

Child Safe Code of Conduct

West Ryde Before and After School Care

West Ryde BASC Child Safe Code of Conduct

At West Ryde Before and After School Care (WRBASC), we are committed to creating, maintaining and continuously improving an environment that promotes the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of all children and young people in our care.

This code of conduct reflects and supports WRBASC's Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, which is displayed at the service and shared with all families. We recognise that child safety is everyone's responsibility. All staff including casual, agency educators, volunteers, contractors and incursion providers and visitors are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that supports the safety and wellbeing of children at all times. Staff, volunteers, contractors, and incursion providers are required to actively promote child safety, prevent harm and respond appropriately to any concern or disclosures. This includes understanding and responding to the diverse needs, backgrounds and cultural considerations of every child.

Child abuse takes many forms and can include physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse, grooming, misconduct and neglect. Definitions of harm, abuse and reportable conduct are outlined in our Child Protection Policy.

Our Child Safe Code of Conduct sets out the behavioural expectations for all adults at WRBASC. It identifies acceptable

- **'I will'** behaviours the positive, child safe actions we expect of everyone.
- **'I won't'** behaviours conduct that is unacceptable and constitutes a breach of this Code.
- **Concerning behaviours** those which may not constitute a breach on their own but together may indicate grooming or other risk.

Engaging in unacceptable behaviour is a breach of this Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary action, up to an including termination.

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I will child safe behaviours

The following behaviours apply to all staff and volunteers in their interactions with children and families at WRBAC.

- Treat all children with respect, dignity and fairness.
- Uphold the rights of every child and always prioritise their needs in decision making.
- Listen to and value the ideas and opinions of all children and respond to them appropriately.
- Welcome all children and their families and carers and ask them to participate in decisions around child safety.
- Actively promote safe and inclusive practices for all children, including those with diverse needs, circumstances and backgrounds, including children with disability.
- Adhere to the organisation's child safe policies, procedures and practices at all times.
- Participate in all compulsory child safe training, including First Nations children, children from culturally linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability.
- Include a child's parent or carer in any direct online communication or correspondence involving that child.
- Disclose to the Director any out-of-hours contact with any children in the care of our organisation or who interact with our services and make sure there is a valid reason for this contact and parents or carers are also aware of this contact.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from harm and abuse and report and act on any concerns or allegations immediately.
- Report any conflicts of interest such as a relationship with a child that is outside the service.
- Raise concerns with the leadership team if risks to child safety are identified do not wait until you are certain.
- Take a child seriously if they disclose harm or abuse and follow the correct procedures for responding to a disclosure.
- Report any breaches of the Child Safe Code of Conduct or any concerning behaviour from another adult immediately to the Director, Assistant Director or Approved Provider.
- Respect the privacy of children, and their families, and keep all information about child protection concerns confidential.
- Ensure when providing first aid care to children must do so in an area where they are within lines of sight of others.
- Inform the Nominated Supervisor (Director) immediately if I am charged with a criminal offence, my Working with Children Check status changes, or I am prohibited from working in the ECE sector by the NSW Early Learning Commission.

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I won't unacceptable behaviours

The following behaviours are unacceptable and constitute a breach of this code of conduct.

- Condone or participate in unsafe, harmful or abusive behaviour towards children, including psychological, physical and sexual abuse, grooming, misconduct or lack of appropriate care.
- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
- Persistently criticise or denigrate a child.
- Use hurtful, discriminatory or offensive behaviour or language with or in the presence of children.
- Verbally assault a child or create a climate of fear.
- Deliberately prevent a child from forming friendships or isolate them from peers.
- Engage in unwarranted and inappropriate touching involving a child.
- Be alone with a child without supervision or adequate risk management in place.
- Have contact after hours with children enrolled at the service.
- Encourage a child to communicate with me in a private or secret setting, including online or on social media.
- Give personal gifts or benefits of any kind to a child unless there is a clear program purpose and prior approval has been given by the Director or Assistant Director.
- Share details of sexual experiences with a child.
- Use sexual language or gestures in the presence of children.
- Show sexual, violent or other inappropriate images to a child.
- Photograph or video children on a personal device or share images of children on personal social media or messaging platforms without consent.
- Fail to report to police or other relevant authorities if I know a child has been harmed or abused (see reporting obligations below).

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Concerning behaviours

These behaviours may not constitute a breach on their own but together may indicate grooming or professional boundary issues. They must be reported to the Director.

Concerning behaviours include:

- Showing favour to one child over others.
- Finding ways to spend time alone with children.
- Babysitting children enrolled at the service without prior disclosure to and consent from the organisation. (babysitting outside the organisation is only allowed in exceptional circumstances when the child and their family or carer is known has a pre-existing relationship exists outside the service and must be documented).
- Participating in the lives of children outside the service without a valid reason and disclosure to the Director.
- Crossing professional boundaries with the children in our care.
- Spending time alone with children
- Being 'child centric', which means showing a preference for hanging out with children rather than adults.

Internal and external reporting obligations

Reporting obligations

All staff and volunteers must report any child safety concern, disclosure, allegation, or breach of this Code of Conduct immediately to the Director (Nominated Supervisor). If the concern involves the Director, report directly to the Approved Provider (Committee).

Do not wait until you are certain. Report any concern as soon as you become aware of it. You will not be penalised for making a report in good faith.

The service's Child Safe Reporting Policy sets out the full detail of internal and external reporting pathways, timeframes, and obligations including mandatory reporting to DCJ, notification to the NSW Early Learning Commission, and the Reportable Conduct Scheme obligations to the OCG. All staff are required to read and understand the Child Safe Reporting Policy.

Key external contacts are:

- NSW Police: 000 (emergency) / 131 444.
- DCJ Child Protection Helpline: 132 111 (24 hours).
- NSW Mandatory Reporter Guide:
reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au

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Criminal offences for not acting to protect children

Criminal offences will be reported

Some breaches of this code of conduct may need to be reported to NSW Police, the Office of the Children’s Guardian or the Department of Communities and Justice, the NSW Early Learning Commission or the Department of Communities and Justice. Depending on the nature of the case, reports may need to be made to more than one agency.

It is a criminal offence for adults not to report to police if they know or believe that a child abuse offence has been committed. In addition, people employed in child-related work may be subject to a criminal offence if they fail to reduce or remove the risk of a child becoming a victim of child abuse.

If you are unsure whether something needs to be reported externally, speak immediately with the Director, Assistant Director or Approved Provider.

Penalties breaching the Child Safe Code of Conduct

Disciplinary actions for breaches

Staff or volunteers who breach our Child Safe Code of Conduct but do not commit a criminal offence may still be subject to disciplinary action. This can include increased supervision, appointment to a different role, additional training, suspension or termination from the service.

If a staff member or volunteer demonstrates a pattern of concerning behaviours but do not commit a criminal offence, this may result in increased supervision and/ or additional training. If concerning behaviours continue, the staff member or volunteer may be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or termination if employment.

Any criminal offences identified will be reported to the relevant authorities as required.

Where a breach of this Code of Conduct involves an agency educator, contractor or incursion provider, WRBASC will notify their employer or agency of the breach and may terminate the engagement with the service immediately. This does not limit WRBASC’s obligation to report the conduct to the relevant authorities where required.

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Acknowledgement:

By signing below, I confirm that I have read, understood and agree to abide by the terms of the WRBASC Child Safe Code of Conduct. I understand that a breach of this Code may result in disciplinary action, to and including termination of my engagement with the service.

Note: This sign off is required for all staff, volunteers, contractors and incursion providers. Visitors are acknowledged through the service's visitor sign in process in accordance with the Volunteers, Student and Visitor Policy.

Name (full name):	
Role: <input type="checkbox"/> WRBASC employee <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):	
Signature:	
Date:	

Document Control	Child Safe Code of Conduct
Policy Owner	Approved Provider/ Director (Nominated Supervisor)
Review Cycle	Annually or if there are any critical incidents, the document will be reviewed immediately.
Next Review Date	30.03.2027

Related Documents Child Safe Policy | Child Safe Reporting Policy | Child Protection Policy Statement of Commitment to Child Safety | Child Safety Risk Management Plan | Child Safe Recruitment and Induction Policy | Staff Code of Conduct.

Developed with reference to the OCG Child Safe sample template and OCG Reporting Obligations and Processes handbook.