

Educator and Management Policy

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QA4	4.2	Educators, co-ordinators and educators and respectful and ethical
	4.2.1	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships
	4.2.2	Educators, co-ordinators and educators work collaboratively and affirm, challenge, support and learn from each other to further develop their skills to improve practice and relationships
	4.2.3	Interactions convey mutual respect, equity and recognition of each other's strength and skills
QA7	7.2.2	The performance of educators, co-ordinators and educators is evaluated and individual development plans are in place to support performance improvement
	7.3.2	Administrative systems are established and maintained to ensure the effective operation of the service
	7.3.4	Processes are in place to ensure that all grievances and complaints are addressed, investigated fairly and documented in a timely manner

Aim

Our service aims to ensure that positive working relationships are formed between all educators and management. Educators and management will at all times conduct themselves in an ethical manner and strive to make all interactions positive and compliant with the service's philosophy.

Related Policies

Physical Environment (Workplace Safety, Learning and Administration) Policy

Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Staffing Arrangements Policy

Ethical Code of Conduct

Each educator, committee member, educator, volunteer and student at the service will uphold the following core ethical conduct principles to positively promote interactions within the service and the local community.

You must avoid conduct that:

- Is detrimental to the pursuit of the charter of the service.
- Is improper or unethical.
- Is an abuse of power.
- Causes or involves intimidation, harassment or verbal abuse.

- Causes or involves discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment in relation to employment.
- You must act lawfully, honestly and exercise diligence.
- You must treat others with respect at all times.

Fairness and Equity

You have an obligation to consider issues fairly and consistently. That being, you must take all relevant facts into consideration and you must not take irrelevant matters into consideration when making decisions.

Harassment and Discrimination

You must not harass or discriminate against others, or support those who do the same. Our service is an Equal Opportunity Employer and recognises the vast skills and knowledge of individuals from all backgrounds.

Development Decisions

- It is your duty to ensure that decisions are properly made and that parties involved are dealt with fairly.
- If there is any uncertainty about the ethical issues around an action or decision you are about to take, you should consider these five points:
 - Is the decision or conduct lawful?
 - Is the decision or conduct consistent with Kardinia Childcare and Kindergarten policy and objectives?
 - What will the outcome be for management, work colleagues, parents, children and any other parties?
 - Do these outcomes raise a conflict of interest?

You have the right to question any instruction or direction given to you which you consider to be unethical. If you are uncertain you can seek advice from your Nominated Supervisor or Nominated Supervisor from the Ombudsman.

Gifts or benefits

You must not:

- Accept an offer of money, regardless of the amount.
- Seek or accept a bribe.
- By virtue of your position acquire personal profit.
- You may accept gifts or benefits of a nominal or token value that do not create a sense of obligation on your part.

- If you receive a gift of more than token value in circumstances where it cannot reasonably be refused or returned, you should accept the gift and disclose this promptly to your supervisor.

Relationships

Obligations of educator

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the service.

Employees have an obligation to:

- Give their attention to business of the service while on duty.
- Ensure that their work is carried out efficiently, economically and effectively.
- Carry out lawful directions given by any person having authority.

Obligations during meetings

Staff must respect management, other educators, parents or visitors present during meetings.

Inappropriate interactions

The following interactions are inappropriate:

- Employees approaching other employees directly on individual educator matters that don't concern them.
- Using service information for personal purpose or benefit.
- Disclosing any information discussed during a confidential meeting.
- Using confidential information with the intention to improperly cause harm to another person.
- Converting any property of the service to your own use unless properly authorised.
- Using the Service's computer resources to search for, download, access or communicate any material of an offensive, obscene, pornographic, threatening or abusive nature.

Staff must:

- Protect confidential information.
- Only access information needed for service business.
- Not use confidential information for any non-official purpose.
- Only release confidential information if you have authority to do so.
- Only use confidential information for the purpose it is intended.

- Only release other information in accordance with established service policies and procedures and in compliance with relevant legislation.
- Be scrupulous in your use of service property and should not permit misuse by any other person or body.

Guiding Principles

- Be honest and open-minded.
- Fast, free and honest communication.
- Believe in the service, its philosophy and its vision.
- Consistency and reliability.
- Frequent and fair feedback.
- Integrity.
- Believe in talent, knowledge and experience of your team-members and employees.
- Commitment.

Reporting Breaches, Complaint Handling Procedure

Corrupt conduct, maladministration and waste of resources

You should report any instances of the above in accordance with service reporting policy.

Reporting breaches of the code of conduct

You should report suspected breaches of the code of conduct to the Nominated Supervisor, preferably in writing. Where you believe that the Nominated Supervisor has failed to comply with this code, you should report the matter to the Authorised Supervisor or next in charge, preferably in writing.

Complaint handling procedures- educator conduct (excluding the Nominated Supervisor)

Where appropriate, the Nominated Supervisor will make enquiries into breaches of the code of conduct regarding members of educator. Where the Nominated Supervisor has determined not to enquire into the matter, the Nominated Supervisor will give the complainant the reason/s in writing.

Enquiries made into all educator conduct which might give rise to disciplinary action must occur in accordance with the relevant local government award and make provision for procedural fairness.

Educator Interactions

- All educators will maintain positive, trustworthy and co-operative relationships with their co-workers.
- Show respect for all educators and it will be returned.
- Accept differences in educators, we are a diverse country.
- Show appreciation of each educator's background, any unusual skills and unique contributions to the service will promote the service in a positive manner.
- Always look for and support the strengths in educators and try not to focus on weakness.
- Resources and information will be shared amongst educators.
- Educators will offer each other support in meeting their professional development and needs.
- Co-workers will be given due recognition for professional achievements by all educators.
- Policies and working conditions will encourage competence, well being and self esteem for all educators.
- Where possible all educators will provide professional support, thoughtful input and resources for other educators as they may be required.
- Respect will be shown for all members of the team and consideration given to their feelings, values and opinions no matter how they may differ from your own.
- Information and observations regarding all of the service's children will be shared.
- Information relative to the families of the service's children which affects individual children will be shared.
- Educators will treat each other with empathy, respect and courtesy.
- Educators will endeavour to develop positive working relationships, which will provide a positive role model of social skills to the children.
- Regular educators meetings will provide a forum for group discussions on all matters relating to educators problems. Any educator unable to attend will be updated upon their return.
- The educators diary and room diary will be used to communicate messages where shifts make it difficult to convey information face-to-face. These means will ensure all educators are informed on important matters. It is the educator's responsibility to check the diaries.

- Educators will consider each other and work as a team in order to share the workload. Decisions concerning children and programs shall utilise the appropriate training, experiences and expertise of each other.
- Educators will be honest and open when resolving differences of opinion or personal conflicts amongst themselves. These will be resolved quickly and always away from the children.
- Educators will approach the educator directly involved about any grievances you may have with them. Don't complain or gossip to other educators or parents/guardians – see Grievance Policy.

Nominated Supervisor/Management Interactions and Responsibilities

In our service the Nominated Supervisor holds responsibility for:

- Determining who the responsible person present is when the Nominated Supervisor is not in attendance.
- Ensuring the service runs smoothly.
- Keeping all service families up to date with issues in the service.
- Selecting new educators and assisting all educators.
- Following policies and making sure all educators are following policies and procedures.
- Developing the service policies with the Committee of Management.
- Ensuring educator ratio and qualification requirements are met.
- Financially running the service and reporting any financial problems to the Committee of Management

To allow effective communication to take place between educators and the management, different methods of communication must be made available. These include:

- Verbal communication in person.
- Phone communication including SMS messaging if appropriate.
- Via a communication book.
- Educator meetings.
- Via other forms of written word such as letters, notices, emails etc.

- Educator appraisals and reviews.

Professional Development Requirements

We endeavour to employ caring, loyal and capable educators who bring a high skill level, appropriate qualifications and a wide and varying amount of experiences to help implement our service's philosophy.

Management and the Nominated Supervisor will ensure that all educators have:

- The correct qualifications to care for children.
- An understanding of their responsibilities under the law.
- The appropriate personality to care for children.

New educators will undergo an appraisal process, as will all educators. They will be introduced to this process during orientation. After three months at the service, the educator will undergo appraisal to ensure they are aware of their duties and responsibilities and from then on every 12 months.

The educator and the Nominated Supervisor will mutually agree on a date at least two weeks prior to the appraisal meeting.

The appraisal meeting will be linked to the educator's job description and will include the following:

- Appraisal for the employee's job description.
- Clarification of the educator member's job role and its expectations.
- Self assessment.
- Two way feedback.
- A discussion of future opportunities within the position.
- A discussion on an action plan for further training.
- Feedback about how the appraisal process could be improved.

After a two year period, the Nominated Supervisor and educators will re-evaluate the appraisal process and determine ways it can be improved or changed. The appraisal process will be used as a tool for identifying any need for further professional development and training. Also, the appraisal process is the best way to show evidence of continued poor work performance and allows formal written warning to occur if necessary.

As this process identifies the need for training, the Nominated Supervisor will ensure that funds are set aside for training and development in the annual budget. Training will be provided on an equal basis and can be in one of the following formats:

- Shared experiences by all educators.
- An outside presenter runs a workshop.
- Educators attend external workshops, seminars etc.
- Educators complete short TAFE, college or university courses.
- Educators learn through changes in their position at the service.
- Educator and management exchanges between services.
- Appropriate resources (books, movies, documentaries etc).

Educators need to respect the knowledge, experiences and skills of all educators. It is important not to criticise each other but rather work together so the services runs to the best of each educators' combined abilities.

Specific Course Requirements

- All educators must hold a current first aid certificate, which is renewed when it becomes necessary.
- Educators must attend Child Protection Training and Development.

Recognising the Diverse Skills of Educators

- The service will actively celebrate the diverse skills and achievements of our educators using the following methods
 - The Nominated Supervisor will use Educator Meetings as an opportunity to provide verbal feedback to all educators.
 - Regular verbal communication and appraisal will occur from the Nominated Supervisor and Room Leaders with all educators.
 - Positive reinforcement of the achievements of educators will be shared with families and the service community through notices and newsletters.
 - The service will inform the service community about the professional development, training and qualifications of educators throughout their time at the service.

Grievance Guidelines

- The service understands the grievances occur in all workplaces and handling them properly is important for maintaining a harmonious and productive work environment. The aim of these guidelines is to assist you to deal with grievances so that small issues or problems do not escalate and to ensure fairness for all persons involved.
- Educators who have a grievance should talk directly to the educators they have grievance with. Both should try to resolve the issue and develop solutions to ensure that

the problem does not happen again. Privacy, confidentiality, respect and open-mindedness must be following during any discussion that will not take place in front of children.

- Ethically, other educators or parents/caregivers should not be involved in an individual concern and it is not ethical for that concern to affect relationships. If unable to resolve the situation, the Nominated Supervisor should be called in to start a private and confidential conflict resolution for both sides. The Nominated Supervisor's role is to be non-bias and fair when dealing with a problem and to maintain confidentiality. Only necessary educators will be informed of the outcome of any conflict resolution. If applicable, educators can also contact their trade union official at this time.
- Educators are encouraged to communicate openly with the Nominated Supervisor. Problems can be discussed formally, informally or at an educator meeting if appropriate and if it does not put the privacy or confidentiality of an educator at risk. Team-work is encouraged amongst educators and having respect for other team members is crucial.
- Educators who belong to a trade union may contact the union at any time if they have major concerns.
- If any grievance is related to suspected or actual unlawful authority, the issue must be raised with the Nominated Supervisor immediately and privately.

Educator Meetings

The service will hold an educator meeting bi-monthly at a time convenient for all educators. This will take place after hours so all educators can attend and that adult/child care ratio needed during hours is not jeopardised.

Meetings will follow this structure:

- They will run for approximately two hours, but can run longer if more issues need to be discussed.
- The Nominated Supervisor (or other person) will chair the meeting and give a report.
- The format of the meeting will be made available in the educator diary and any educator who wishes to speak can add their name.
- In the meeting, educators are able to:
 - Raise concerns
 - Negotiate solutions for any grievances.
 - Receive, share and discuss new information.
- In regards to the decision making process the following will occur:
 - If a decision cannot be reached about an issue the Nominated Supervisor will step in and make an informed decision.

- If there is not sufficient information an educator will be nominated to do some research by the Nominated Supervisor.
- All decisions made will be made on a trial basis and their effectiveness will be discussed at the next meeting.
- Minutes are to be taken of all educator meetings.

Educator Orientation

Before a new educator commences their job, management will:

- Show the new educator the service and introduce them to other educators, children and families.
- Give the new educator a copy of the Educators Handbook.
- Highlight relevant policies including the philosophy.
- Highlight relevant legislation including OHS, Equal Opportunity, Confidentiality, Records, and Anti-Discrimination.
- Show new educators where the Policy and Procedures Manual is along with a copy of the Award/Industrial agreement and advise that they are available at all times.
- Induct and show the new educator techniques and relevant legislation in regards to Occupational Health and Safety.
- Provide new educator with necessary forms in regards to taxation, superannuation and payment of salary.
- Advise the new educator about the service's management structure.
- Provide the new educator with a copy of their job description and go through it with them.
- Clarify any questions the new educator has.
- Allow the educator to spend some time in their designated room so they can be introduced to other educators, children and families.
- All new staff will have a follow-up meeting with the Director and/or Educational Leader four to six weeks following the commencement of their employment. This meeting provides an opportunity for staff members to discuss their experience of transitioning to their position at Kardinia as well as their goals and any concerns. The meeting also provides an opportunity for the Director and/or Educational Leader to provide feedback on the staff member's performance in their first few weeks.

Educators Returning From Extended Leave

Our service will work with both the educator who has been on leave and educators at the service to ensure a smooth return to work. This will be carried out in the following way:

- The returning educator will if possible come in a few days beforehand to reacquaint themselves with the environment and take in any changes.
- The returning educator will be notified of any policy changes.
- Parents will be notified of the educator's return.
- If necessary, educators training and development will be offered.
- If the period is due to an illness the educator must produce medical certificates stating they are ok to return to work.
- If special conditions or considerations are needed these will be discussed with management and appropriate plans commenced.

Work Experience Students and Volunteers

The service endeavours to support work experience students and volunteers in their efforts to become Early Childhood Professionals. They will be encouraged to complete their training enabling them to gain the knowledge and skills to provide children with care, support and developmentally appropriate programs.

Work experience students and volunteers MUST follow all policies and procedures at the service.

Existing educators will:

- Maintain open communication with work experience students and volunteers along with their practicum teachers.
- Support all students, volunteers and individuals undertaking work experience needs during their placement.
- Pass relevant skills and knowledge onto each student, volunteers and work experience people.
- Ensure all educators are provided with relevant feedback about tasks that the student is required to complete in the service as part of their practicum.
- Be aware of the expectations perceived by the student, volunteers and work experience people.
- Have the time and capabilities to support each student, volunteers and work experience people in their placement.

Work experience students and volunteers will:

- Enjoy being with the children.
- Learn about the children through observation and practical experience.
- Develop skills and abilities needed to care for and educate children.
- Learn about working as part of a team in the early childhood profession.
- Learn strategies employed when working in a team environment.
- Learn skills already acquired by qualified educators in the service.
- Become familiar with families and children in the service.
- Keep educators aware of all written work required of the student, volunteers and work experience people.

Families will:

- Be informed of when work experience students and volunteers are present at the service and their role and the time frame they will be spending at the Service.

Method:

An educators will be appointed 'Student Supervisor' and this person will be required to:

- Arrange time for the student to visit the service for a pre placement visit, during this visit the following will be arranged.
- Give the student times/hours and dates of the placement.
- Give the student a student package.
- Take the student on a tour of the service.
- Introduce the student to educators.
- Inform educators and Directors of student's, volunteers and work experience people's visit.
- On the students, volunteers and work experience person's first day, they will be introduced to the Room Leader. During this meeting the student will inform the educators of all written work they are required to do and provide them with the time sheets and evaluation forms.

Work experience students and volunteers will:

- Inform the Student Supervisor, in writing of what will be expected of them by their training body, University or School, or any other training organisation.
- Be required to do different shifts during their time, so as to gain knowledge of each different aspect of the service's day.
- Bring in a photo and a short statement addressing the following:
 - Name
 - Time they will be at the Service
 - What it is they are studying
- Discuss any problems they may be experiencing with the Student Supervisor.

The Room Leader will:

- Communicate with the Student, volunteers and work experience people and discuss progress of their written work and performance.
- Discuss any issues raised by the student with the Student Supervisor.

Fail Procedure

If educators feel that the student is at risk of failing their practicum, the following steps are to be taken:

- Room Leader is to alert the Student Supervisor of any concerns with the student.
- Both the Student Supervisor and the Room Leader are to discuss these issues with the student.
- The Student Supervisor is to arrange with the student's teacher/supervisor to visit the service and discuss those issues that have arisen.
- The education institution of the student will ultimately determine the outcome of the prac.

Termination of practicum

Termination of student's placement will occur if:

- The student harms a child in the care of this childcare service.
- The student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- The student has disregard for the Service and fails to notify if not able to attend the service.
- The student is observed using repeated inappropriate behaviour at the service.
- The student does not comply with all policies and procedures addressed in the student package.

- The student does not provide the photo with an introduction on commencement.

Sources

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

National Quality Standard

Early Years Learning Framework

Bryant, L. (2009). *Managing a Child Care Service: A Hands-On Guide for Service Providers*. Sydney, Community Child Care Co-Operative.

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually.

The review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

Last reviewed: November 2013

Date for next review: November 2014