



## 5.2 Code of Professional Conduct

### Purpose

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require John Street to have in place policies and procedures in relation to staffing, including a professional code of conduct.

The National Quality Standard requires educators at John Street to be respectful and ethical.

This purpose of this Code of Professional Conduct is to promote professionalism, confidentiality and ethical conduct, and to inform children and families, and the community, of the standard of professional conduct they can expect John Street to uphold.

John Street uses this code as a basis for evaluating professional conduct, and as a reference tool for the thought processes that inform pedagogy, including actions and reactions towards professional conduct, relationships, views, influence and position within communities and society.

This Code of Professional Conduct operates in parallel with John Street's centre-wide Code of Conduct (Policy No. 1.8), which governs the conduct of all persons within the centre including staff.

### Objective

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John Street is committed to a code of professional conduct, upholding ethical principles and professional standards that guide decision-making and practice at John Street.

This includes a system of ethical inquiry to provide a basis for reflection on how to relate to and contribute to the education and care community in which we actively participate.

### Definitions

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**Professional Conduct** – The moral and social manner in which a person carries out their professional responsibility.

### Scope of Policy

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The professional team, to which this code applies, includes the Committee of Management (the Board), the Centre Director, educators and staff at John Street.

### Standards of professional conduct

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The professional conduct of the team at John Street in relation to one another, the children and their families, the community, and the Education and Care Services sector is based on the following set of expected standards of professional conduct:

- John Street will administer an approved education and care service in compliance with legislation including the Education and Care Services National Law, professional standards and best practice.
- Early Childhood Australia's (ECA) *Code of Ethics (2016)* will be used as a framework for reflection about the ethical responsibilities of early childhood professionals.
- John Street will implement Child Safe Standards set forth by its governing bodies as apply from time to time including the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Justice, the Wrongs Amendment Act 2017, and the Reportable Conduct Scheme (July 2017).
- John Street will *uphold the ethical responsibility to take action in the face of injustice and when unethical practice occurs (ECA 2016)*.
- John Street will engage in reflective, ethical, and sustainable decision-making.
- John Street will provide a program within a family and child-centred context.
- John Street will promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from LGBTQIA, those from linguistically, and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

These standards of professional conduct are supported by, and should be read in conjunction with

- Early Childhood Australia's *Code of Ethics (2016)*.
- the National Quality Framework document as made available through the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority.
- John Street's:
  - Centre-wide Code of Conduct
  - Child Safe Standards Policy
  - Operational policies and procedures, which provide a framework for accountable and responsible professional practice
  - Statement of Philosophy.

#### **Obligation to act in accordance with the above standards**

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All members of the professional team are required to maintain the standards of professional conduct outlined in this policy.

#### **Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics 2006**

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Early Childhood Australia's *Code of Ethics (2016)* is an integral part of John Street as it guides the ethical principles and professional standards of conduct towards children, families, colleagues, communities, students, employers, yourself, and the conduct of research. The Code of Ethics is

referred to widely within the education and care sector, and is highly respected. The Code of Ethics is owned by the field, rather than imposed upon it (ECA 2016).

John Street accepts professional ownership of ECA's *Code of Ethics (2016)* and formally acknowledges that the ECA's *Code of Ethics (2016)* provides John Street with:

- A basis for critical reflection
- A guide for professional behaviour
- Principles to inform individual and collective decision-making.

### **Ethical Response Cycle**

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John Street endeavours to ensure that the planning and delivery of the program reflects ECA's *Code of Ethics (2016)* and recognises that every now and then situations present that do not have laws, policies or procedures to guide their resolution.

In order to reach sound ethical judgements, John Street works through an ethical response cycle, based on *Newman and Pollintz's (2001)* framework to support and validate systematic, humane and sensitive reasoning. The cycle involves the following:

#### **Procedures**

- Identify the facts surrounding the issue.
- Identify any legal aspects and community values.
- Refer to John Street Philosophy, Policies and Procedures.
- Identify the principles of ECA's *Code of Ethics (2016)* that are relevant to the issue.
- Form an opinion based on professional knowledge, application of the Code of Ethics, and the specific contexts for the issue, then discuss these opinions with others to decide on how to respond to the issue.
- Reflect on the outcomes to guide the development of consistent ways of responding to the issue if it arises again and document the outcome to inform further development of policies and guidelines that are fair and equitable.

### **Communication Plan**

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John Street's Code of conduct acknowledging ECA's *Code of Ethics 2016* is a valuable tool for empowering families and communities to maintain high expectations of John Street, and for those party to the Code to self-assess their professional behaviour. For this reason, the Code will be widely promoted and upheld by all stakeholders at John Street.

#### **Procedures**

- John's Street's Code of conduct will be made available in the policy and procedures manual, in staffing publications and family publications.

- The ECA *Code of Ethics (2016)* is displayed at John Street in the foyer.
- The ECA *Code of Ethics (2016)* is made available to the professional team during staff orientation, in staffing publications, is on display in the staff room, and in this policy document.
- Staff responsible for program planning documentation will ensure that the planning and delivery of the program reflects ECA's *Code of Ethics (2016)*.

### **Responsibility**

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It is the responsibility of the professional team to implement this policy.

### **Legislative Provisions**

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#### **DEEWR Child Care Service Handbook 2011-2012**

<b>Section 6.5</b>	<i>What are my services responsibilities to parents?</i>
<b>Section 6.6</b>	<i>What are my responsibilities to children?</i>
<b>Section 6.6</b>	<i>What are my services responsibilities to staff?</i>

**Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Vic)** - Section 3(2)(b); 3(3)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f); 165-166 & 168

#### **Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011:**

<b>r.155</b>	<i>Interactions with children</i>
<b>r.156</b>	<i>Relationships in groups</i>
<b>r.168 (2)(i)</b>	<i>Education and Care Service must have policies and procedures</i>

#### **National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care & School Age Care**

<b>Standard 1.1</b>	<i>The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.</i>
<b>Standard 1.2</b>	<i>Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development</i>
<b>Element 2.1.1</b>	<i>Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.</i>
<b>Element 2.2.3</b>	<i>Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.</i>
<b>Standard 4.2</b>	<i>Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical</i>
<b>Standard 5.1</b>	<i>Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child</i>
<b>Standard 5.2</b>	<i>Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships</i>
<b>Standard 6.1</b>	<i>Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role</i>
<b>Standard 7.2</b>	<i>Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community</i>

### **Sources**

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Department of Education and Training, Victoria – website at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au>

National Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) 2009, *Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, Commonwealth of Australia, ACT

Newman, L & Pollnitz, L (2001) *Will my response be ethical? : A reflective process to guide the practice of early childhood students and professionals*, University of Western Sydney, Sydney.

Early Childhood Australia (2016) *ECA Code of Ethics*, ECA – available at <http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/code-of-ethics-core-principles/>

### **Related John Street Policies, Procedures and Guidelines**

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<b>Policies</b>	<i>Philosophy; Code of Conduct; Child Safe Standards Policy; Expectations of Educators; Dealing with Complaints; Inclusion of Children with Additional Needs; Managing Poor Work Performance &amp; Gross Misconduct; Personal Safety &amp; Security; Equity, Diversity &amp; the Children's Program; Multicultural Programming for Social Inclusion; Program Planning; Educational Equipment &amp; Toys; Communication with Families; Supervision of Children; Ongoing Professional Development</i>
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### **Authorisation**

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This policy was approved by the John Street Board in July 2018.