

Code of Conduct

Policy: At Lady Game Community Kindergarten the management committee and all staff working in the preschool are expected to be familiar with and abide by the standards of conduct contained in the *Code of Conduct Policy*.

This policy is founded in, respect for, and the valuing of children, families, educators and staff, and the extended service community.

Relevant Legislation: Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010; Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Practices:

To ensure all Kindergarten educators and staff are committed to upholding the highest standards in ethical conduct in accordance with the *ECA Code of Ethics (2006)* *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)* and service philosophy and policy.

Ethical conduct and decision making will occur with reference to legislation and statutory documents and through a process of critical reflection. Decision making processes will be clear and the service director/ coordinator will be accountable for decisions and able to demonstrate how those decisions are made.

Interactions with children

Educators and staff will provide education and care to children in a way that:

- Encourages the children to express themselves and their opinions
- Allows children to undertake experience that develops self-reliance and self esteem
- Maintains at all times the dignity and rights of each child
- Gives each child positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behavior
- Has regard to the family and cultural value, and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for.

Relationships in groups

All educators and staff will take reasonable steps to ensure that children attending the service will be provided with opportunities to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other, with staff members and volunteers.

In Relation to Families, educators and staff 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 assessment practices for children's learning and communicate this in ways that families understand.
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, educators and staff will:

1. Encourage 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 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 colleagues.
6. Collaborate with colleagues to generate a culture of continual reflection and renewal of high quality practices in early childhood.

In Relation to the Community, educators and staff will:

1. Learn about the communities within which they work and enact curriculum 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 early childhood programs for all children.
6. Work to promote community understanding of how children learn in order that appropriate systems of assessment and reporting are used to benefit children.

In Relation to students, educators 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 environment.
3. Model high-quality professional practices.
4. Know the requirements of the students' individual institutions and communicate openly with the representatives of that institution.
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 employer, educators and staff will:

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

In Relation to Ourselves as Professionals, educators and staff will:

1. Base their work on contemporary perspectives on research, theory, content knowledge, high quality early childhood practices and their understandings of the children and families with whom they work.
2. Regard themselves as learners who undertake 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 their profession.
6. Work within the limits of their professional role and avoid misrepresentation of their professional competence and qualifications.
7. Mentor other early childhood professionals and students.
8. Advocate in relation to issues that impact on their profession and on young children and their families.
9. Encourage qualities and practices of leadership within the early childhood profession.

In Relation to the Conduct of Research, educators will:

1. Recognise that research includes their 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, negotiating their involvement taking account of matters such as safety, fatigue, privacy and their interest.
3. Support research to strengthen and expand the knowledge base of early 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 themselves, colleagues, children, families and communities.
5. Ensure research in which they are 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.

Sources: *The Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics 2006*; United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989); Early Childhood Australia www.eca.com.au

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 155, 156, 168
Links to National Quality Standard: 4.2.1