

# Family Code of Conduct Policy

## Policy Details

<b>Classification</b>	Mandatory
<b>Quality area/s</b>	6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
<b>Policy owner</b>	President <a href="mailto:president@raleighst.org">president@raleighst.org</a>
<b>Date of approval/most recent review</b>	July 2023
<b>Date of next review</b>	July 2026



### PURPOSE

This policy provides a clear set of guidelines and procedures for Raleigh St Community Children's Centre (Raleigh St) to:

- establish the expected standards of behaviour for parents/guardians, nominees and visitors accompanying families to Raleigh St
- create and maintain a child safe environment that reflects the philosophy, beliefs, objectives, and values of Raleigh St
- articulate desirable and appropriate behaviour
- promote interactions at the service and online which are respectful, honest, courteous, sensitive, tactful, and considerate.



### POLICY STATEMENT

#### VALUES

Raleigh St:

- respects the rights of the child and values diversity
- values the contribution of Aboriginal children, children from a culturally and linguistically diverse background and children with a disability
- has zero tolerance of discrimination
- maintains a duty of care (*refer to Definitions*) towards all children at the service
- is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all staff and the members of our service's community
- is committed to supporting staff to act cohesively and ethically as a team and provide an environment that is conducive to children's learning and development
- provides a safe and secure environment for all at the service
- provides an open, welcoming environment in which everyone's contribution is valued and respected
- is committed to communicating openly and honestly
- is committed to continually learning how to be inclusive and respectful of cultural needs
- encourages relationships that are based on the principles of mutual respect, equity and fairness.

- encourages both adults and children to identify and raise concerns through the appropriate channels to maintain a culture of reporting and pro-actively responding to concerns
- encourages volunteers, students, parents/guardians and visitors to support and participate in the program and activities of the service.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to the Committee of Management (CoM), persons with management or control, Director, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Raleigh St, including during offsite excursions and activities.

RESPONSIBILITIES	CoM (Approved Provider)	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teachers, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Providing a safe environment for everyone attending the programs and activities of Raleigh St	R	R	✓	✓	
Ensuring racism within the service is identified, confronted and not tolerated.	R	✓	✓	✓	✓
Developing, updating and reviewing Families Code of Conduct for Raleigh St in collaboration with all stakeholders within the service ( <i>refer to Attachments 1 and 3</i> )	R	✓	✓	✓	
Ensuring that parents/guardians are provided with a copy of this policy on enrolment at the service and that the current codes of conduct are publicly displayed and promoted to everyone including contractors and visitors	R	✓			
Developing a culture of accountability within the service for complying with the code of conduct and responding when behavioural expectations are not adhered to	R	✓	✓	✓	✓
Providing an environment that encourages positive interactions, supports constructive feedback and holds one another to the codes of conduct	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for ( <i>Regulation 157</i> ), except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of care of the approved provider, nominated supervisor or early childhood teachers and educators under the <i>National Law: Section 167 &amp; 171</i>	R	R			

Respecting individual abilities, needs, cultural practices and beliefs in all interactions, both verbal and non-verbal. Paying particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres strait Islander children, children with disability and children from CALD backgrounds	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Engaging in open, two-way communication with families and communities about the service's child safety approach and providing relevant and accessible information	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Not consuming or being under the influence of alcohol or be affected by drugs when on Raleigh St premises or in attendance at excursions ( <i>refer to Tobacco, Alcohol and other Drugs Policy</i> )	R	R	R	✓	R
Taking appropriate action, or reviewing the terms of a family's enrolment in the event of misconduct or a serious breach of the <i>Families Code of Conduct Policy</i>	R				
Contacting police in an emergency situation where it is believed that there is an immediate risk, such as when violence has been threatened or perpetrated or where sexual abuse or grooming is suspected as outlined in the <i>Child Safe Environment Policy</i> .	R	R	R	✓	R
Reading the <i>Families Code of Conduct Policy</i> ( <i>refer to Attachment 1</i> ) and signing the Families Code of Conduct Acknowledgement ( <i>refer to Attachment 2</i> ) and that these are filed with children's records upon enrolment in the service		✓		✓	
Adhering to the relevant Code of Conduct at all times	R	R	R	R	R
Informing the CoM in the event of a serious incident ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ), of a notifiable complaint ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) or of a breach of the <i>Families Code of Conduct Policy</i>		R	✓		
Providing an environment that encourages positive interactions, supports constructive feedback and holds one another to the codes of conduct	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Ensuring that parents/guardians, students and volunteers sign the Families Code of Conduct Acknowledgement ( <i>refer to Attachment 4</i> )	✓	✓		✓	✓
Understanding and accepting that serious breaches of this code will be deemed misconduct and may lead to disciplinary or legal action, or a review of their employment or enrolment at Raleigh St	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reporting and acting on any concerns or observed breaches of this <i>Families Code of Conduct Policy</i>		R	R	R	R

## BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION



### BACKGROUND

Codes of conduct establish standards of behaviour to be followed and define how individuals are expected to behave towards each other, towards the children in their care, and towards other organisations and individuals in the community.

The approved provider, nominated supervisor, early childhood teachers, educators and all other staff have a duty of care to the children attending the service and must ensure 'that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children being educated and cared for by the service from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury' (*National Law: Section 167*).

The *National Quality Standard* requires that all staff be respectful and ethical and that 'professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships' (*National Quality Standard: 4.2 and 4.2.2*). Employers also have a legal responsibility to provide, as far as is practicable, a safe workplace that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment.

*Child Safe Standards* requires services to ensure the Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities, and breaches to the Code of Conduct are acted upon and reported.

A Code of Conduct should be informed by the service's philosophy, beliefs and values, and based on ethical principles of mutual respect, equity and fairness. Consideration should be given to the Victorian Teaching Profession *Code of Conduct and the Code of Ethics* and to the Early Childhood Australia's *Code of Ethics* in developing the code of conduct.

The approved provider must ensure that the nominated supervisor, early childhood teachers, educators, other staff, contractors, volunteers, students on placement, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Raleigh St adhere to the expectations outlined in the Code of Conduct when communicating to and interacting with:

- children at the service and their parents and family members
- each other
- others in the community.

### LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Child Safe Standards (Vic)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics (2016)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 166, 167, 173, 174
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 83, 155, 156, 157, 168, 170, 171, 174, 175, 176
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- Fair Work Regulations 2009 (Cth)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)

- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Victorian Institute of Teaching the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct
- Victorian Institute of Teaching the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Ethics

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: [www.legislation.vic.gov.au](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au)
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: [www.legislation.gov.au](http://www.legislation.gov.au)

## DEFINITIONS



The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g. Approved provider, Nominated supervisor, Notifiable Complaints, Serious Incidents, Duty of Care, etc. refer to the Definitions file of the PolicyWorks catalogue.

**Behaviour:** the way in which one acts or conducts oneself, especially towards others.

**Bullying:** Repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Bullying occurs when one or more people deliberately and repeatedly upset or hurt another person, damage their property, reputation or social acceptance.

**Ethical conduct:** Behaviour which reflects values or a code of conduct.

**Harassment:** When someone is demeaning, derogatory or intimidating towards another person. Harassment includes:

- racial taunts
- taunts about sexual orientation or gender identity
- sexual harassment: unwelcome physical, verbal or written behaviour of a sexual nature
- repeated insulting remarks.

**Investigator:** A person/staff member assigned or organisation engaged with the responsibility of investigating suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct by the CoM

**Physical attack:** the direct or indirect application of force by a person to the body of, or to clothing or equipment worn by another person, where that application creates a risk to health and safety.

**Respect:** Demonstrating regard for the rights of individuals, for different values and points of views.

**Sexual harassment:** includes offensive gestures, leering, staring or suggestive comments about a person's physical appearance, inappropriate physical contact, unwanted invitations of a sexual manner, sexually orientated jokes, sending of obscene letters, notes, telephone texts or emails.

**Support:** Work in a co-operative and positive manner.

**Threat:** a statement or behaviour that causes a person to believe they are in danger of being physically attacked.

**Unreasonable behaviour:** includes actions of individuals or a group and may involve using a system of work as a means of victimising, humiliating, undermining, or threatening.

**Verbal harassment:** includes name-calling, offensive language, putting people down.



## SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

### SOURCES

- Early Childhood Australia, *Code of Ethics*: [www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/)
- United Nations, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*: [www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/](http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/)
- United Nations, *Convention on The Rights of the Child*: [www.unicef.org/crc/](http://www.unicef.org/crc/)
- Victoria Legal Aid: [www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au)
- Victorian Institute of Teaching – *The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics*: [www.vit.vic.edu.au](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au)
- Commission for Children and Young People: [www.ccyp.vic.gov.au](http://www.ccyp.vic.gov.au)

### RELATED POLICIES

- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
  - Compliments and Complaints
  - Delivery and Collection of Children
  - Inclusion and Equity
  - Information Communication Technology
  - Interactions with Children
  - Occupational Health and Safety
  - Privacy and Confidentiality
  - Relaxation and Sleep
  - Staffing
  - Tobacco, Alcohol and other Drugs
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### EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
  - monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
  - assess whether a satisfactory resolution has been achieved in relation to issues arising from this policy
  - keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
  - revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
  - notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (*Regulation 172 (2)*).
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### ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Code of Conduct for parents/guardians
- Attachment 2: Code of Conduct Acknowledgement for parents/guardians

### AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Raleigh St Community Children's Centre on 18/07/2023



REVIEW DATE: July 2026

### POLICY REVIEW HISTORY

Date	Modification
July 2023	Created new, separate Code of Conduct for Families – - Tailored language to apply to families - Removed references that only applied to staff and CoM and was not relevant to families - Added in privacy considerations when using social media
July 2017	Code of Conduct Policy created and endorsed by CoM

## ATTACHMENT 1. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

I commit to contributing to creating an environment at Raleigh St that:

- respects the rights of the child and values diversity
- acknowledges the vulnerability of Aboriginal children, children from a culturally and linguistically diverse background and children with a disability and has zero tolerance of discrimination
- maintains a duty of care (*refer to Definitions*) towards all children at the service
- is committed to the safety and wellbeing of each child at the service
- is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all staff at the service
- provides a safe and secure environment for all at the service
- provides an open, welcoming environment in which everyone's contribution is valued and respected
- is committed to communicating openly and honestly
- is committed to continually learning how to be inclusive and respectful of cultural needs
- encourages parents/guardians, volunteers, students and community members to support and participate in the program and activities of the service.

### Relationships with children

In my relationships with children, I commit to:

- being a positive role model at all times
- encouraging children to express themselves and their opinions
- allowing children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem
- maintaining a safe environment for children
- speaking to children in an encouraging and positive manner
- giving each child positive guidance and encouraging appropriate behaviour
- regarding all children equally, and with respect and dignity
- having regard to each child's cultural values
- respecting individual difference including age, physical and intellectual development, and catering for the abilities of each child at the service.

### Relationships with the CoM, Director, staff and others

In my relationships with the CoM, Director, staff, other parents/guardians, volunteers and visitors I commit to:

- reading and abiding by the *Families Code of Conduct policy*
- developing relationships based on mutual respect
- working in partnership in a courteous, respectful and encouraging manner
- valuing the input of others
- sharing our expertise and knowledge in a considered manner
- respecting the rights of others as individuals
- giving encouraging and constructive feedback, and respecting the value of different professional approaches
- respecting the privacy of children and their families and only disclosing information to people who have a need to know as required under the *Privacy and Confidentiality policy* - with particular regard to social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram etc.
- following the directions of staff at all times
- treating the early childhood environment with respect
- raising any concerns, including concerns about safety, as soon as possible with staff to ensure that they can be resolved efficiently
- raising any complaints or grievances in accordance with the *Compliments and Complaints Policy*.



## ATTACHMENT 2. CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS,

I/We hereby acknowledge that on \_\_\_\_\_, I/we received a copy of the *Families Code of Conduct policy* for Raleigh St Community Children's Centre.

I/We have read this policy and understand its contents. I commit to abiding by the *Families Code of Conduct* and fulfilling my responsibilities as outlined in this policy whilst my child is attending Raleigh St.

I/We agree to abide by the values, principles and practices set out within.

I/We understand that a breach of the *Families Code of Conduct* may lead to limitations being placed on my child's attendance at the service.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Thank you for your contribution to making Raleigh St an open, Child Safe, welcoming and friendly environment.