

We believe in maintaining an inclusive and welcoming environment and workplace that motivates and facilitates personal growth and development for staff and educators. The values that underpin our work ethic include equality, respect, integrity, and responsibility. Our Service is committed to the ECA 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 the reflection about the ethical responsibilities of early childhood professionals.

As a service we are 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.

## PURPOSE

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 philosophy of Clarence Family Day Care.

Our Service takes every reasonable effort to accommodate the diversity of all children in implementing the Child Safe Standards. 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.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to staff, educators, management, Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, students, families, children and visitors (including contractors) of Clarence Family Day Care.

## IMPLEMENTATION

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators and staff, volunteers, and students will adhere to the Early Childhood Australian Code of Ethics, Education and Care Services National Regulations and National Quality Standard, Child Safe Standards and Service policies and procedures, promoting positive interactions both within the Service and the local community.

## RESPECT FOR PEOPLE AND THE SERVICE

- Employees, educators and management are committed to the Service philosophy and values, inclusive of best practice in early childhood education and building positive partnership with children, families and staff
- Our Service will develop a *Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing* to demonstrate a strong culture of child safety within the Service
- Employees and management adhere to our Child safe policies including *Child Safe Environment Policy, Child Protection Policy*, at all times and take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse and harm
- Employees, educators and management understand that *child safety is everyone's responsibility*
- Employees and educators are committed to valuing and promoting the safety, health, and wellbeing of employees, educators, volunteers, children, and families
- Employees, educators 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, educators 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
- 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 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 respect the privacy of children and their families by keeping all information about child protection concerns confidential and only share information to promote child wellbeing or safety and /or manage risk of family violence with other Information Sharing Entities (IES) as per NSW legislation.
- It is important employees, educators and management listen and respond to the views and concerns of children particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or they are worried about their safety or the safety of another.

## EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYEES & EDUCATORS

### Educators and Employees WILL:

- ensure their work is carried out proficiently, harmoniously, and effectively
- 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 Regulations, and the National Quality Standard
- act honestly and exercise attentiveness in all Service operations.
- 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
- uphold the rights of children and always prioritise their needs
- treat all children and young people with respect
- promote the wellbeing and safety of children and take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- provide adequate supervision of children at all times
- 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
- 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*
- participate in all compulsory training, including update of Child Protection training on a regular basis
- report any instances of suspected corrupt conduct, mismanagement of government funds or other serious allegation to the appropriate agency ([tipoffline@education.gov.au](mailto:tipoffline@education.gov.au))
- follow and comply with the *Dealing with Complaints Policy* when matters are raised regarding Child Safety and Wellbeing
- have a solid understanding of the Service's policies and procedures, Child Safe Standards and the 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
- 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
- ensure compliance with a zero tolerance of racism within the Service
- adhere to the *Tobacco, Drugs and Alcohol-Free Policy*
- respect the confidential nature of information gained about each child enrolled in our Service
- engage in critical reflection to inform individual and collective decision making and ensure continual improvement, including a review of Child Safe policies and procedures.

## Educators and 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 me 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 *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.
- 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 ECA Code of Ethics and 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 OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

- all employees and educators are required by law to undergo a Working with Children Check (WWCC) which is verified by the employer to ensure it is valid and current
- if employees and educators become aware of a serious crime committed by another employee or educator, they are required to report it to management as per the *Reportable Conduct Scheme*
- as mandatory reporters, all employees and educators must report possible risk of harm to children or young persons to management and/or Child Protection authority
- employees and educators will report any concerns they may have about inappropriate actions of any other employee and educators that involves children or young people to management as per the *Reportable Conduct Scheme*
- 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.
  - Child Protection Helpline – 13 21 11
  - ChildStory Reporter - [Login \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/child-story-reporter)

## MANAGING CONFLICT IN THE WORKPLACE

Management WILL:

- remain objective and impartial when managing conflict in the workplace
- be responsive and address a possible breach of the code of conduct by any employee as soon as they are aware of the breach
- investigate all allegations which may result in remedial action, or disciplinary action ranging from a caution to dismissal
- 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
- Lawful sharing of information with other parties must be to promote the wellbeing or safety of children and adhere to guidelines under Child and Family Information Sharing Schemes
- All employees are to ensure that confidential information is not accessed by unauthorised people
- Employees will adhere to the Service’s *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*.

## RECORD KEEPING

- Employees, educators and Management will maintain full, accurate, and honest records as required by the Education and Care Services National regulations
- Managers have a responsibility to ensure that employees and educators comply with their record keeping obligation outlined in the *Record Keeping and Retention Policy*
- Employees and educators must not destroy records without permission from management
- Records must be retained and stored securely as per our *Record Keeping and Retention Policy*

## DUTY OF CARE

- Management, educators 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 outlined in the *Work Health and Safety Policy*
- Duty of Care relates to both physical and psychological wellbeing of individuals
- Management, educators 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

- As a Child Safe Organisation, our 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 *Social Media Policy*
- Employees and educators who have personal social media accounts are not permitted to post any negative comments relating to the Service, children, colleagues, or families.

## 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.

## USE OF ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND TOBACCO

- Smoking is NOT permitted in or on surrounding areas of the Service
- It is expected that the odour of cigarette smoke will not be detected on an employee's or educator's clothing. If an employee is found smoking on the premises, that employee's employment 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.
- Our 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, 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.
- 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 and educators 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 mandated professional 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
- 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 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

## DISCIPLINARY ACTION

All staff members are made fully aware that continued abuse of any of the above or any of the following may result in disciplinary action. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- unauthorised absence
- having personal visitors whilst on shift
- continued personal phone calls/messaging whilst on shift
- unauthorised solicitation or distribution of money or materials
- poor work standard
- lack of personal accountability/responsibility
- carelessness
- low level of enthusiasm
- lack of personal cleanliness
- taking excessive breaks
- failure to report health, fire or safety hazards
- repeated tardiness

## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

The *Code of Conduct* will be evaluated and reviewed on a regular basis.

## SOURCES

- *Anti-Discrimination Act*.
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority.
- 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).
- 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).
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (Cth).
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth).
- *Workplace Relations Act 1996* (Cth).

## 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

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

I acknowledge I have received a copy of the Code of Conduct, v1.1, effective 1 October 2023.

I have read and been informed about the content, requirements, and expectations of the Code of Conduct at Clarence Family Day Care.

I have received a copy of the policy and agree to abide by the policy as a condition of my engagement with Clarence Family Day Care.

I understand that if I have questions, at any time, regarding the Code of Conduct, I will re-read the policy, consult with the Nominated Supervisor/Director or the Manager.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_