Neerim South Primary School **Outside School Hours Care Service**
Address: 180 Main Rd, Neerim South VIC 3831
Phone: 03 5628 1254 | Mobile: 0408 812 072
Email: neerim.south.ps@education.vic.gov.au
Website: https://www.neerimsouthps.vic.edu.au/

Respect | Learning | Teamwork | Perseverance

OSHC POLICY: CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT & CHILD SAFE BEAVIOURS

HELP FOR THOSE WITH LIMITED ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS



Neerim South Primary School Outside School Hours Care Service offers support to stakeholders who have limited English language skills, including access to interpreting and translation services, to communicate key information about service policies and procedures.
If you need assistance to understand the information in this policy, please contact the Neerim South Primary School OSHC Service Coordinator or the School Administration Office and ask for language assistance.

WE VALUE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PERSPECTIVES





NSPS OSHC Service is committed to promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and families, and aims to value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culture by embedding cultural perspectives in the program.

WE ARE A SAFE SPACE FOR LGBTQIA+



The NSPS OSHC Service is a safe place for all children, families, staff and visitors, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status. We aim to foster a safe environment that is supportive and inclusive of LGBTIQA+ community.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

NSPS OSHC Service is committed to the safety, inclusion and participation of all children, families, paid and unpaid staff, and the members of the community. We value diversity and are committed to providing an inclusive environment for all children, including children with disability, developmental delay, medical or health related issues, cultural and linguistic diversity, refugee or humanitarian background, or any personal characteristic protected under equal opportunity and discrimination laws.

COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

NSPS OSHC Service embeds the Child Safe Standards into service planning, operation and delivery, which helps us to promote the safety of children; prevent child abuse; ensure effective processes are in place to respond to and report allegations of child abuse; and encourage children to 'have a say', especially on issues that are important to them or about decisions that affect their lives.

POLICY STATEMENT & PRINCIPLES

The 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 and child safe behaviours they can expect NSPS OSHC Service to uphold.

NSPS OSHC Service 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.

NSPS OSHC Service is committed to a code of professional conduct, upholding ethical principles, and implementing child safe behaviours, practices, standards and expectations.

All staff (including Governance, management, educators, students, volunteers, and contractors) will be guided by this document and uphold the highest standard in professional, ethical and child safe conduct in accordance with the NSPS OSHC Service Philosophy, as well as:

- The Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics (on display in the Orana Centre) which reflects current pedagogical research and practice, and provides a framework for reflection about the ethical responsibilities of Educators who work with or on behalf of children and families in OSHC. The Code is a valuable tool for empowering families and communities to maintain high expectations of our outside school hours care service, and for educators to self-assess their professional behaviour.
- For Educators who hold registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching, the Victorian Teaching Profession's Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics which supports them to understand the expectations of the teaching profession and the community in relation to their professional conduct, personal conduct and professional competence.
- Child Safety Standards which aim to protect children and young people, by requiring organisations to put policies, procedures and processes in place to prevent and respond to abuse and make keeping children and young people safe a key focus.
- Neerim South Primary School's Child Safe Code of Conduct, which sets out the expected behaviour of adults with children and young people at the school, and the Statement of Values and School Philosophy Policies. The School's core values influence how we communicate, work together, and make decisions. We embed these values in all aspects of service delivery, including in our professional practice and pedagogy, and Educators encourage children to engage with these values in their play and learning.

BACKGROUND & SCOPE

The Education and Care Services National Regulations (r.168) require policies and procedures to be in place in relation to staffing, including having a code of conduct that reflects the professional standards that guide quality practices.

The professional team to which this code applies includes the School Council, the OSHC Sub-Committee of Management, the OSHC Coordinator and all Educators including students and volunteers. This team and any other adult involved in child-connected work with the NSPS OSHC Service must agree to follow our Code of Professional Conduct and Child Safe Behaviours, and will be held accountable in their practice.

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NSPS OSHC CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOURS

As OSHC Service staff, students, volunteers, and any other member of our school community involved in child-connected work, we are responsible for for our professional conduct and practice professional behaviours by:

- Contributing to an environment that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment.
- Developing positive relationships based on mutual trust, equity and fairness.
- Engaging in open and honest communication with others.
- Maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of all children and families
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability.
- Providing an open, welcoming and supportive environment that promotes positive interactions.
- Providing programs that promote inclusion and celebrate diversity.
- Respecting the cultural, religious and political differences of others.
- Treating all children, families, Educators, Staff, volunteers, students and visitors with respect, including listening to and valuing their ideas and opinions.
- Undertaking all duties in a competent, responsible and timely manner.
- Valuing each other's professional experience and knowledge and using it as a resource.

For the integrity of staff and the service, and for the protection of children, we will never:

- Disclose any personal or sensitive information to any person other than those authorised
- Discriminate against any person on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, religion, language, sexuality, ethnicity, ability, medical condition, economic status, family structure, lifestyle, political beliefs or national origin.
- Engage in any activity that brings Neerim South Primary School or the OSHC Service into disrepute.
- Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children
- Express personal views on cultures, race, religion or sexuality in the presence of children.
- Harass, bully or discriminate against any educator, student volunteer, member of school council or the OSHC sub-committee, school staff, contractors, service providers or visitors
- Use inappropriate or offensive language in the presence of children.

RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

We are responsible for our professional conduct, and develop positive relationships with children by:

- Implementing the NSPS OSHC Service Interactions with Children Policy
- Providing a safe, predictable, inclusive and welcoming environment for children.
- Providing opportunities for children to develop a positive sense of self-worth and a sense of belonging in the NSPS OSHC Service community.
- Providing opportunities for children's voices to be heard.
- Respecting children's individual abilities, needs, cultural practices and beliefs.
- Spending meaningful time with children during service provision.
- Ensuring the dignity and rights of each child are supported and maintained.
- Working in partnership with families to best meet the needs of each child.
- Adhering to the approved behaviour guidance strategies whenever children present with challenging behaviours.

For the integrity of staff and the service, and for the protection of children, we will never:

- Develop 'special' relationships with specific children or show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention.
- Engage in rough physical games, or any form of rough physical contact.
- Exchange personal contact details with children.
- Seek to embarrass, belittle, intimidate, scare or threaten a child.
- Engage in any form of corporal punishment or discipline unreasonable in the circumstances, including but not limited to isolation, humiliation, intimidation, or negative labelling.
- Use physical restraint and seclusion except in exceptional circumstances where it is immediately required and reasonably necessary to protect the safety of a child or another person. Physical restraint and seclusion are not permitted at any other time. (refer to restraint and seclusion policy)

SAFETY AND SUPERVISION

We are responsible for supervision, and promote the safety and wellbeing of children by:

- Encouraging children to undertake activities of a personal nature for themselves e.g. toileting and changing clothes
- Ensuring children are adequately supervised at all times
- Ensuring that children know who they can talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe.
- Following Child Protection and Allegations of Abuse reporting protocol whenever there are concerns for the safety or wellbeing of children.
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are disclosing that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child.

- Maintaining correct Educator-to-child ratios at all times as per the national law and based on risk assessment procedures
- Releasing children to authorised persons as per the NSPS OSHC Service Arrivals and Departures Policy
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from any form of abuse.
- Taking every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.
- Taking responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others.
- Contacting relevant authorities in an emergency situation where it is believed that there is an immediate risk to a child, such as:
  - DFFH Child Protection (South Division) phone 1300 555 526
  - Neerim South Police Station – phone (03) 5628 1303
  - Victoria Police – phone 000

For the integrity of staff and the service, and for the protection of children, we will never:

- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves e.g. toileting or changing clothes.
- Leave children in the care of any person other than staff.
- Make any untrue or improper allegations against any other person.
- Put children at risk of abuse or harm e.g. leaving children unattended.
- Release children to any unauthorised persons

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Professional Boundaries are the lines that educators draw between professional and personal/social relationships. They help to differentiate between actions that are professionally appropriate and those that are inappropriate or unprofessional.

In OSHC, professional boundaries acknowledge that the relationship between educators and families (and children and young people) is not one of equals – educators have power. Professional boundaries help to ensure that educators use their power fairly, without compromising the safety or wellbeing of families, children and young people.

As OSHC Service staff, students, volunteers, contractors and members of our school community involved in child-connected work we must not develop 'special' relationships with specific children or show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention.

To ensure professional boundaries can be maintained any potential conflict of interest should be declared to the OSHC Coordinator or Principal.

BREACHES TO PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

All NSPS OSHC staff, students volunteers, contractors and any other member of the school community involved in child-connected work who breach this code of professional conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with their employment agreement or relevant industrial instrument, terms of engagement, and this code of conduct.

All breaches or suspected breaches of this code of professional conduct will be managed under the NSPS OSHC Service policy on unsatisfactory work performance and misconduct.

NSPS OSHC CHILD SAFE BEHAVIOURS

All paid and unpaid staff, including Governance, Management, Educators, Students and Volunteers are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who engage with NSPS OSHC Service. All paid and unpaid staff are expected to act in accordance with this NSPS Code of Professional Conduct and Child Safe Behaviours in their physical and online interactions with children and young people.

All paid and unpaid staff are asked to read and sign a Child Safe Conduct Agreement as a condition of engagement.

As NSPS OSHC Service staff, students, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of our school community involved in child-connected work, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- Upholding our commitment to child safety at all times, and adhering to our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Treating children and families in our OSHC community with respect in our service environment and outside our service environment as part of normal social and community activities.
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they disclose that they or another child or young person has been abused or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child or young person.
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children, children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with a disability, children who are unable to live at home and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LQBTIQ+) children.
- Ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with children– one-to-one interactions between an adult and a student are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult.
- Understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our child safety policy and procedures and the PROTECT Four Critical Actions.
- Ensuring that the child(ren) are safe and protected from harm and hazard.

As NSPS OSHC Service staff, students, volunteers, contractors and members of our school community involved in child-connected work we must not:

- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- Develop a relationship with any child that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, by offering gifts), or display behaviours or engage with children in ways that are not justified by the educational or professional context
- Ignore an adult's overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a child
- Discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language, except when needed to deliver professional guidance
- Treat a child or student unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity
- Communicate directly with a child through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where there is an immediate safety concern.
- Photograph or video a child or young person in the OSHC environment except in accordance with the Photographing, Filming and Recording Children policy or where required for duty of care purposes
- Have contact with any child outside of OSHC program hours except when parental/guardian permission has been sought.

BREACHES TO CHILD SAFETY CONDUCT

All NSPS OSHC staff, students volunteers, contractors and any other member of the school community involved in child-connected work who breach this Child Safety Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with their employment agreement or relevant industrial instrument, terms of engagement, and this code of conduct.

All breaches or suspected breaches of this Code of Professional Conduct and Child Safe Behaviours will be managed under the NSPS OSHC Service policy on unsatisfactory work performance and misconduct.

RESPONSIBILITIES - POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Responsibilities of the School Council as the Approved Provider of the OSHC Service (or the Sub-Committee or School Principal as delegated by School Council):

NSPS School Council and the OSHC Sub-Committee are responsible for:

- Ensure that all educators, staff, volunteers and children are familiar with ECA's Code of Ethics
- Collaborate with educators and staff to develop and review this code of conduct.
- Ensure that all educators, staff, volunteers and children are provided with a copy of, and are familiar with, the the NSPS OSHC Service Code of Professional Conduct and Child Safe Behaviours
- Take appropriate action in the event that the code of conduct is not met.

Responsibilities of the OSHC Coordinator (or in the absence of the OSHC Coordinator, the Nominated supervisor/ Responsible person present):

- Ensure that all educators, staff, volunteers and children are familiar with the NSPS OSHC policy Code of Professional Conduct and Child Safe Behaviours
- Collaborate with educators and staff to develop and review this code of conduct
- Ensure that all educators, staff, volunteers and children are provided with a copy of, are familiar with, and adhere to the code of conduct
- Take appropriate action in the event that the code of conduct is not met.

Responsibilities of all Educators (including OSHC Coordinator, children and volunteers):

- Be familiar with ECA's Code of Ethics
- Be familiar with the Child Safe Standards and practice child safe behaviours.
- Be familiar with and adhere to this code of professional conduct and child safe behaviours
- Ensure quality staffing practices are implemented in line with the National Quality Standard (especially Quality Area 4 – Staffing arrangements)

Responsibilities of Families:

- Be familiar with the code of conduct and report any concerns to the OSHC Coordinator or School Principal.

KEY TERMS

TERM	MEANING	SOURCE
Code of Conduct	Together with a code of ethics, the code of conduct helps guide interactions between management, educators and staff, as well as informing the service decision-making processes relating to professional standards.	Guide to the NQF (Quality Area 4 – Staffing arrangements)
Code of Ethics	A recognised set of statements about appropriate and expected behaviour of early childhood professionals Designed especially for early childhood education and care environments, and based on the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)	Early Childhood Australia
Professional standards	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships. The standards inform educators and staff of their responsibilities in relation to one another and to the children and their families.	Guide to the NQF (Quality Area 4 – Element 4.2.2)

Reportable and notifiable conduct	a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of a child; sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child; physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of a child; behaviour causing significant emotional or psychological harm to a child, or significant neglect of a child.	https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/reportable-notifiable-conduct/policy

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

In compliance with regulation 171, copies of the current policies and procedures required under regulation 168 (including this policy) are available for inspection at the OSHC Service at all times that the service is operating, or otherwise on request.

Associated NSPS OSHC Service policies and procedures include:

- Child safety and wellbeing
- Determining the responsible person present
- Grievance and complaints
- Guiding children's behaviour
- Restraint and Seclusion policy
- Participation of students and volunteers
- Performance review and appraisal
- Privacy and confidentiality of records and informationService philosophy
- Unsatisfactory work performance and misconduct

The information in this policy is also contained in the following handbooks:

- NSPS OSHC Children's Handbook
- NSPS OSHC Family and Community Handbook
- NSPS OSHC Service Governance and Management Handbook
- NSPS OSHC Staff Handbook

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2024) ***Preparing NQF policies and procedures***
https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/pre) Child Safety Code of Conductparing-nqf-policies-and-procedures

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2022) ***Six reasonable steps to ensure staff follow policies and procedures***
https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-11/13-Six-steps-staff-policies-procedures%20v3.pdf

Commission for Children and Young People (July 2022) ***Child Safe Standards.***
https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/

Early Childhood Australia (2019) ***Code of Ethics***
https://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/

Neerim South Primary School (accessed July 2024) ***Child Safety Code of Conduct***
https://www.neerimsouthps.vic.edu.au/sites/default/files/NSPS%20Child%20Safety%20Standards%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20Policy_0.pdf

Neerim South Primary School (2024) ***Statement of values and school philosophy***
https://neerimsouthps.vic.edu.au/sites/default/files/NSPS%20STATEMENT%20OF-VALUES%20AND%20SCHOOL%20PHILOSOPHY%20POLICY.pdf

State of Victoria (2002) ***Child Safety Code of Conduct***
https://www.vic.gov.au/develop-your-schools-child-safety-code-conduct

United Nations ***Convention on the Rights of the Child (***1991)
https://www.unicef.org.au/united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child

Victorian Institute of Teaching (2023) ***The Victorian Teaching Profession's Code of Conduct*** https://www.vit.vic.edu.au/sites/default/files/media/pdf/2024-01/Document_VIT_Code-of-Conduct.pdf
Victorian Institute of Teaching (Accessed July 2024) ***The Victorian Teaching Profession's Code of Ethics*** https://www.vit.vic.edu.au/sites/default/files/media/pdf/2023-06/Document_VIT_Code-of-Ethics.pdf

NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK – LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Education and Care Services National Law https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-law-regulations/national-law
The National Quality Framework operates under an applied law system, comprising the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. The purpose of the applied law system is to set a national standard for children's education and care across Australia. The following regulations inform the implementation of this policy.

Regulation	Description
Regulation 12	Meaning of serious incident
Regulation 16	Matters relating to criminal history
Regulation 55	Quality improvement plans
Regulation 82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
Regulation 83	Staff members and family day care educators not to be affected by alcohol or drugs
Regulation 84	Awareness of child protection law
Regulation 85	Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
Regulation 86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
Regulation 87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
Regulation 117A	Placing a person in day-to-day charge
Regulation 120	Educators under 18 to be supervised
Regulation 147	Staff members
Regulation 150	Responsible person
Regulation 151	Record of educators working directly with children
Regulation 155	Interactions with children
Regulation 165	Record of visitors
Regulation 166	Children not to be alone with visitors
Regulation 167	Record of services' compliance
Regulation 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
Regulation 175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority
Regulation 176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
Regulation 177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
Regulation 181	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
Regulation 190	Infringement offences
Regulation 191	False or misleading information or documents

National Quality Standard https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard
The National Quality Standard (NQS) sets a high national benchmark for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services in Australia. The NQS includes 7 quality areas that are important to outcomes for children. NSPS OSHC Service is assessed and rated by the Victorian Government Department of Education against the NQS and given a rating for each of the 7 quality areas and an overall rating based on these results. The following quality areas, standards and elements support the implementation of this policy.

Standard/Element	Description
Element 2.2.3	Child protection
Element 4.2.2	Professional standards
Standard 5.1	Relationships between educators and children
Element 6.1.3	Families are supported
Element 7.1.1	Service philosophy and purpose
Element 7.1.2	Management systems
Element 7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities
Element 7.2.3	Development of professionals

Framework for School Age Care in Australia https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/MTOP-V2.0.pdf
Under the National Law, services must deliver an educational program to all children being educated and cared for that is based on an approved learning framework, delivered in accordance with that approved learning framework, based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child , and designed to take into account the individual differences of each child.
The following principles, practices and learning outcomes support the implementation of this policy.

Principle/Outcome	Description
Principles	Respect for diversity
	Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning
	Collaborative leadership and teamwork
Practices	Holistic, integrated and interconnected approaches
	Collaboration with children and young people

INDUCTION AND ONGOING TRAINING

The NSPS Council acknowledges the important role played by our service leaders, educators and staff. They are provided with the necessary training and support to implement the policies and procedures for implementing this Code of Professional Conduct and Child Safe Behaviours.

To ensure that all NSPS OSHC service stakeholders are given adequate induction and ongoing support to develop a thorough understanding of these procedures, this policy will be provided in accordance with induction processes for the OSHC Service staff team.

EVALUATION, REVIEW & DEVELOPMENT

This policy will be reviewed and developed accordingly as part of the NSPS OSHC Service annual review process, or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations, circumstances, or operational matters.

In response to any breach of this policy, this policy and procedures (and any directly associated policies and procedures) will be reviewed and developed to ensure the effectiveness of their implementation.

NSPS OSHC Service ensures that all relevant stakeholders are notified at least 14 days before making any change to this policy, unless that notice period would pose a risk to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child enrolled at the service. In this instance, stakeholders will be notified as soon as practicable after making a change in accordance with requirements under the National Law.

Date	Description	Author
12/07/2024	New Policy Drafted in compliance with the Education and Care service National Law, and Child Safe Standards.	OSHC Sub-Committee
20/09/2025	Reformatted and prepared for review	OSHC Sub-Committee
17/11/2025	Approved	School Council

Next scheduled review by 17/11/2026