our Service supports the Smoke Free Environment Act 2000. Our OSHC Service and its employees will follow all conditions outlined in this act.
- Our OSHC Service is bound by the Education and Care Services National Regulations. 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. (See: *Tobacco, Vapes, Drugs and Alcohol-Free Policy*)
- 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.

Breach of the Code of Conduct

All employees 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 OSHC Service
- inappropriate use of company equipment and/or resources
- refusing to work as reasonably directed
- possessing a dangerous weapon whilst at the OSHC Service
- bringing disrepute to the Service
- causing disruption or discontent in the relationship between a family and the OSHC Service
- disclosure of confidential information
- falsifying documentation
- associating with families without disclosing this information with management
- stealing, 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 OSHC 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
- 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
- taking excessive breaks
- failure to report health, fire, or safety hazards
- repeated tardiness

Babysitting

- Our OSHC Service does 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 the family. However, we do expect staff to inform the Service if they are babysitting or caring for a child that attends the Service.
- Should employees undertake private babysitting arrangements we require employees and families to sign a copy of the Code of Conduct and complete a 'Out of Hours Babysitting Agreement Waiver' which will be kept in the child and staff member's file (see *Out of Hours Babysitting Policy*)
- All staff are bound by contract to the Service's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*, where they are unable to discuss any issues regarding the Service, other staff members, parents/families, or other children.

Procedure

In relation to children, I will:

1. Act in the best interests of all children.
2. Respect the rights of children as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and commit to advocating for these rights.
3. Recognise children as active citizens participating in different communities such as families, children's services and schools.
4. Work with children to help them understand that they are global citizens with shared responsibilities to the environment and humanity.
5. Respect the special relationship between children and their families and incorporate this perspective in all my interactions with children.
6. Create and maintain safe, healthy environments, spaces and places which enhance children's learning development, engagement, initiative, self worth, dignity and show respect for their contributions.
7. Work to ensure that children and families with additional needs can exercise their rights.
8. Acknowledge the uniqueness and potential of all children, in recognition that enjoying their childhood without undue pressure is important.
9. Acknowledge the holistic nature of children's learning and the significance of children's linguistic and cultural identities.
10. Work to ensure that children are not discriminated against on the basis of gender, age, ability, economic status, family structure, lifestyle, ethnicity, religion, language, culture or national origin.
11. Acknowledge children as competent learners and build active communities of engagement and inquiry.
12. Honour children's right to play as both a process and context for learning.

In relation to families, I will:

1. Listen to and learn from families in order to acknowledge and build upon their strengths and competencies and support them in their role of nurturing children.
2. Assist each family to develop a sense of belonging and inclusion.
3. Develop positive relationships based on mutual trust and open communication.
4. Develop partnerships with families and engage in shared decision making where appropriate.
5. Acknowledge the rights of families to make decisions about their children.
6. Respect the uniqueness of each family and strive to learn about their culture, structure, lifestyle, customs, language, beliefs and kinship systems.
7. Develop shared planning, monitoring and documentation for children's learning and wellbeing and communicate this in ways easily understood by families.

8. Acknowledge that each family is affected by the community contexts in which they engage.
9. Be sensitive to the vulnerabilities of children and families and respond in ways that empower and maintain the dignity of all children and families.
10. Maintain confidentiality and respect the right of the family to privacy.

In relation to colleagues, volunteers, I will:

1. Encourage my colleagues to adopt and act in accordance with this Code, and take action in the presence of unethical behaviours.
2. Build collaborative relationships based on trust, respect and honesty.
3. Acknowledge and support the personal strengths, professional experience and diversity which my colleagues bring to their work.
4. Make every effort to use constructive methods to manage differences of opinion in the spirit of collegiality.
5. Share and build knowledge, experiences and resources with my colleagues.
6. Collaborate with my colleagues to generate a culture of continual reflection and renewal of high quality practices in Out of School Hours Care.

In relation to communities, I will:

1. Learn about the communities that I work within and offer experiences and programs which are responsive to those contexts and community priorities.
2. Connect with people, services and agencies within the communities that support children and families.
3. Promote shared aspirations amongst communities in order to enhance children's health and wellbeing.
4. Advocate for the development and implementation of laws and policies that promote child-friendly communities and work to change those that work against child and family wellbeing.
5. Utilise knowledge and research to advocate for universal access to a range of high quality out of school hours care programs for all school age children.
6. Work to promote community understanding of how children learn in an out of school hours care setting in order that appropriate systems of documentation, research and reporting are used to benefit school age children.

In relation to students, I will:

1. Afford professional opportunities and resources for students to demonstrate their competencies.
2. Acknowledge and support the personal strengths, professional knowledge, diversity and experience which students bring to the learning environments.
3. Model high quality professional practices.
4. Know the requirements of the students' individual institutions and communicate openly with the representatives of that institution if I am required to do so.
5. Provide ongoing constructive feedback and assessment that is fair and equitable.
6. Implement strategies that will empower students to make positive contributions to the workplace.
7. Maintain confidentiality in relation to students.

In relation to my employer, I will:

1. Support workplace policies, standards and practices that are fair, non-discriminatory and are in the best interests of children and families.
2. Promote and support ongoing professional development within my work team.
3. Adhere to lawful policies and procedures and if there is conflict attempt to effect change through constructive action within the organisation or seek change through appropriate procedures.

In relation to myself as a professional, I will:

1. Base my work on contemporary perspectives on research, theory, high quality out of school hours care practices and my understanding of the children and families with whom I work.
2. Regard myself as a learner who undertakes reflection, critical self study, continuing professional development and engages with contemporary theory and practice.
3. Seek and build collaborative professional relationships.
4. Acknowledge the power dimensions within professional relationships.
5. Act in ways that advance the interests and standing of my profession.
6. Work within the limits of my professional role and avoid misrepresentation of my professional competence and qualifications.
7. Mentor other out of school hours care educators and students.
8. Advocate in relation to issues that impact on my profession and on children and their families.
9. Encourage qualities and practices of leadership within the out of school hours care profession.

In relation to the conduct of research, I will:

1. Recognise that research includes my routine documentation and investigations of children's learning and development as well as more formal research projects undertaken with and by external bodies.
2. Be responsive to children's participation in research by negotiating their involvement and taking into account matters such as safety, fatigue, privacy and their level of interest.
3. Support research to strengthen and expand the knowledge base of middle childhood and, where possible, initiate, contribute to, facilitate and disseminate such research.
4. Make every effort to understand the purpose and value of proposed research projects and make informed decisions as to the participation of myself, colleagues, children, families and communities.
5. Ensure research in which I am involved meets standard ethical procedures including informed consent, opportunity to withdraw and confidentiality.
6. Ensure that images of children and other data are only collected with informed consent and are stored and utilised according to legislative and policy requirements.
7. Represent the findings of all research accurately.

As an Employee at Fun 4 U, I will Not:

1. use abusive, derogatory or offensive language
2. engage in conduct that is detrimental to the professional standing of our OSHC 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 OSHC Service, either directly or indirectly via information technology such as email, text or social media.
Additionally, they will not support those who do this
3. condone or participate in illegal, unsafe or abusive behaviour towards children, including physical, sexual or psychological abuse, ill-treatment, neglect or grooming
4. exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
5. fail to report information to the approved provider if they know a child has been abused
6. engage in unwarranted and inappropriate touching involving a child
7. persistently criticise and/or denigrate a child
8. verbally assault a child or create a climate of fear
9. encourage a child to communicate with an adult in a private setting
10. share details of sexual experiences with a child

11. use sexual language or gestures in the presence of children
12. discriminate against any child, because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
13. put children at risk of abuse- refusing food/play, making threats, exposing children to inappropriate language or material (movies, internet, photos)
14. show preferential behaviour towards any child
15. accept an offer of money, regardless of the amount
16. seek or accept a bribe
17. acquire personal profit or advantage because of their position (e.g., through the use of Service information)
18. exchange any property of the Service for own use unless properly authorised
19. approach other employees, managers or visitors directly on individual matters that are irrelevant to them
20. engage in any action in breach of our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*, 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.
21. engage in or support any action in breach of Service policies and/or procedures.

Sources:

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). [National Model Code for Early Childhood Education and Care.](#)
- 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 Human Rights Commission <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/childrens-rights>
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
- Australian Government. Fair Work Ombudsman. (2024). [Hiring employees](#)
- 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).
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth).
- *Workplace Relations Act 1996* (Cth).

Comments:

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