

# Educator Professionalism and Ethics

<Service name>

## Background

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Research findings support the claim that educators largely determine the quality of education and care provided to children enrolled in early education and care services. The National Quality Framework requires educators have a positive working with children check, be suitably experienced and hold the appropriate formal educational qualifications. They also need additional qualifications in first aid, CPR, asthma management and anaphylaxis training.

Educators are expected to comply with all relevant regulatory requirements, standards and guidelines, the service's policies and procedures, relate well to children, parents, other team members, multi-disciplinary professionals who support children enrolled at the service, and members of the community. Above all, they are expected to be professional, ethical and collaborative, and to maintain confidentiality.

## Policy statement

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This Policy details how the service ensures it complies with regulatory requirements at all times and that its educators possess the formal and informal attributes to deliver high quality education and care to children.

## Strategies and practices

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The Service meets regulatory requirements for educators at all times (e.g. educator-to-child ratios, qualifications, working with children check, first aid). (Remove the paragraph that does not apply to your state below)

- The Nominated Supervisor maintains a Staff Summary Sheet which details the qualifications and training (e.g. anaphylaxis, asthma, working with children check) and a Blue Card Register Sheet, and their currency, of all educators employed at the Service. These details are entered onto the Sheet when educators present original/certified documents.
- The Nominated Supervisor maintains a Staff Summary Sheet which details the qualifications and training (e.g. anaphylaxis, asthma, working with children check) and a Working With Children Check Register Sheet, and their currency, of all educators employed at the Service. These details are entered onto the Sheet when educators present original/certified documents.
- All educators undergo a comprehensive Educator Orientation. During these orientations, the Nominated Supervisor explains the Service's philosophy, policies and procedures and position descriptions. Further, the Nominated Supervisor explains the expectation that they work within these parameters at all times.
- All educators are issued with a copy of the Staff Handbook. When updates to the Handbook occur, they are provided with a copy of the update and sign the Staff Handbook Update Sheet to acknowledge they have received these updates.

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- The Nominated Supervisor ensures that all educators have a clear understanding of their obligations through continuing personal discussions, team meetings and activities, and opportunities for guided reflection.
- Educators are required to adhere to the ECA Code of Ethics. The Code is displayed in the Service entrance and staff room. The Code details educators' responsibilities for professional and ethical conduct in regard to:
  - Children
  - Families
  - Colleagues
  - Communities
  - Students
  - Employers
  - Themselves
  - Research.
- When making decisions, the Nominated Supervisor models professional and ethical decision-making and accountability. The Nominated Supervisor considers:
  - All relevant legislation
  - The Service's Policies and Procedures
  - ECA Code of Ethics
  - Outcomes for children, educators, families, Approved Provider and any other party who may be affected.
- The Service supports educators studying for formal qualifications. Progress towards the completion of the qualification is recorded on a Training and Study Record – Educator. This Record is updated at the end of each semester.
- Educators reflect upon their practice and upon the Service's progress towards meeting the National Quality Standard. They undertake this reflection individually and with colleagues. The reflection is guided by questions in the National Quality Standard and their answers are recorded in their professional diary or on forms such as Reflective Diary – Educator (Daily), Reflective Diary – Educator (Weekly), Team Reflection Sheet and Weekly Report for Nominated Supervisor - Educator, and on the provision made in the Team Meeting Agenda.
- Educators maintain the highest level of confidentiality and sign a Confidentiality Agreement to this effect. Refer to the Service's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*.
- The Service has a designated Educational Leader who oversees the program and facilitates collaboration between all educators. Refer to the Service's *Educational Program Policy*.
- Depending upon their position, educators are expected to maintain or contribute to the programming and documentation for individual and groups of children. Refer to the Service's *Educational Program Policy*.
- Educators are expected to complete all required Service documentation promptly and accurately.

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- The Service prioritises respectful communications – verbal and written – among all parties concerned with the Service. Because age is not a barrier to human rights, children are afforded the same respect as others.
- The Service has a Staff Grievance Process, and educators are to use this process to communicate their concerns or complaints.
- The Service provides educators with a range of professional development and training opportunities to extend their knowledge and to challenge and extend their thinking. However, educators are also expected to independently seek ways to build their professional knowledge and skills.
- Whenever educators have attended a professional course, they complete a Professional Development Evaluation Sheet so that the Service has a record of: the name of each course; its training provider; and, its relevance to the Service’s practices. This record also facilitates the sharing of information about the course with other educators in the Service.
- The Nominated Supervisor conducts annual appraisals for each educator and bases further training upon the outcomes of these appraisals.
- Educators are asked to ensure that they do not attend the Service with any medical condition, including work stress, which could negatively affect the wellbeing of children, colleagues or other persons at the Service.
- The Service holds regular team meetings. Educators are expected to attend these meetings or to show cause. Occasionally, they are asked to prepare by reading background information on agenda items, and to sign the Team Reading Tracking Form to that effect. During meetings, educators are asked to contribute respectfully and to listen to the contributions of others.
- Educators and staff members share tasks and responsibilities and remain alert to opportunities to assist each other. They collaborate effectively – and draw upon each other’s diverse skills, knowledge and strengths – in joint projects such as policy reviews and constructing the Service’s Quality Improvement Plan.
- During their time at the Service, students and volunteers are supported by educators who also ensure that the students and volunteers are not alone with children at any time. Refer to the *Service’s Students, Volunteers and Visitors Policy*.

## **Additional safe practices for babies**

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- N/A

## **Responsibilities of parents**

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- N/A

## **Procedure and forms**

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- Blue Card Register Sheet

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- Confidentiality Agreement
- ECA Code of Ethics\*
- Professional Development Evaluation Sheet
- Reflective Diary – Daily
- Reflective Diary – Weekly
- Staff Handbook Update Sheet
- Staff Summary Sheet
- Team Meeting Agenda
- Team Reading Tracking Form
- Team Reflection Sheet
- Training and Study Record – Educator
- Weekly Report for Nominated Supervisor – Educator
- Working With Children Card Register Sheet

## Links to other policies

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- Educational Program Policy
- Relationships with Children Policy
- Interactions with Families Policy
- Policy and Procedure Review Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Students, Volunteers and Visitors Policy

## Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

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Regs	55	Quality improvement plans
	118	Educational leader
	120	Educators who are under 18 to be supervised
	122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
	123	Educator to child ratios – centre-based services
	126	Centre-based services-general educator qualifications
	130-131	Educational requirements for early childhood teacher
	136	First aid qualifications
	145-152	Staff and educator records
	161	Offence to operate a service without a nominated supervisor
	162	Offence to operate education and care service unless responsible person is present
	168	Policies and procedures are required

QA	1.3.1	Each child's learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection
	4.2.1	Management, educators and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills
	4.2.2	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships
	7.1.2	Management systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service
	7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service

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7.2.1	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place
7.2.2	The educational leader is supported and leads the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle
7.2.3	Educators, co-ordinators and staff members' performance is regularly evaluated, and individual plans are in place to support learning and development

## Sources

- Early Childhood Australia (ECA). (2016). *Code of Ethics*. <http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/> accessed 17 May 2022
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority. *Guide to the National Quality Framework 2018 (May 2022 Update): Section 4 – Operational Requirements*. <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-05/Guide-to-the-NQF-220511-compressed.pdf> accessed 17 May 2022
- SCRIBD. *Ethics: a part of everyday practice in child care*. <https://www.scribd.com/document/314700108/Ethics-a-Part-of-Everyday-Practice-Mar09> accessed 17 May 2022
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx> accessed 17 May 2022

**Further reading and useful websites** (Consistent with the approach of the National Quality Framework, the following references have prioritised efficacy and appropriateness to inform best practice, and legislative compliance over state or territory preferences.)

- Early Childhood Australia – <http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/> accessed 17 May 2022

## Policy review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

## Version Control

Version	Date Reviewed	Approved By	Comments/Amendments	Next Review Date
1	8 January 2018	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 February 2018. Service to modify policies to its specific needs.	
2	6 September 2019	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	
3	29 November 2020	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	
4	17 May 2022	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated references.	