

# Code of Conduct Policy



<b>Document Title</b>	NQS7.45 Code of Conduct Policy	<b>Version</b>	2a
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<b>Warning - Ensure you are using the latest version of this policy.</b>			
DCC Network/All Organisation Information/DCC Policies/Quality Area 7 – Leadership & service management			

## 1. Policy Statement

River Region Early Education is committed to a code of professional conduct, upholding ethical principles and professional standards that guide decision-making and practice at the service. River Region Early Education is committed to child safety, champions a child safe culture and recognises that child safety is a shared responsibility at all levels of the organisation.

## 2. Rationale

River Region Early Education uses this code together with our Values and Behaviours guide as a basis for evaluating professional conduct, and as a reference tool for the way we work as well as the actions, behaviours and conduct expected at River Region Early Education.

## 3. Definitions

Nil

## 4. Guidelines

### a) Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision is educating children from the mind and the heart.

Our Mission is to create safe, happy and stimulating environments in rural communities where children are supported to reach their full potential and learn lifelong skills.

Our Values are:

- Integrity - the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles.
- Inclusion - when a diversity of people feel valued and respected, have access to opportunities and resources and can contribute their perspectives and talents.
- Empathy - the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.
- Joy - a feeling of great pleasure and happiness.
- Passion - an intense enthusiasm for the work of early childhood education.
- Nurturing - to care for and help or encourage the development of others.

### b) Safety

River Region Early Education is committed to providing and maintaining safe workplaces. All team members are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure their health and safety and that of others. This includes following all health and safety policies and procedures and reporting all hazards, incidents and injuries.

### c) Child Safe Code of Conduct

All team member, families and volunteers are expected to:

- Treat children with respect and be a positive role model in your conduct with them,

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- Communicate with children in an age appropriate and realistic manner,
- Set clear boundaries about appropriate behaviour between yourself and a child,
- Only have physical contact with a child in ways which are appropriate to your professional or agreed role and responsibilities,
- Use positive guidance and behaviour guidance strategies and work with children in an appropriate manner. These strategies must not include physical, verbal or emotional harm or the deprivation of liberty,
- Provide a pleasant, safe and nurturing environment for all children free from harm or any hazard,
- Seek to develop positive learning outcomes for all children,
- Adhere to the Photography Policy in relation to any photographic or video images of children (including no personal phones, cameras or communication devices being on floor with children),
- Be willing to listen and respond appropriately to a child's views and concerns,
- Respond quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child or that are related to a child,
- Abide your mandatory reporting obligations, that is, report any observation or suspicion of inappropriate interactions with children or their families by employees to your supervisor or to the General Manager or Approved Provider if the person suspected to be engaging in inappropriate interactions is your supervisor.
- Abide by the mandatory Office of the Children's Guardian Child Safe Standards 2019.

### **d) Workplace conduct**

All team members of River Region Early Education are expected to:

- Uphold the rights and responsibilities of families and caregivers Family Involvement Policy
- Be honest and act with integrity in all aspects of your employment including but not limited to undertaking assigned duties, work attendance, use of personal sick leave and reporting others for breaches etc,
- Maintain high standards of conduct whenever you are representing River Region Early Education (including whenever you are wearing River Region Early Education uniform outside of work hours),
- Treat other persons fairly, courteously and without discrimination, harassment or bullying,
- Uphold the rights of children as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulation,
- Be respectful of, and responsive to, persons of all ethnicities, cultures, values and beliefs.
- Promote the principles of equal opportunity in River Region Early Education's workplaces,
- Perform your duties as required to the best of your ability, showing commitment to a high quality of work by acting within the bounds of all relevant legislation, rules and regulations at all times,
- Comply with the Code of any professional body that you are registered or affiliated with, where this impacts upon River Region Early Education,
- Make decisions appropriate to the position held and being responsible for those decisions and the actions that result from them,
- Be supportive of changes made by River Region Early Education, as change is necessary to River Region Early Education's ongoing organisational success and the provision of high standards of early childhood care and education,

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- Be supportive of work colleagues and accepting job responsibilities as a team member or River Region Early Education Representative, including following the lawful and reasonable instructions and directions of supervisors,
- Uphold the reputation and standing of River Region Early Education by ensuring the security and confidentiality of all information that is gained during the course of employment with River Region Early Education,
- Use financial and non-financial information gathered by River Region Early Education and personal knowledge of River Region Early Education's systems and processes only to perform River Region Early Education's functions,
- Treat all River Region Early Education property and assets with care and respect,
- Be mindful that content published on social media sites is publicly available, and as such an individual who chooses to engage in such activity must not bring River Region Early Education into disrepute.

### **e) Communication**

When communicating employees are representing River Region Early Education and they should uphold River Region Early Education's values and policies relevant to how, and what, they are communicating, particularly in regard to the strict maintenance of confidentiality, privacy and professionalism at all times.

To ensure a high standard of professionalism in our work, employees must not use inappropriate language or words of a derogatory nature whilst representing River Region Early Education, or in the presence of other employees, families, guardians, suppliers, contractors or children.

Communication about current or past employees or any aspect of River Region Early Education operations (including in relation to children, families and volunteers) in any social media platform or mainstream media or in any other public forum is unacceptable. (see Acceptable use of Electronic Media Policy)

### **f) Professional Standards**

All employees of River Region Early Education are to act according to our values and philosophy at all times and avoid situations where their actions, behaviours or conduct could reflect adversely on River Region Early Education.

- Employees should be guided by the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics and value and respect the equity and diversity of different people in our operation.
- Employees must adhere to River Region Early Education Policies and procedures at all times.
- Employees are directed to talk to their Supervisor or the General Manager if they have concerns about what might be considered unacceptable conduct or behaviour.

### **g) Privacy and Confidentiality**

River Region Early Education employees must not discuss nor disclose personal or confidential information with other employees or any other person unless such discussion and disclosure is required to perform their duties or to comply with a legal requirement. If any employee is ever unsure as to the need to use/disclose/discuss any information or document, they are not to disclose the information but rather, seek advice and direction from their Supervisor or the General Manager immediately.

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### h) Property and Resources

River Region Early Education provides a number of property and resource items to enable employees to carry out their jobs (including physical property, cash, equipment, motor vehicles, River Region Early Education information, telephones, internet and intranet systems, computer hardware, technology systems and associated software).

These property items are provided by River Region Early Education to enable its organisational activities to be undertaken and organisation's goals to be achieved.

It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that River Region Early Education's logo, letterhead and River Region Early Education stationery entrusted to them are used carefully, lawfully, honestly and not misappropriated. Unless proper authorisation has been granted, River Region Early Education resources are not to be used for private purposes.

In addition, River Region Early Education's property and resources are not allowed to be removed from River Region Early Education premises without the express permission of the employee's Manager/Centre Director.

### i) Breach of Code of Conduct

For employees of River Region Early Education, a breach of Code of Conduct will be dealt with under the Underperformance, Misconduct and Disciplinary Policy. Other breaches of Code of Conduct will be dealt with using the Complaint Policy.

## 5. Procedure

Nil

## 6. Resources and references

- Child Safe Standards
- Office of Children's Guardian- Code of Conduct template
- Goodstart Code of Conduct

## 7. Relevant Legislation, Regulations and Standards

Legislation	
166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Education and Care Services National Regulation	
84	Awareness of child protection law
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures

<b>National Quality Standards</b>	
2.2.3	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.
4.2.2	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.
7.1.2	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service.
<b>Child Safe Standards</b>	
1	Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
4	Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account
5	People working with children are suitable and supported
10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe
<b>Early Years Learning Framework Learning Outcomes</b>	
<b>Early Years Learning Framework Principles</b>	
	Secure, respectful, and reciprocal relationships
	Equity, inclusion, and high expectations
	Collaborative leadership and teamwork
<b>Early Years Learning Framework Practices</b>	

## 8. Related Documents

<b>Doc #</b>	<b>Attachments</b>
NQS7.45 A1	Values and Behaviours Chart

<b>Doc #</b>	<b>Intersections with other key documents</b>
NQS2.19	Work Health and Safety Policy
NQS7.60 A1	Confidentiality Statement
NQS4.36	Tobacco Drug and Alcohol Policy
NQS4.40	Code of Dress Policy
NQS6.42	Family Involvement Policy
NQS7.44	Underperformance, Misconduct and Disciplinary Policy
NQS7.64	Photography Policy

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NQS7.52	Child Safe Complaint Policy
NQS7.61	Acceptable Use of Electronic Media Policy

## 9. Document Control

Doc #	Doc Title	Version	Approved	Next Review
NQS7.45	Code of Conduct Policy	1	July 2018	July 2020
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