

# DENZIL DON KINDERGARTEN CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

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Mandatory – Quality Area 4

## REVISION REGISTER

| DATE OF ISSUE     | AMENDMENT DETAILS  |
|-------------------|--|
| 15 September 2015 | Version 1.1: Annual update including minor grammatical changes   |
| 11 September 2018 | Scheduled update, reconciled against ELAA v3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More specific instruction around expected standards of behaviour reflective of Child Safe standards</li></ul> |
|                   |  |

## PURPOSE

This policy provides guidelines to enable Denzil Don Kindergarten to:

- establish the expected standards of behaviour for the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Persons in Day to Day Charge, staff, contractors, volunteers, students on placement, parents/guardians and visitors
- create and maintain a child safe environment that reflects the philosophy, beliefs, objectives and values of Denzil Don Kindergarten
- promote desirable and appropriate behaviour
- promote interactions at the service which are respectful, honest, courteous, sensitive, tactful and considerate.

## POLICY STATEMENT

### 1. VALUES

Denzil Don Kindergarten:

- 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
- encouraging parents/guardians, volunteers, students and community members to support and participate in the program and activities of the service.

### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Persons in Day to day Charge, staff, contractors, volunteers, students on placement, parents/guardians and all visitors attending the programs and activities of Denzil Don Kindergarten.

### 3. 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 and 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 staff are respectful and ethical and that “professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships” (*National Quality Standard: 4.2 and 4.2.1*).

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 Standard 3 requires services to develop and review codes of conduct that establish clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children including:

- how to respond to risks adults may pose to children or that children may pose to each other
- how to ensure the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and culturally and linguistically diverse children
- how to be inclusive of all children, including children with a disability.

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 Early Childhood Australia’s *Code of Ethics* in developing the Code of Conduct.

The Approved Provider must ensure that the Nominated Supervisor, staff, contractors, volunteers, students on placement, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Denzil Don Kindergarten 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*
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 166, 167, 174
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2014: Regulations 155, 156, 157, 175
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- Fair Work Regulations 2009 (Cth)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements
  - Standard 4.2: Educators, coordinators and staff members are respectful and ethical
    - Element 4.2.1: Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships
- 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: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/>

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. National Law, National Regulations, Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

**Assault:** An incident where a person causes injury, pain, discomfort or damage to another person. It also includes insult or deprivation of liberty. Assault can be physical or verbal.

**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.

**Duty of care:** A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.

**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 Approved Provider.

**Notifiable complaint:** A complaint that alleges a breach of the National Act or National Regulation, or alleges that the health, safety or wellbeing of a child at the service may have been compromised. Any complaint of this nature must be reported by the Approved Provider to the secretary of Department of Education and Training (DET) within 24 hours of the complaint being made (National Law: Section 174(2)(b), National Regulations: Regulation 176(2)(b)). If the Approved Provider is unsure whether the matter is a notifiable complaint, it is good practice to contact DET for confirmation. Written reports to DET must include:

- details of the event or incident
- the name of the person who initially made the complaint
- if appropriate, the name of the child concerned and the condition of the child, including a medical or incident report (where relevant)
- contact details of a nominated member of the Complaints and Grievances Subcommittee/investigator
- any other relevant information.

Written notification of complaints must be submitted using the appropriate forms, which can be found on the ACECQA website: [www.acecqa.gov.au/notifications](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/notifications)

**Respect:** Demonstrating regard for the rights of individuals; for different values and for different points of views. Refrain from actions and behaviour that constitute harassment, bullying or discrimination.

**Serious incident:** A serious incident is defined as (regulation 12):

- the death of a child -
  - while being cared for by an education and care service; or

- following an incident while being educated and cared for by an education and care service
- any incident involving serious injury or trauma to, or illness of, a child while being educated and cared for by an education and care service -
  - which a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner (examples include broken limbs or anaphylaxis reaction) attention of a registered medical practitioner; or
  - for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended a hospital.
- any incident where the attendance by emergency services at the education and care service premises was sought, or ought reasonably to have been sought
- any circumstances where a child being educated and cared for by an education and care service appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for;
  - appears to have been taken or removed from the education and care services premises in a manner that contravenes National Regulations;
  - is mistakenly locked in or locked out of the education and care service premises or any part of the premises.

The Regulatory Authority must be notified of a serious incident (section 174(2)(a)) **in writing in the case of:**

- the death of a child, as soon as practicable but within 24 hours of the death, or the time that the person becomes aware of the death
- any other serious incident, within 24 hours of the incident or the time that the person becomes aware of the incident

Written notification of serious incidents must be submitted via the ACECQA portal using the appropriate forms at <http://acecqa.gov.au/notifications>.

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

## SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

### Sources

- Early Childhood Australia, *Code of Ethics*: [www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au)
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: [www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/](http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/)
- Victoria Legal Aid: [www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au)
- United Nations, *Convention on The Rights of the Child*: [www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm)
- *Victorian 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: <http://www.vit.vic.edu.au>

### Service policies

- *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- *Complaints and Grievances Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
- *Staffing Policy*

## RESPONSIBILITIES

**The Approved Provider is responsible for:**

- providing a safe environment for staff, contractors, volunteers, students on placement, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Denzil Don Kindergarten
- providing guidance through leadership and by being a positive role model

- developing and updating/reviewing codes of conduct for Denzil Don Kindergarten in collaboration with the Nominated Supervisor, staff, parents/guardians, children and others involved with the service (refer to Attachments 1 and 3)
- ensuring that all staff, volunteers, students, parents/guardians are provided with/given access to a copy of this policy on employment, engagement or at the service and that the current codes of conduct are publicly displayed and promoted to everyone including contractors and visitors
- ensuring that all staff complete and sign the *Code of Conduct Acknowledgement* (refer to Attachment 2) and that these are filed with individual staff records
- ensuring that the codes of conduct are regularly discussed at staff meetings to reinforce expectations
- developing a culture of accountability within the service for complying with the code(s) of conduct and being prepared to respond when behavioural expectations are not adhered to
- ensuring that all children being educated and cared for at Denzil Don Kindergarten are protected from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury (National Law: Section 167) and that the children know who to speak to about any concerns and that their concerns are followed-up
- working with the Nominated Supervisor, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians and others at the service to provide an environment that encourages positive interactions and 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, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or educators under the Law (National Regulations: Regulation 157)
- ensuring that parents/guardians, volunteers, contractors, students, visitors or other adults participating in the program, are not placed in a situation where they are left alone with a child
- respecting individual abilities, needs, cultural practices and beliefs in all interactions, both verbal and non-verbal.
- notifying DET in writing within 24 hours of a serious incident (refer to *Definitions*) or of a notifiable complaint (refer to *Definitions*) at the service (National Law: Sections 174(2)(b) and 174(4), National Regulations: Regulations 175(2)(c) and 176(2)(b)) via the NQAITS
- referring notifiable complaints (refer to *Definitions*), grievances (refer to *Definitions*) or complaints that are unable to be resolved appropriately and in a timely manner to the Complaints and Grievances Subcommittee/investigator (refer to *Complaints and Grievances Policy*)
- activating the *Complaints and Grievances Policy* on notification of a breach of the *Code of Conduct Policy*
- taking appropriate disciplinary or legal action, or reviewing the terms of engagement in the event of misconduct or a serious breach of the *Code of Conduct Policy*
- 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 *Child Safe Environment (formerly Child Protection) Policy*.

**The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:**

- ensuring that the children educated and cared for at Denzil Don Kindergarten are protected from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury (National Law: Section 167)
- providing guidance through their leadership and by being a positive role model
- assisting the Approved Provider to develop codes of conduct for staff and parents/guardians, students, contractors, volunteers and visitors (refer to Attachment 1 and 3)
- working with the Approved Provider, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians and others at the service to provide an environment that encourages positive interactions and supports constructive feedback
- completing and signing the *Code of Conduct Acknowledgement* for staff (refer to Attachment 2)
- adhering to the Code of Conduct for staff at all times (refer to Attachment 1)
- informing the Approved Provider in the event of a serious incident (refer to *Definitions*), of a notifiable complaint (refer to *Definitions*) or of a breach of the *Code of Conduct Policy*

- 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 *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- ensuring that all parents/guardians, volunteers, students sign the code of conduct (refer to Attachment 4)
- 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, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or where the parent is prohibited by a court order from having contact with a child (National Regulations: Regulation 157)
- developing practices and procedures to ensure that parents/guardians, students, contractors, volunteers, visitors or other adults at the service are not placed in a situation where they are left alone with a child
- respecting individual abilities, needs, cultural practices and beliefs in all interactions, both verbal and non-verbal
- referring to the DDK *Child Protection Policy* where there are concerns for a child's safety, health and/or wellbeing
- 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 engagement.

**All staff are responsible for:**

- assisting the Approved Provider to develop a code of conduct for staff (refer to Attachment 1)
- completing and signing the *Code of Conduct Acknowledgement* (refer to Attachment 2)
- adhering to the code of conduct for staff (refer to Attachment 1) at all times
- providing guidance to parents/guardians and volunteers through positive role modelling and, when appropriate, clear and respectful directions
- working with the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, their colleagues, students, volunteers, parents/guardians and others at the service to provide an environment that encourages positive interactions and supports constructive feedback and holds one another to the codes of conduct
- ensuring that parents/guardians, students, contractors, volunteers, visitors or other adults at the service, are not placed in a situation where they are left alone with a child
- informing the Approved Provider in the event of a serious incident (refer to *Definitions*), of a notifiable complaint (refer to *Definitions*) or of a breach of the *Code of Conduct Policy*
- 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 *Child Safe Environment (formerly Child Protection) Policy*.
- respecting individual abilities, needs, cultural practices and beliefs in all interactions, both verbal and non-verbal
- referring to the *Child Safe Environment Policy* where there are concerns for a child's safety, health and/or wellbeing
- 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 engagement.

**Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- reading the *Code of Conduct Policy*
- completing and signing the Code of Conduct for parents/guardians (refer to Attachments 3 and 4)
- abiding by the Code of Conduct for parents/guardians
- complying with all policies of the service.

**Volunteers, students, contractors and visitors while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.**

**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
- notify parents/guardians as soon as practicable or at least 14 days before implementing any changes to this policy or its procedures.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1: Code of Conduct for Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and all staff
- Attachment 2: Code of Conduct Acknowledgement for staff
- Attachment 3: Code of Conduct for parents/guardians, students, contractors and volunteers
- Attachment 4: Code of Conduct Acknowledgement for parents/guardians, students, contractors and volunteers

## **AUTHORISATION**

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Denzil Don Kindergarten on 11 September 2018.

**REVIEW DATE:** 11 SEPTEMBER 2020

## **ATTACHMENT 1**

### **Code of Conduct for the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and all staff**

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and all staff at Denzil Don Kindergarten are responsible for promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and their families by:

- welcoming all children and their families and being inclusive
- treating everyone with respect, including listening to and valuing their ideas and opinions
- contributing to a culture of child safety
- adhering to the *Child Safe Environment (formerly Child Protection) Policy* and all other policies
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- 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*
- reporting and acting on any breaches of this Code of Conduct, complaints or concerns.

#### **Professional responsibilities**

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and all staff demonstrate our commitment to our professional responsibilities by:

- undertaking duties in a competent, timely and responsible way
- ensuring our knowledge and expertise is up to date and relevant to our roles
- being aware of the role of other professionals and agencies and working collaboratively and within the limits of our professional expertise
- understanding and complying with legal obligations in relation to:
  - discrimination, harassment and vilification
  - negligence
  - grooming
  - disclosure of child sexual abuse
  - protection of a child from child sexual abuse
  - mandatory reporting
  - privacy and confidentiality
  - occupational health and safety, including emergency evaluation procedures
  - raising any complaints or grievances in accordance with the Complaints and Grievances Policy
  - maintaining teacher registration and Working with Children checks as applicable.
- raising any complaints or grievances in accordance with the *Complaints and Grievances Policy*.

#### **Relationships with children**

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and all staff at Denzil Don Kindergarten demonstrate our commitment to high-quality education and care for children by:

- respecting the rights of all children
- 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
- being a positive role model at all times
- speaking to children in an encouraging and positive manner
- giving each child positive guidance and encouraging appropriate behaviour
- providing opportunities for children to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other, and with other staff members and volunteers at the service
- regarding all children equally, and with respect and dignity
- having regard to their cultural values and supporting them to express their culture

- respecting individual difference including age, physical and intellectual development, and catering for the abilities of each child at the service
- encouraging and assisting children to undertake activities of a personal nature for themselves e.g. toileting and changing clothes
- contributing to a service environment that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment
- listening actively to children and offering empathy and support
- informing children if physical contact is required for any purpose, and asking them if they are comfortable with this interaction and complying with the *Interactions with Children Policy*
- working with children in an open and transparent way by informing other staff about the work being done with children

### **Relationships with parents/guardians and families**

In our relationships with parents/guardians and families, the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and all staff demonstrate our commitment to collaboration by:

- working collaboratively with parents/guardians and families
- considering the perspective of parents/guardians and families when making decisions that impact on the education and care of their child
- communicating with parents/guardians and families in a timely and sensitive manner
- responding to concerns expressed by parents/guardians and families in a timely and appropriate manner
- being respectful of, and courteous towards, parents/guardians and families at all times
- respecting the cultural context of each child and their family
- respecting the privacy of information provided by parents/guardians and families, and keeping this information confidential, as required under the *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*.

### **Relationships with employer and between colleagues at the service**

In relationships with the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and between colleagues, staff demonstrate collegiality by:

- encouraging others to act in accordance with this Code of Conduct and taking action when they observe behaviours which are outside of the Code of Conduct
- developing relationships based on mutual respect, equity and fairness
- working in partnership in a courteous, respectful and encouraging manner
- valuing the input of others
- sharing expertise and knowledge in appropriate forums, and in a considered manner
- respecting the rights of others as individuals
- giving encouraging and constructive feedback, and respecting the value of different professional approaches
- being prepared to have difficult conversations and use constructive processes to address differences of opinion.



## ATTACHMENT 3

### Code of conduct for parents/guardians, students, volunteers, contractors and visitors

I commit to contributing to creating an environment at Denzil Don Kindergarten 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 our 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 Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, staff and others

In my relationships with the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, staff, other parents/guardians, volunteers and visitors I commit to:

- reading and abiding by the *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
- following the directions of staff at all times
- treating the kindergarten 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 *Complaints and Grievances Policy*.

