

Child Safe Code of Conduct

**1. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

1. To state our rules and expectations for staff about child safe behaviour in our service, and to outline the likely action we will take in the event of any breaches
2. We are required to have a Code of Conduct under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
3. We are required to have a code of conduct as part of our **Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy**, which is required under the Blue Card system
4. This Code of Conduct aligns with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. It is a requirement under the National Principles to have a code of conduct that guides staff on expected behaviour and responsibilities
5. This Code aligns with the ECEC Code of Ethics

**2. SCOPE**

1. This code applies to:
   1. The approved provider, paid employees, volunteers and work placement students, **referred to as ‘staff’ throughout this policy**
   2. Third parties who carry out child-related work at our service, including contractors, subcontractors, self-employed persons, employees of a labour hire company **referred to as ‘staff’ throughout this policy**
   3. Visitors to our service who carry out child-related work, including allied health support workers
   4. Parents, family members, care providers, othervisitors to our service

**3. DEFINITIONS**

1. The following definitions apply to this policy and related procedures:
   1. ‘Breach’ means any action or inaction that fails to comply with this Code
   2. ‘Child-related work’ is used in this Code to refer to the work of our service (an education and care service for children). It does not apply where contact with children is incidental or would not reasonably be expected to occur (e.g. a plumber or delivery driver)
   3. ‘Harm’ and ‘risk of harm’ are used in this policy as overarching terms that cover neglect and various forms of abuse. It includes physical, sexual and psychological abuse; neglect; ill-treatment; grooming; exposure to family violence; commercial child sexual exploitation; online child sexual abuse; and sexual abuse that is perpetrated by other children and young people
   4. ‘Parents’ includes guardians and persons who have parental responsibilities for the child under a decision or order of court
   5. ‘Staff’ refers to paid employees, volunteers, students, and third parties who are covered in the scope of this policy

**4. CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT**

1. Our Child Safe Code of Conduct is at **Appendix A**. It provides examples of the behaviour we want our staff to engage in and the behaviour that is unacceptable. Engaging in unacceptable behaviour is a breach of our Code and may result in performance management or disciplinary action
2. Examples of concerning behaviour are also described. On its own, a concerning behaviour may not be a breach of the Code; however, a pattern of concerning behaviour may pose a risk to children and be deemed a breach

**5. CODE COMMUNICATION, TRAINING AND MONITORING**

1. This Child Safe Code of Conduct can be found in our policies and procedures folder and staff handbook.
2. The approved provider and nominated supervisor provide information, training and other resources and support regarding the Child Safe Code of Conduct and related documents
3. All staff (including volunteers and students) are formally inducted. They are given a copy of this policy to, review, understand and formally agree to uphold this Child Safe Code of Conduct and related documents
4. The approved provider/nominated supervisor runs a professional development program for each staff member, which covers this Code
5. The approved provider and nominated supervisor monitor the Child Safe Code of Conduct and staff practices to ensure our staff are understand and uphold the Code The approved provider and nominated supervisor monitor and audit staff practices. They address non-compliance. Breaches are taken seriously
6. Families know they can access our Child Safe Code of Conduct and related documents in our centre policies and procedures folder and on Storypark.
7. Families are notified in line with our obligations under the *National Regulations* when changes are made to our policies and procedures, including this Child Safe Code of Conduct

**6. RELATED DOCUMENTS**

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| Key Policies | Child Protection Policy | Child Safe Environment Policy | Child Safe Risk Management Plan | Recruitment, Induction and Training Policy | Complaint Handling Policy | Excursions Policy | Tobacco, drug and Alcohol-Free Environment Policy | Safe Arrival of Children Policy | Transport Policy | Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Policy| Managing Emergencies and Evacuations Policy | Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy | ECEC Code of Ethics | Physical Environment Policy | Educator and Management Policy | Staffing Arrangement Policy | Social Media Policy | Technology Usage Policy | Photography Policy | Work Health and Safety Policy | Relationships with Children Policy | Orientation for Children Policy | Parental Interaction and Involvement Policy | Governance Policy | Privacy and Confidentiality Policy | Delivery and Collection of Children Policy | Lock Up Policy | Collection and Delivery of Children Policy |
| Procedures / Plans | Complaint Handling Procedure (in Complaint Handling Policy) | Child Protection Procedures (in Child Protection Policy) |
| Templates/resources | Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record template (in Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record Policy)  Recording disclosures of harm/risk of harm template (in Child Protection Policy)  Recording suspicions of harm/risk of harm template (in Child Protection Policy)  Child Safety and Wellbeing Breach – Incident Report Form (in Child Protection Policy)  List of indicators of harm (in Child Protection Policy)  Child protection reporting summary (in Child Protection Policy) |

**7. DOCUMENT INFORMATION**

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| Approval date | 31.12.2024  Email sent to approved providers on the 30.12.2024 for approval. |
| Effective date | 31.12.2024 |
| Review date | 31.12.2024  Reviewed annually and when there are changes that may affect this document, including after any responses to incidents, disclosures or suspicions of harm or risk of harm. The review will include checks to ensure the policy reflects current legislation, continues to be effective, or whether any changes and additional training are required |
| Approved by | Approved Providers |

**APPENDIX A**

**Child Safe Code of Conduct**

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| Commitment to child safety and wellbeing |
| Our number one priority is the safety, health and wellbeing of children in our care. We champion and model a child safe culture at all levels in our service.  We will not tolerate harm or the risk of harm to children or young people. We will not tolerate bullying or harassment. We act on any concerns about child safety and encourage a culture of reporting harm and risk of harm.  We listen to all children. We uphold their rights and empower them to know and exercise their rights. Children and families are involved in making decisions about matters that concern them. We are committed to equity and the inclusion of all children, regardless of their abilities, sex, gender, or social, economic or cultural background. We have an inclusive and welcoming environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and respect and value their diverse and unique identities and experiences. |

| I WILL: |
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| Follow the law and our policies and procedures: |
| Act in line with all relevant laws and regulations |
| Act in line with all of our policies and procedures, including our Child Safe Environment Policy and those that cover supervision practices, interactions with and between children, child protection, discrimination, bullying and harassment, communication (including online), technology use, photography, privacy and record keeping |
| Report and act on suspected or observed breaches of this Child Safe Code of Conduct |
| Take harm and the risk of harm to a child, including sexual misconduct, seriously: |
| Put children’s safety, health and wellbeing first at all times, remembering my duty of care to take all reasonable steps to protect children from hazards and harm and the risks of harm, and to prevent the abuse of a child to by anyone associated with our service while the child is in our care |
| Identify, report and manage risk of harm to children in line with our Child Safe Risk Management Plan and our other risk assessments, policies and procedures |
| Not tolerate bullying or harassment |
| Be aware of current child protection laws and my obligations under them, and undertake all the child safety/protection training I need |
| Take a child seriously if they make a disclosure about harm or risk of harm concerning themselves or another child |
| Respond to suspicions, beliefs, disclosures, incidents, allegations, concerns and complaints about child safety, including harm or the risk of harm, following the relevant policy and procedure, including our Child Safe Environment Policy, Child Protection Policy and Procedures and Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure |
| Meet my child protection reporting obligations following our Child Protection Policy and Procedures, including mandatory reporting, and reporting criminal conduct, allegations of sexual misconduct |
| Manage allegations of a child exhibiting harmful sexual behaviour in line with our Child Protection Policy and Procedures |
| Keep all information about child protection concerns confidential, except when it must be disclosed by law to a relevant authority under information sharing laws (as described in our Child Protection Policy and Procedures) |
| Treat children with respect: |
| Uphold the rights of children, and empower children to know and exercise their rights |
| Listen to and value children’s ideas and opinions |
| Involve children (and their families and communities) in making decisions about matters that concern them |
| Behave in a courteous, ethical and respectful way towards children and their families and other staff members |
| Use positive behaviour management |
| Communicate in a polite and respectful way in written material (e.g. emails, social media) |
| Communicate in ways children (and their families and communities) can understand |
| Use non-intrusive physical contact with a child when it is warranted, such as to soothe, build trusting relationships, demonstrate learning, treat or prevent an injury, and to meet the health and hygiene needs of a child or the needs of a child with disability |
| Act professionally around children: |
| Dress in clean and suitable clothing and in line with our Dress Code |
| Be a positive team member and not allow any personal differences I have with other staff members get in the way of my meeting the needs of the children (and their family) in our care |
| Report any actual or perceived conflicts of interest to the nominated supervisor (such as an outside relationship with a child in our care) |
| Maintain proper supervision of children: |
| Strictly follow our supervision procedures and our policies and procedures, including during high-risk activities e.g., during the delivery and collection of children, travel between services, excursions, transport, nappy changing and toileting, water-play, special events with visitors etc |
| Raise any concerns I have about supervision with the nominated supervisor or approved provider |
| Work with children in an open and transparent way, so that the other adults know what work I am doing with children |
| Use electronic and online platforms appropriately: |
| Follow all of our policies and procedures for using electronic devises and online platforms |
| Get consent from parents before photographing or recording a child or using their image |
| Use a professional tone in online communications – social media, emails, other platforms |
| Only connect with children online in relation to my work and include the child’s parent in any electronic communication with a child |
| Report to the nominated supervisor if a child communicates with me outside of a work-related matter |
| Contribute to a culturally safe and inclusive environment: |
| Welcome and celebrate all children (and their families and communities), regardless of their race, colour, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, health status, national, ethnic or social origin, culture, property, ability or other status |
| Acknowledge the histories, cultures, language, traditions, religions, spiritual beliefs, child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families |
| Make reasonable adjustments for children with disability |
| Take part in discussions and share knowledge about cultural safety with my colleagues |

| I WILL NOT: |
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| Condone or engage in any activity that harms or risks harming a child: |
| Including physical, sexual or psychological/emotional abuse; ill-treatment; neglect; sexual grooming; commercial child sexual exploitation; online child sexual abuse; any other unsafe behaviour towards a child |
| Use corporal punishment, such as smacking or other forms of physical discipline |
| Use verbal abuse or intimidation, such as yelling and shouting, invading another person’s personal space, talking over other people, persistently criticising and/or denigrating people, humiliating, shaming or name calling |
| Use passive aggressive behaviour, such as deliberately ignoring, isolating or being dismissive of others |
| Bully or harass, such as threatening to harm, either physically or psychologically |
| Deliberately prevent a child from forming friendships |
| Engage in rough physical games with children that could lead to injury |
| Neglect a child by not giving them adequate supervision, nourishment, water, education or medical care |
| Condone or engage in any sexual misconduct, including grooming offences, with a child: |
| Commit any sexual offences in relation to a child in our care, including any sexual act with or towards a child, any sexual touching, voyeurism, recording or distributing intimate images, grooming |
| Take or distribute explicit or intimate images or recordings of a child, including those in which are they are in a state of undress, bathing or using the toilet |
| Offer a child gifts, food, money, attention or affection in exchange for sexual activities or images or with the intention of making it easier to access the child for sexual activity |
| Discuss my sexual experiences and preferences with a child or ask a child to share intimate or sexual information about themselves |
| Use sexual language or gestures in the presence of children |
| Show children pictures, animations, images or websites of an inappropriate or adult nature |
| Talk about adult or sexualised topics – including telling adult jokes – around children |
| Undress in front of, or expose myself to, a child |
| Undress a child unless it is necessary to do so, and the child is unable to undress themselves |
| Do personal care tasks that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting |
| Communicate with a child about romantic, intimate or sexual feelings |
| Initiate inappropriate and unwarranted touching, such as massages, kisses or unwelcome hugging |
| Deliberately facilitate situations that unnecessarily result in close physical contact with a child, such as wrestling or tickling |
| Make negative, overly flattering or sexualised comments about a child’s appearance |
| Flirt with a child |
| Engage in unprofessional conduct: |
| Use offensive language, such as swearing, using racial, cultural, homophobic or sexist slurs, |
| Wear clothes that include offensive language or pictures |
| Engage in any sexual or intimate acts with anyone while at the service or during work-related activities outside the premises (e.g. excursions, staff development activities) |
| Form any intimate relationship with a child in our care |
| Encourage a child to communicate or meet with me in a private setting, or arrange personal contact, including online, with children in our care for any purpose that is not related to our service’s activities unless I have prior approval from the nominated supervisor or approved provider and the child’s parent/s |
| Babysit, mentor and/or tutor a child in our care out of work hours unless I have the nominated supervisor or approved provider’s prior approval |
| Develop any special relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism |
| Accept gifts or benefits from children or their families which exceed $50 in value. If this occurs in circumstances where the gift cannot reasonably be refused or returned, I will immediately disclose the gift to the approved provider or nominated supervisor |
| Accept an offer of money, regardless of the amount, by a child or their family |
| Offer a child gifts or money in exchange without permission from the approved provider or nominated supervisor |
| Misuse technology or behave unprofessionally online: |
| Use a camera, computer, mobile phone, tablet, or other electronic device in any way that breaches our policies and procedures |
| Take or store photographs or recordings of a child on personal devices/online storage for personal use |
| Take, access, share, store, publish photographs or recordings of a child without the written consent of their parent/s |
| Have unauthorised contact with a child online |
| Use private text messages to communicate with a child where open communication is possible |
| Use an electronic device to exploit or harass a child or their family |
| Access, retrieve, display, view, forward and/or store offensive obscene, pornographic, threatening, abusive or other inappropriate material in the workplace |
| Negatively discriminate against a child or their family or a staff member: |
| Treat a child (or their family or another staff member) unfairly or unfavourably because they have a particular characteristic or belong to a certain group, such as their disability, sex, race, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religious appearance, |
| Express my personal views about gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, culture, race, religion, or disability in front of children |
| Condone or participate in unacceptable behaviour relating to alcohol, recreational drugs and cigarettes: |
| Offer children and young people alcohol, cigarettes, vapes or other drugs |
| Be affected by alcohol or drugs while I am at work |
| Smoke or use e-cigarettes at the service, in the carpark, or within 5 metres of the boundaries our premises |
| Fail to respond or report harm and the risk of harm to a child, including sexual misconduct: |
| Ignore or disregard any incidents, suspicions, disclosures or knowledge of harm or risk of harm to a child |
| Fail to report to the relevant authorities in line with my obligations and our Child Protection Policy and Procedures |
| Exaggerate or trivialise harm or risk of harm to children |
| Disclose personal or sensitive information about a child, including their image, and details of any child protection matters, unless I am authorised to do so |
| I understand the following types of behaviour may be of concern: |
| Talking with other adults about hurting a child |
| Asking a child to keep a secret, including a relationship with an adult |

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| How to report breaches: |
| Breaches and suspected breaches of our Child Safe Code of Conduct must be reported as soon as practicable |
| If the breach relates to child protection matter, staff must follow our Child Protection Policy and Procedures |
| For all other matters, staff must report to the nominated supervisor and/or approved provider either in person, by telephone on 3341 1755 or via email info@kurabyelc.com.au |
| Staff should complete the Child Safety and Wellbeing Breach – Incident Report Form which is available in the programming room tray labelled Incident Report form [a template is available in Centre Support’s Child Safe Environment Policy] |
| How breaches will be dealt with: |
| Breaches and suspected breaches will be taken seriously and dealt with quickly, fairly, transparently and according to our relevant policies and procedures, including our HR/management policies, our Complaint Policy and Procedure and Child Protection Policy and Procedure, where appropriate. |
| Staff, including volunteers and students, who breach our Code may have disciplinary action taken against them, such as formal warnings, increased supervision, being transferred to another role, or having their employment suspended or terminated. |
| Reporting requirements: |
| In QLD:   * Mandatory reporting laws require us to report reasonable suspicions that a child has suffered, is suffering or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm from physical or sexual abuse; and may not have a parent who is able and willing to protect them from the harm * There are criminal offences relating to failing to report child sexual offences to police and failing to protect children from the risk of sexual offending |
| Our Child Protection Policy and Procedures detail our legal obligations and set out how to respond to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of harm and risk of harm, and how to make reports to the relevant authorities. |
| Agreement and signature |
| I have read and understood this Child Safe Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it and its terms. |
| Name: |
| Signature: |
| Date: |