

CODE OF CONDUCT

Statement of Intent

Little Adventures Early Learning (LAEL) is committed to the implementation of this code to ensure the highest quality of ethical and professional conduct in order to provide quality education and care for children in a safe and nurturing environment.

This code will be used as a basis for the evaluation of professional conduct, and as a reference tool for thought processes that inform pedagogy, including actions and reactions towards professional conduct, relationships, views, influence and positions within communities and society.

This document is intended to ensure ethical conduct guides the behaviour and decisions within our Service, strengthened by the respect for, and the valuing of children, families, educators, staff and the broader community.

Strategies and Practices

- All LAEL employees, (including full time, part time and casual employees, temporary and permanent employees, employees on leave and trainees), all other people performing work for LAEL (including work experience students and volunteers), and families are required to abide by this Code of Conduct. Likewise, visitors to the service are supervised by educators at all times to ensure they too abide by the service expectations outlined in the Code of Conduct.
- Behaviours which deliver the culture of LAEL include:
 - teamwork
 - positive attitude
 - loyalty
 - motivated
 - honesty
 - integrity
 - respect
 - confidentiality; and
 - punctuality.
- Educators at LAEL can expect to:
 - be a part of a safe and healthy workplace
 - be respected and treated fairly
 - be trained and receive instructions to fulfil their role
 - receive feedback on performance
 - receive appropriate wages and conditions; and
 - receive open and honest communication.

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Early Childhood Australia (ECA) Code of Ethics

- The ECA Code of Ethics is fundamental to our Service in guiding ethical principles and professional standards of conduct towards children, families, educators, students, volunteers and the community.
- The operational policies and procedures of LAEL use this Code of Ethics as a framework to ensure professional and ethical practice is carried out across all aspects of the Service.

Responsibilities

The **Approved Provider** is responsible for ensuring:

- The service operates in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations at all times
- All Educators and staff are made aware of their obligations through the provision of a thorough induction and orientation process, the staff handbook, staff meetings, employment contracts, personal discussions and opportunities to critically reflect upon ethical practice
- The Nominated Supervisor upholds and enforces the Code of Conduct throughout the Service; and
- That families or staff members acting outside of the Code of Conduct are referred to the relevant policies and procedures.

The **Nominated Supervisor** is responsible for ensuring:

- The service operates in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations at all times
- All Educators and staff are made aware of their obligations through the provision of a thorough induction and orientation process, the staff handbook, staff meetings, employment contracts, personal discussions and opportunities to critically reflect upon ethical practice
- Decision making is clear and transparent
- There is a copy of the ECA Code of Ethics displayed in a prominent location within the Service for staff and families to view
- There are opportunities for staff to participate in staff meetings and discuss and reflect on practices within the Service regarding continuous improvement
- The curriculum is designed and implemented in line with the philosophy enabling children to develop, learn and grow; and
- There are no incidents where a child is inappropriately disciplined.

Educators are responsible for ensuring they:

- Are familiar with and abide by the *National Law and Regulations, Code of Conduct, ECA Code of Ethics*, operational policies and procedures, the National Quality Framework, staff handbook, philosophy, policies and procedures and other legislative and statutory documents applicable to their role
- Contribute where appropriate to the review of the documents that guide service operations such as the philosophy and policies and procedures
- Comply with Child Protection Legislation and Mandatory Reporting obligations, responding to any concerns or complaints as per the services policies and procedures.
- Always behave in a manner that promotes the health, safety and wellbeing of all children

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- Demonstrate ongoing engagement with the Principles, Practices and Outcomes of The Early Years Learning Framework
- Respect and value the diversity of children, families and other staff
- Contribute to staff meetings and critically reflect on practices in relation to continuous improvement
- Wear the provided uniform, representing the Service in a respectful and professional manner at all times
- Respect the confidentiality of families, other staff and the Service including regarding record keeping, and the safe sharing and storage of information.
- Continue to strive for improvement in their ability to perform their role
- Uphold the dignity and rights of children at all times
- Value the importance of play based learning
- Work collaboratively with other staff at all times
- Guide children's behaviour positively
- Ensure a safe, welcoming, culturally safe and inclusive learning environment is provided to children
- Follow the Nominated Supervisors and Responsible Persons directions
- Are punctual and regular in attendance; and
- Maintain open, honest communication with all stakeholders.

Families are responsible for ensuring they:

- Respect confidentiality at all times for all staff, children and families of the service
- Communicate any concerns to the Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person or Approved Provider as necessary in relation to the professional conduct of educators, as per the Dealing with Family Grievances and Complaints Policy
- Respect professional boundaries regarding communication with educators ensuring this occurs face to face at the service during operational hours
- Display appropriate behaviour at all times, treating staff, children and other families with respect, regardless of the situation; and
- Do not approach educators, children or members of their family in an aggressive, abusive or violent manner.
- Understand the curriculum is play-based
- Provide current information to the Nominated Supervisor in regard to any Court Orders or Parenting Plans
- Provide current information regarding children's medical conditions, and maintain a supply of any required medications

Other Stakeholders

- Stakeholders other than staff of LAEL (such as Suppliers) are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner in their interactions with LAEL. Stakeholders that engage in conduct contrary to this policy may jeopardise their involvement with LAEL
- If you are not an employee but you breach this Code of Conduct, your involvement with LAEL
- Learning may be terminated. You may also be personally liable for conduct engaged in contrary to this Code of Conduct.

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Professional Boundaries

Unacceptable communication includes but is not limited to:

- Swearing and inappropriate comments
- Inappropriate pet names
- Vilification or humiliation
- Jokes or innuendo of a sexual nature
- Obscene gestures and language
- Talking openly about confidential matters; and
- Correspondence of a personal nature via any medium.

Unacceptable physical contact includes but is not limited to:

- Physical discipline or restraint e.g. smacking, pulling; and
- Initiating, permitting or requesting inappropriate physical contact.

Breach of this Code of Conduct

Breach of this code may result in disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment or engagement either with notice or summarily.

You may also be personally liable for conduct engaged in contrary to this code, in addition to making LAEL liable.

References

- *Education and Care Services National Law*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
- *Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics*
- *Community Early Learning Australia – Sample Policies*
- Australian Child Care Alliance NSW –
<https://nsw.childcarealliance.org.au/members/policies-required-under-regulation-168>
- Dr Brenda Abbey (Childcare by Design)
- Office of Children’s Guardian – Child Safe Standards

Policy Review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the 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, where necessary, as part of the review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.