

# Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements

## Code of Conduct for Staff Members



### Introduction

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Kootingal and District Preschool 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), Australian Human Rights Commission, National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, and the National Quality Framework, and service philosophy and policy.

### Goals – What are we going to do?

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Kootingal and District Preschool uses these frameworks, codes and conventions 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 behavior 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 – To achieve our goals

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The professional conduct of our team, in relation to one another, the children and their families, the community, and the Education and Care 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 centered 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.

## Child Safe Standards

The Child Safe Standards guides our services decisions surrounding practices relating to children’s safety and ensures that everyone participating/contributing to our preschool understands the importance of putting the children first to keep them safe.

Kootingal Preschool aims to have a child safe culture and a set of values and practices that guide the attitudes and behaviour of all staff. Good leaders champion these values and embed them in organisational governance. The following values should be at the heart of any approach that prioritises children’s safety:

- The best interests of children and their protection from harm is paramount.
- Child abuse is not tolerated and must not happen.
- Children’s rights are understood and respected.
- Concerns about child safety raised by children and their parents and carers are acted on.
- Reporting abuse is not obstructed or prevented.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Authority/Responsibility For
Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011 at all times.</li> <li>➤ 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.</li> </ul>
Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Model child safe values in daily practices and decision-making</li> <li>➤ Monitor and review compliance with National Child Safe Principles or Child Safe Standards (insert state/territory Child Safe Standards), mandatory reporting, National Law and National Regulations</li> <li>➤ 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</li> <li>➤ Promote leadership by working with employees and providing opportunities for professional development and growth</li> <li>➤ Report any changes to a person’s WWCC or teacher accreditation or registration to the regulatory authority via the NQA ITS within 24 hours of becoming aware of the change</li> <li>➤ Report any allegations, concerns or suspicions of inappropriate conduct to the regulatory authority</li> <li>➤ Promote open and effective communication with all staff regarding Right to Disconnect provisions under Fair Work Act- including out of hours emergency contact and expectations of staff</li> <li>➤ Provide ongoing support and feedback to employees</li> <li>➤ Keep employees informed about essential information and any relevant changes and make all documents readily accessible to them</li> <li>➤ Ensure copies of the ECA Code of Ethics and National Principles for Child Safe standards are available to staff and families</li> <li>➤ Model professional behaviour at all times whilst at the Service</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Implement supportive and effective communication systems, consulting employees in appropriate decision making</li> <li>➤ Take appropriate action if a breach of the code of conduct occurs</li> <li>➤ Share skills and knowledge with employees</li> <li>➤ Give encouragement and constructive feedback to employees, respecting the value of different professional approaches</li> <li>➤ Follow recruitment policies and procedures to ensure all potential candidates undergo appropriate background checks, including WWCC Checks and prohibition checks</li> <li>➤ Model and provide guidance to educators and staff to ensure compliance with a zero tolerance of child abuse, racism and bullying within the Service.</li> </ul>
<p>Early Childhood Educators / Responsible Person</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ensure their Working with Children Check (WWCC) is valid and current</li> <li>➤ Notify the approved provider, within 72 hours of any changes, or within 24 hours of becoming aware of any changes, to their WWCC status, changes to their teacher registration or fit and proper status (including show cause notice, suspension notice, supervision notice, disciplinary notices/orders or prohibition notices)</li> <li>➤ Ensure their work is carried out proficiently, harmoniously and effectively</li> <li>➤ 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, Child Safe Standards, Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulation, and the National Quality Standard</li> <li>➤ Demonstrate and maintain professional boundaries that foster trust, dignity and mutual respect in their interactions with children, families, colleagues and members of the community</li> <li>➤ Refrain from any behaviour that may be considered inappropriate conduct or inappropriate discipline, including behaviour that is threatening, intimidating, humiliating, degrading, hostile or otherwise inappropriate</li> <li>➤ Follow and implement all directions or orders issued by the regulatory authority or authorised organisation (e.g. Police, Office of the Children’s Guardian)</li> <li>➤ Only use Service-supplied/issued devices to take, store and transmit images and videos of children</li> <li>➤ Act honestly and exercise attentiveness in all Service operations</li> <li>➤ 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</li> <li>➤ Ensure that no child being educated and cared for by the Service is subjected to inappropriate conduct or inappropriate discipline by any staff member, educator or volunteer</li> <li>➤ Report any allegations, concerns or suspicions of inappropriate conduct or inappropriate discipline to the approved provider</li> <li>➤ Report all child safety concerns or child protection concerns to the appropriate authorities as per the Child Protection and Child Safe Environment Policies</li> <li>➤ Promote the safety of children and take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse</li> <li>➤ Provide active and adequate supervision of children at all times</li> <li>➤ Understand their legislative responsibility as mandatory reporters to report any allegation of child abuse, neglect or possible risk of harm to management or Child Protection authority</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understand their legislative responsibility to report any inappropriate action of any other employee that involves children or young people to management as part of the Reportable Conduct Scheme</li> <li>➤ Participate in all compulsory training, including update of Child Protection training every 12-24 months or whenever there are changes to Child Protection law</li> <li>➤ Participate in mandatory child safety training and ensure that child safety training is refreshed every 2 years</li> <li>➤ Report any instances of suspected corrupt conduct, mismanagement of government funds or other serious allegation to the appropriate agency (Reporting fraud via a tip-off)</li> <li>➤ Follow and comply with the Dealing with Complaints Policy when matters are raised regarding child safety and wellbeing</li> <li>➤ Have a solid understanding of the Service’s policies and procedures, Child Safe Standards and the Early Childhood Australia (ECA) 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.</li> <li>➤ Be courteous and responsive when dealing with colleagues, students, visitors, children and families</li> <li>➤ Work collaboratively with colleagues and recognise and value diversity</li> <li>➤ Be mindful of their duty of care towards themselves and others</li> <li>➤ Be positive role models for children at all times</li> <li>➤ Ensure compliance with a zero tolerance of racism within the Service</li> <li>➤ Respect the confidential nature of information gained about each child enrolled in our Service</li> <li>➤ Engage in critical reflection to inform individual and collective decision making and ensure continual improvement, including review of child safe policies and procedures.</li> </ul>
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Respect confidentiality at all times.</li> <li>➤ Give feedback in relation to educators’ professional conduct to the Approved Provider as necessary.</li> <li>➤ Act in a professional manner whenever they are involved in the programs provided by the service.</li> <li>➤ Communicate to Responsible Person or staff any individual requests regarding staff/educators’ code of conduct.</li> <li>➤ Families to become familiar with the services policies and procedures to ensure behaviour that aligns with positive role modelling, effective communication and respect.</li> </ul>

## Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Management and staff will monitor and review the effectiveness of the Code of Conduct for Staff Members regularly. Updated information will be incorporated as needed.

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 12 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 Regulation 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.

### Links with other policies:

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Harassment Free Workplace

Participation of Volunteers and Students

Casual Staff

Child Safe Standards

### Complies with:

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## NQS

Quality Area 4	Staffing arrangements
Standard 4.1	Staffing arrangements
Element 4.1.1	Organisation of educators
Element 4.1.2	Continuity of staff
Quality Area 5	Relationships with Children
Quality Area 6	Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

## National Regulations

Reg	168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
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### Sources:

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- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) - [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- Early Childhood Australia – [www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au)
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics 2016
- Australian Government Department of Employment – <https://www.employment.gov.au>
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Department of Education and Communities – [www.dec.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au)
- Education and Care National Law Act 2010
- Child Safe Standards 2023