**Muswellbrook Preschool Kindergarten Inc**

ABN: 516 770 731

“Learning to play: Playing to learn”



CODE OF CONDUCT

Our Code of Conduct establishes a standard of behaviour to be followed by everyone who has any involvement with Muswellbrook Pre School Kindergarten. This Code of Conduct defines how individuals should behave towards each other, towards the children in their care and towards individuals and other organisations in the community.

The Committee and Nominated Supervisor 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 “educators, coordinators and staff interactions 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.

Muswellbrook Pre School Kindergartens 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 the role, responsibilities and obligations combined with community involvement and collaborative decision making.

**Muswellbrook Pre School Kindergarten Policies and Procedures**

The Pre-school has policies and procedures in place as required by the Education and Care Service National Regulations (Part 4.7 Division 2) and compliance with these policies and procedures is a requirement. Copies of these are available for both staff and parents at the Preschool.

 Muswellbrook Pre School Kindergarten Philosophy

At Muswellbrook Preschool Kindergarten children become confident learners, create lifetime memories, become part of friendship groups and become part of the Pre School community of which they will always be welcome!

**We value and believe in:**

Our Children

* We recognise the importance of a child’s right to be a child and experience the joy of childhood
* We foster their love of learning through play
* We give them the tools and experience to guide their own behaviour and be their own person
* We believe they have a right to a high quality Early Childhood Education
* We believe they are active participants in their own learning
* We allow them to discover new things
* We provide a relaxed, caring atmosphere
* We understand the need for fun
* We believe no two children are the same and enjoy the differences they bring
* We encourage children to be themselves and lead their own play

Our Staff

* Who provide enriching and engaging experiences for all children
* Who implement the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
* Who believe in the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics, the United Nations Convention of Children’s Right and the National Quality Framework
* Who believe in our Pre School and are proud of the service we provide
* Who are a team!
* Who are highly trained and continue learning
* Who respect, trust and support each other
* Who are advocates for all children and families
* Who bring their own values and beliefs and share a passion for each child’s learning and development
* Who believe Early Childhood education is not solely about preparing a child for their future, but also enjoying and appreciating the present

Our Families

* We believe in building relationships between families and Pre School and value families as the child’s first educators
* We link our families with community services and other families
* We encourage, guide and support
* We acknowledge and value that every family is unique
* We welcome families into our preschool community.
* We provide families the opportunity to become active community members

Our Environment

* Which is natural
* Which is appreciated and respected
* Which is sustainable - through our recycling, water conservation and gardening
* Which is relaxed, engaging and fun
* Which is a place where learning takes place
* Which is challenging, interesting and encourages children to explore and be adventurous
* Which is for the child as they form friendships

Our Community

* In which we pay our respects to the Wanaruah and Kamilaroi people, to Elders past and present and we also extend that respect to all Aboriginal people and the people who have come before us.
* In which we have been an active part of the community since 1965
* In which we promote the importance of Early Childhood Education
* In which we respect and acknowledge cultural diversity
* In which we value our own Pre School traditions
* In which we are active participants in our own community
* In which we acknowledge and enjoy the support of the wider community

Interactions with Children

* All interactions with children will be respectful giving the children a positive self-image. They must allow for children to develop an understanding of self and others, experiment with social skills and enhance intellectual growth.
* All children will be treated with respect and consideration. All children should have the opportunity to participate in all activities provided.
* Respect for childrens ethnicity and cultural differences will be maintained at all times.
* Children will be guided towards positive and responsible behaviour. The dignity and rights of each child will be maintained at all times.
* Child management techniques will not include physical, verbal or emotional punishment, including punishment that humiliates, frightens or threatens the child.
* Children will not be isolated for any reason other than illness or accident.
* Children will be given emotional support at all times and will be provided with support in learning experiences.
* It is not acceptable for anyone to touch children inappropriately or unwarrantedly. Conversations that are of a sexual nature, sexual behaviour involving obscene gestures and providing sexual publications, are considered reportable behaviours to the NSW Ombudsman.

Staff, volunteers and families

* Adults will conduct themselves in a professional manner in their relationships with children and their families, including no overstepping the boundaries into personal contacts outside school, unless the child is already known to them in another capacity.
* The safety and welfare of the children in our Pre School is paramount
* To arrive at the Pre School on time, comply by our dress code and participate in an induction process
* To be familiar with our policies and procedures and ensure they are followed.
* To have looked over our allergies and care plan folder so you are aware of those children who you may need to be sensitive to.
* Respect other colleagues and actively support them.
* Be polite and well-mannered and have regard to all those who access the Pre School
* Fulfil your responsibilities and duties to the children to the best of your ability.
* Be attentive in work health and safety matters and reporting any issues to Pre School management.
* Staff are permitted to hold and comfort a child by picking the child up being aware of manual handling and work health and safety.
* Staff are permitted to have a child in their laps for comfort, security and reassurance however not when the staff member is in a leadership role for the group of children (ie: storytime)
* Everyone will respect personal space of our parents and other staff members.

Staff and Committee Responsibilities

All staff will aim to provide a high quality Early Childhood programme, which meets the needs of all children within our care and promotes their physical, social, emotional and language development. Staff members should be aware of the individual needs of the children in their care at all times. It is important that Muswellbrook Pre School Kindergarten establish a common understanding of the standards of behaviour expected of all employees and elected Committee, if there is any aspect of the responsibilities below that is unclear it is the employee or Committee members responsibility to obtain clarification.

**Convictions**

You must advise the President or the Authorised Supervisor of any convictions that have occurred after your initial employment screen has been undertaken.

**Conflict of Interest**

A conflict of interest situation is where a personal or professional interest of an employee or Committee member may conflict with their position, obligations and responsibilities as an employee of the Pre-School or Committee member (as the case may be). It may also include a situation where an employee or Committee member conducts himself/herself in a manner or uses their influence in a way which might compromise the Pre-Schools reputation or affect the conduct of its business.

Employees and Committee members must avoid any situation which may result in a conflict of interest.

Any interest which may constitute a conflict of interest must be promptly disclosed to the Director in the case of a staff member or to the Chairperson in the case of a Committee member or Director and resolved as soon as possible.

**Other Employment or Business**

An employee considering engaging in outside employment or business must ensure that the outside employment or business will not result in any conflict with their duties to the Pre-School; and/or breach any of the requirements of their employment contract.

In all circumstances, before an employee engages in outside employment or other business activity which relates to the business of the Pre-School or that might conflict with his/her duties with the Pre-School, the employee must notify and seek the prior approval of the Director in writing.

**Confidentiality and Information Security**

This Code of Conduct is not intended to prevent the Pre-School from requiring employees and/or Committee members to enter into a Deed of Confidentiality and/or provide undertakings in relation to confidentiality.

In the course of performing their responsibilities, employees and/or Committee members must:

* Only access the Pre-School information needed for Pre-School business;
* Not use the Pre-school’s information for private purposes;
* Not seek or obtain, either directly or indirectly, any financial benefit or other improper advantage for themselves, or any other person or organisation, from any information to which they have access to because of their engagement at the Pre-school;
* Only use or release the Pre-School’s information in accordance with established Pre-School procedures; and
* Use and secure information appropriately and not disclose confidential information.

**Property**

* The Pre-school property, funds, facilities and services must only be used for authorised purposes.
* Employees and Committee members must not abuse, deface or wilfully damage Pre-School property.

**Respect for Others**

Employees and Committee members must:

* Be aware of, and adhere to the Pre-School’s policies and procedures relating to workplace health and safety, equal employment opportunity and the prevention of unlawful discrimination (including sexual harassment) and harassment;
* Treat others with respect, and not harass or discriminate against, or support others who do so; and
* Not make complaints improperly, take detrimental action in response to complaints or disclose information about Code of Conduct matters other than provided for in this Policy.

**Public Statements**

* Employees must inform the Pre-School as soon as any media enquiries are received.
* The Pre-School’s relationships with the media and wider community are conducted by the Director or as delegated by the Director.

**Compliance**

In the course of his/her duties, an employee must comply with relevant legislation, professional rules and the Pre-School.

**Dealing with Families**

When dealing with families, employees must:

* Be courteous and helpful.
* Provide prompt attention, accurate information and meet job commitments.
* Ensure their appearance is neat, clean, and appropriate to the job.

**Public Statements**

* Employees must inform the Pre-School as soon as any media enquiries are received in accordance with the Media Policy.
* The Pre-School’s relationships with the media and wider community are conducted in accordance with the Media Policy.

**Alcohol and Prohibited Drugs**

* No alcohol is to be consumed on any Pre-School premises without the express approval of the Director.
* No prohibited drugs are to be brought onto the Pre-School premises.
* No prohibited drugs are to be taken or used during working hours. The Pre-School undertakes random drug and alcohol testing as per its Drug and Alcohol Policy.

**Security**

Employees must adhere to all security policies, procedures and instructions, and ensure at all times the physical security of all Pre-School premises.

**Gambling**

Gambling is not permitted on Pre-School premises. Office sweeps or tipping competitions involving monetary reward require Director approval.

**Smoke-free Workplace**

All Pre-School workplaces are smoke free. The smoke free zone extends to within four meters of any pedestrian entrance or exit from a workplace.

**Gifts**

In general you must not accept gifts and benefits from anyone that have more than a nominal or token value. Any gift received over the value space of $30 must be disclosed to the Nominated Supervisor and the circumstances under which the gift was received or given. An example of this may be when each parent in a classroom contributes $5.00 towards a gift voucher for a staff member who is leaving and this would make the value $100 which is over our $30 gift limit.

You must never accept an offer of money, regardless of the amount.

Gifts given to a child enrolled at the Pre-school must not be given on an individual basis except when each child in the class receives a similar gift for the same purpose. Gifts cannot be given to an individual child where the intention is to gain advantage.

**Harassment and discrimination**

You must not harass, discriminate against, or support others who harass and discriminate against children, committee, colleagues or members of the public. This includes, but is not limited to harassment and discrimination. These can be on the grounds of gender, pregnancy, age, race (including nationality, ethnicity or religious background), political affiliation, marital status, disability, sexual orientation or transgender status.

**Neglect**

The neglect of any child in your care is reportable conduct to the NSW Ombudsman and may warrant instant dismissal.

An example of neglect that might be considered harmful: an employee failing to uphold their “duty of care” to attend to a child’s basic physical and emotional necessities such as not allowing the child to have access to food, appropriate clothing or medical attention.

**W.H. & S**

Work Health & Safety is the responsibility of everyone at Muswellbrook Pre-school. Identified minor risks need to be recorded through our safety management systems or if of a more serious nature must be immediately reported to the Nominated Supervisor.

**Physical contact**

In the course of your employment it is appropriate to comfort a child that is distressed by placing them on your knee and speaking calmly and positively. Staff need to be at all times able to be viewed by another staff member. It is not appropriate for example for a staff member to comfort a child within the outdoor shed or any secluded area of the Pre-school.

**Reporting breaches of Code of Conduct**

You should report any suspected breach of the Pre-school’s Code of Conduct to the Nominated Supervisor or the President of the Committee, preferably in writing. This must be done with reference to the Complaints Policy.

Unacceptable Behaviour

The following behaviours by children, staff, families and others involved in Muswellbrook Pre School Kindergarten are unacceptable and may result in employment being terminated or enrolment at Preschool declined:

* All forms of bullying (physical, verbal, emotional, social or cyber bullying), including comments, actions or visual displays that are intentional, hurtful and repetitive
* Harassment, including behavior that degrades, demeans, humiliates or embarrasses someone that a reasonable person would know is unwelcome
* All forms of abuse (sexual, physical or psychological), including verbally, in writing or otherwise
* Discrimination against any person or group because of their race, colour, ancestry, nationality or place of origin, ethnic background, religion, age, sex, gender-determined characteristics, sexual orientation, marital and family status, source of income, political belief and physical or mental disability.
* Actions that put another person at risk of harm, including violent physical acts (with or without a weapon) and threatening someone.

Reviewed on 31 March 2017

Approved by the Management Committee on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Due for review March 2019