

INTRODUCTION

The quality of care for children, good relationships among staff, the confidence of parents and the reputation of Bourke and District Children's Services all depend on the professional attitude and behaviour of the Service Staff and Management. This policy aims to provide clear guidance to staff about the standards BDCS requires as a condition of employment.

OVERALL GOALS – What are we going to do?

BDCS staff and volunteers will uphold the highest standards in ethical conduct in accordance with the *ECA Code of Ethics* (2010) and *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989) as well as our service Code of Conduct (attached).

OVERALL STRATEGIES – How will it be done?

- Educators and staff will be familiar with the legislation and statutory documents that apply to their role with children, families and other staff in the Centres.
- Educators and staff will be familiar with the *ECA Code of Ethics*, *BDCS Code of Conduct* and philosophy of each Centre. This will guide conduct and decision-making within each Centre.
- 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 Executive Officer & Directors will be accountable for decisions and able to demonstrate how those decisions are made.
- The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor of each Service will ensure all Educators and staff are made aware of their obligations through personal discussions, staff meeting activities and opportunities to critically reflect upon ethical practice.
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The service community will work together in the best interests of the children and families and will act in a manner that will enhance the standing of the early childhood sector. This involves a full understanding of role responsibilities and obligations combined with best practice and collaborative decision making.

Evaluation

Educators, staff and volunteers in the service will conduct themselves in an ethical manner through clear processes in accordance with legislative and statutory guidelines.

Statutory Legislation & Considerations

Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

- Links to National Quality Standard: 4.2.1
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 168

Policy Revision History

<i>Date</i>	<i>Authorised By</i>	<i>Description of Amendments</i>	<i>Sections affected</i>
Jan 2021	P. Ritchie – GM		

- Review Date: Jan 2022

BDCS CODE OF CONDUCT

As Bourke and District Children's Services provides child care services your conduct will be held to a higher level of accountability than general community expectations;

1. It is particularly important that staff know and follow the Child Protection Policy.
2. Staff should perform their duties to the best of their ability. If staff have trouble performing these duties to the required standard, they should ask for help from the Director.
3. Staff are expected to comply with their legal and industrial award obligations.
4. It is vital that the Service be a healthy and safe environment for children, staff, parents and visitors. Staff must act in ways which do not endanger the health or safety of anyone and should encourage healthy and safe behaviour in the children by setting a good example. Staff are to promote healthy eating when eating with or in around children. All food and drink consumed in the classroom or in front of children must be healthful. No takeaway or pre-packaged food or fizzy or flavoured drinks are to be consumed in the classrooms or in front of children. Staff are not to take hot drinks back into areas where children are being cared for.
5. Good quality childcare relies on effective teamwork and good relationships among staff. Staff are expected to assist in maintaining good working relationships by treating each other with courtesy, honesty and respect. Conflicts between staff should be aired in private, and not in front of children, parents or other staff. Staff should seek help from the Director, or use the grievance procedure, if they are unable to resolve their conflict between themselves. Staff should use the "Staffing Issue Form" for referring staffing matters to their supervisor.
6. Similarly, staff should treat parents and children with courtesy, honesty and respect. Children and parents arriving or departing from the Service should be welcomed or farewelled by name. Staff should treat children equally and as individuals regardless of gender, race, family background, culture, religion or beliefs. Staff will be sensitive to the rights and feelings of the children.
7. Staff are expected to maintain and improve their skills through participating in the staff training and development opportunities provided by the Service.
8. Staff must observe confidentiality in all circumstances involving children, parents, staff and visitors. Staff must not discuss any child or parent with any another parent or visitor, within or outside the Service. In any situation where a staff member is not sure if information is confidential or not, they should check with the Director.
9. Staff are expected to attend work and return from breaks on time, this includes all lunch, morning & afternoon tea breaks. Staff will sign and time the Staff Sign In/Out sheets every time they enter and leave the service. Timesheets must be filled in correctly each day.
10. Staff should dress appropriately for their duties, with attention to safety. No thongs and no singlets are to be worn. Hats should be worn when outdoors.
11. Staff should use language which will not offend other staff, children or parents. Staff should never swear in the presence of children, parents or other staff. Staff should use suitable conversation when working with children and should refrain from gossiping about other matters when working with or around

children. Staff should never raise their voice excessively (eg shout) in anger or frustration at the children or other staff members.

12. Staff must attend work free from the influence of alcohol or other non-prescription drugs. Staff should not smoke at or near the front gate of the service, where parents with children may be arriving or departing. Staff should tell the Director if they are taking any prescription medication which may affect their capacity for work (e.g. causing drowsiness).
13. Staff are expected to come to work when they are fit enough to do so without risking injury or infection to themselves or the staff or children at the Service. When staff are unwell or injured they should not attend work and if entitled may apply for sick leave or workers' compensation.
14. Staff members should help each other to maintain high quality care and high standards of professionalism.
15. Staff will not use the internet for any personal use as per the internet agreement that was signed.
16. Mobile phones will be kept in the staff rooms at all times and will be used in your staff break time. Under no condition will a mobile phone be used whilst you have children in your care. In the case of an emergency the Director requires you to put in writing that you need your phone in the room, an explanation as to why and a time period for the phone to be with you.
17. Please refer to the "Early Childhood Code of Ethics" at the end of "Staff Handbook" and please note the following:

The obligations of the Code apply at all times. This includes times when a staff member is not at a workplace or is not performing work duties. It includes times when a staff member is on leave. While the Code focuses primarily on how all staff perform their work duties, it is important to note that the "Early Childhood Code of Ethics" applies also to conduct in a private capacity that reflects adversely on the reputation of the Childcare, Preschool and Mobile services, and all employees in this profession.
18. Staff members will, faithfully and diligently always serve Bourke and District Children's Services Inc (BDCS) exercising all due care and act in BDCS best interest's.
19. Refrain from acting, being seen to act, in conflict with BDCS best interests.
20. At all times display a professional manner, upholding and maintaining BDCS, reputation, goodwill and it's client relationships.
21. At all times comply with BDCS policies and procedure, as established from time to time and other direction requirements of BDCS including those relating to expected behaviour in the workplace.
22. Advice BCS as soon as practical of anything or reason that may impede your ability to fulfil your duties and obligations including health or other issues.

A breach of your obligations under Bourke and District Children's Services policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action, including the immediate termination of your employment.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I BREACH THE CODE?

As Early Childhood professionals, we hold special positions of trust, especially regarding children in our community, and must always be accountable for our actions. If the Management considers that the Code has been breached, disciplinary action will be taken.