

Code of Conduct Policy - Parents/Guardians and Volunteers

1. Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the DSCCC Management Committee at its meeting on **14** February 2018.

2. Review date

This policy will be reviewed in four years' time, in February 2022, or earlier if required.

3. Preamble

The DSCCC and the Management Committee have a legal responsibility to provide an open, welcoming and safe environment for all children and staff. DSCCC believe that all parents/guardians and volunteers play a crucial and valuable role in the effective operation of the centre and in enriching the children's program. The Management Committee acknowledges that without parents'/guardians' support, participation and contribution DSCCC could not operate.

This Code of Conduct for parents/guardians and volunteers outlines the type of practice DSCCC requires of all adults working and volunteering at the Centre to follow and reflects the values and beliefs of the Centre. It will assist in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children, families and staff. The policy provides a broad outline of behavioural principles, expectations and ideals.

Employers have a responsibility to provide, as far as practicable, a safe workplace that is free from discrimination, bullying and/or harassment. This Code of Conduct provides guidelines for desirable and appropriate behaviour.

In developing this policy, input from a range of users, including staff, Directors and Management Committee members has been sought to ensure relevance and a common understanding of the purpose of the policy. The policy provides a valuable resource for guiding decisions and behaviour of all persons involved, both directly and indirectly, in the Centre.

4. Policy Statement

Values

This Centre is a place of learning for young children and therefore the rights of the child will be considered first and foremost.

This Centre is committed to:

- The wellbeing of each child having fundamental importance.
- The provision, as far as practicable, of a safe and secure environment.
- Providing an open, welcoming environment where everyone's contribution is valued and respected.
- Encouraging parents/guardians, volunteers and community members to support and participate in the Centre's program.

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Purpose

This policy will provide guidelines to promote desirable and appropriate behaviour to ensure that all interaction with children and adults is respectful, honest, courteous, sensitive, tactful and considerate.

5. Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all adults, including parents/guardians, volunteers, extended family, visitors and other association members while involved in any activities related to the DSCCC.

6. Background and legislation

This may include, but is not limited to:

- *Education and Care Service National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Service National Regulations 2011 (NSW)*
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986(Cth)*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*
- *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*

7. Guidelines

All adults, including parents/guardians, volunteers, extended family, visitors and other association members must comply with the following guidelines while involved in any activities related to the DSCCC:

- **Safety:** Comply with all policies and procedures of the Centre (these are displayed on the Centre website). Be aware of emergency evacuation procedures.
- **Ethical conduct:** Always act in the best interests of children, their families and users of the Centre.
- **Support:** Work in a cooperative and positive manner.
- **Communication:** Use courteous and acceptable verbal and nonverbal language. Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or otherwise offensive language.
- **Respect:** Value the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals. Refrain from actions and behaviour that constitute harassment or discrimination.
- **Confidentiality:** Comply with the Centre's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*. Respect the confidential nature of information gained, or behaviour observed, whilst participating in the program, in relation to other children and adults.

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- **Children's program:** If participating in the program, seek guidance and direction from staff. If unsure, ask staff for further information. Behaviour guidance of the children is the responsibility of staff: immediately refer any issues or concerns related to managing children's behaviour to staff.

All adults, including parents/guardians, volunteers, extended family, visitors and other association members must also comply with the Standards of Conduct in Appendices 1 and 2 while involved in any activities related to the DSCCC.

8. Procedures

8.1 General

The Director is responsible for:

- Implementing the standards of conduct as set out in this policy (Appendix 1 and 2).
- Collecting and filing the completed and signed acknowledgments & agreements (Appendix 3).
- Ensuring a safe and discrimination free working environment for staff in accordance with relevant legislation.
- Ensuring all parents/guardians, volunteers, staff and students (and any other persons involved in the Centre) adhere to clear guidelines regarding appropriate interaction and communication with one another, and with children at the Centre.
- Ensuring all parents/guardians, staff, volunteers, students and visitors are alerted to the existence of Centre policies on the Centre website upon arrival, employment or enrolment.

The staff are responsible for:

- Respecting the individual needs, cultural practices and beliefs of parents / guardians and families in all interactions, both verbal and non-verbal.
- Working with colleagues, Management Committee and parents/guardians to provide an environment that encourages positive interactions and supports constructive feedback.
- Providing guidance to parents/guardians and volunteers through positive role modelling and, when appropriate, clear and respectful directions.
- Ensuring practices and procedures are in place to ensure that parents/guardians on duty, or other adults participating in the program, are not placed in a situation where they are left alone with any child with the exception of their own child. For example, staff are responsible for assisting with toileting needs, nappy changing.
- Abiding by the Staff Code of Conduct.

The parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Abiding by the standards of conduct as set out in this policy (Appendix 1).
- Abiding by the Child Safe Standards as set out in this policy (Appendix 2).
- Reading the *Code of Conduct Policy – Parents/Guardians and Volunteers* and signing the acknowledgement and agreement (Appendix 3).

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8.2 Procedure for dealing with a breach in the code of conduct

On notification of a potential breach of the code the Management Committee will activate the *Complaints and Grievances Policy*. In such instances, a subcommittee will be formed and, ultimately, will recommend a course of action to the Management Committee which may include, but is not limited to:

- A first and final warning meeting/letter being issued to inform the relevant person/s of the outcome of the investigation and that another breach of the code of conduct will not be tolerated.
- A restraining order (via the legal system) being sought against the relevant person. Success in obtaining a restraining order might then prevent this person from attending the Centre to deliver or collect children or to participate in the program.
- The withdrawal or suspension of a child's place in the program due to the parents/guardians serious breach of the Code of Conduct. This action will only be taken if no other alternatives are deemed appropriate by the Management Committee.

8.3 Emergency situations

In an emergency situation, where it is believed that staff, children or parents/guardians are at immediate risk (for example, violence has been threatened or perpetrated), the staff members and/or Management Committee involved need to be able to act quickly and decisively. The Management Committee, the nominated supervisor and all staff are authorised to contact the local police to advise them of the current situation.

The Director or Assistant Director is delegated the authority to determine suitable actions, which may include, but not be limited to:

- Applying immediately for an intervention order (via the legal system)
- Suspending the relevant person/s from attending the Centre until the Management Committee has investigated and decided on an appropriate course of action. If required, notify the parents/guardians that alternate arrangements will need to be organised for the delivery/collection of their child to ensure that the suspended person does not attend the Centre.
- Suspending a child's place in the program due to the suspended person still attending the Centre after they have been advised not to.

9. Related documents

DSCCC policies

- Complaints and Grievances Policy
- Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
- Behaviour Guidance and Interactions with Children Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Staff Conduct Policy

10. Evaluation

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In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes the Management Committee will:

- Monitor compliance with the expectations and procedures set out in the policy.
- Take into consideration feedback on the policy from staff, parents/guardians and Management Committee members.
- Assess whether a satisfactory resolution has been achieved in relation to issues arising from this policy.

Date Reviewed	Details of Changes (if any)	Date of Next Review
February 2018	Clarify the roles of the Director and Committee of Management in an emergency situation Other minor changes	February 2022
November 2016	Inclusion of the Child Safe Standards in Appendix 2	March 2018
March 2014	Minor name changes	March 2018
April 2012	Revisions to legislative framework and reorganisation of preamble and procedures	February 2014
February 2010	Updating change to Fair Work Act 2009 Removal of requirement for parents to avoid approaching staff while in contact with children Insertion of Staff Code of Conduct as Appendix 3	February 2012
November 2007	Initial DSCCC policy based on 2006 KPV Code of Conduct Policy.	November 2009

Appendix 1

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT - Behavioural practices to follow

In relation to children

- Be a positive role model at all times
- Always speak in an encouraging and positive manner
- Listen actively to children and offer empathy, support and guidance where needed
- Regard all children equally and with respect and dignity
- Physical contact with children other than your own should be avoided unless directed by staff or if the safety of a child is compromised (this should be reported immediately to staff)
- Inform children if physical contact is required for an activity and ask them if they are happy to proceed
- All interactions with children should be undertaken in full view of other adults
- Never do things of a personal nature for a child that they can do themselves, for example, assisting them in going to the toilet or changing their clothes.

In relation to other adults (including staff)

- Use respectful, encouraging and accepting language.
- Respect the rights of others as individuals.
- Give encouraging and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Accept staff decisions and follow their directions at all times. Speak with the staff member if you have a problem complying with any directions.
- Be aware of routines and guidelines for children's play within the Centre, abide by them and seek advice when unsure.
- Be aware of emergency evacuation procedures.
- Discipline of children is the responsibility of staff and therefore any matters or concerns related to managing children's behaviour should be referred to staff immediately.
- Refrain from public criticism of children and adults at the Centre.
- Any issues or grievances should be raised as outlined in the *Complaints and Grievances Policy*.
- Under NO circumstance should a child, parents/guardians or member of staff be approached directly in a confrontational manner.
- Parents/Guardians are to pick up their children from the Centre by 5.50pm to allow staff to close the Centre by 6pm on each day of business operation.

In general

- The Centre and staff are responsible for the children that are enrolled and signed in, that is those children attending the children's program.
- Parents/guardians, and other persons attending with children not enrolled in the program, are responsible for supervision of their children at all times. This is particularly important, for

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example, during outdoor time as the climbing equipment may be set-up for four to five year-olds and could be hazardous for younger siblings participating in the program.

- Adults are responsible for all children who accompany them, for example while on duty, drop off and pickup time, ensuring they do not inhibit or disrupt the program in any way
- The Centre will supply a box of toys in the office for children to play with while their parents/guardians are in attendance in the office, for example, when undertaking Committee duties or meeting with a staff member.
- Parents/guardians must clean up after their children and leave all areas as they were found.
- Staff may ask parents/guardians to remove children not enrolled and signed into the program if they are disturbing the program.
- Parents/guardians will also be responsible for children's behaviour when attending other activities and the child is not signed into the program, for example working bees, family nights.
- Smoking is prohibited on the Centre property at all times.

Appendix 2

All parents, guardians and volunteers of Dawson Street Child Care Co-operative are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

All personnel of Dawson Street Child Care Co-operative are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to Dawson Street Child Care Co-operative (DSCCC) child safe policy at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal child's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or safety concerns to Narelle Lawton – Centre Director or a member of the leadership team, and ensure any allegation is reported to the police or child protection
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.

Parents, guardians and volunteers must not:

- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps. Sitting on laps could be appropriate sometime, for example while reading a storybook to a small child in an open plan area)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without our Director's consent (for example, no babysitting). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate)
- have any online contact with a child or their family (unless necessary, for example providing families with e-newsletters)
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to DSCCC Director Narelle Lawton.

Appendix 3

CODE OF CONDUCT - Acknowledgement & Agreement

I hereby acknowledge that on [date] I received a copy of the *Code of Conduct Policy - Parents/Guardians and Volunteers* for the Dawson Street Child Care Co-operative (DSCCC).

I have read this policy, I understand its contents and I agree to abide by the principles, and practices and consequences set out within.

I understand that the Management Committee will deal with any breach of this policy and any serious breach could lead to the withdrawal of my child(ren)'s place at DSCCC long day care / kindergarten or withdrawal of my volunteer time at the Centre.

I understand that a signed copy of this statement of commitment will be kept on file whilst my child(ren) remain at the Centre; or whilst I am involved with the Centre, and will be disposed of at the end of this time.

Signature

Name (please print)

Date

Witness signature

Name (please print)

Date