

FAMILY CONDUCT GUIDELINES (Code of Conduct)

The *Family Conduct Guidelines* works in conjunction with our Service's *Enrolment Policy*, *Dealing with Complaints Policy*, *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*, *Family Handbook* and the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. The *Family Conduct Guidelines* are in place to emphasize the commitment and ethical responsibilities each family adopts when enrolling their child/ren at First Five Early Learning.

AIM

The aim of the *Family Conduct Guidelines* is to provide information to support families and the Service develop clear and effective methods of communication to support the building of genuine partnerships and adopt appropriate and expected behaviour for families and educators. This includes acting as an advocate for individual children and discussing more complex and challenging issues that call for astute attention and respect.

It is anticipated that all stakeholders within the Service will adopt the following qualities during their interactions:

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Inclusivity
- Democracy
- Respect
- Confidentiality

COMMUNICATION

It is expected that families will collaborate with their child's educator/s, working together to support their child's learning and development. Our educators understand that families are often eager to find ways to strengthen the connection between home and our Service within their busy lifestyle. We have a range of methods to promote effective communication with families and encourage families' interaction. Effective communication builds mutual respect, understanding and trust. For educators working with families, building a positive partnership includes sharing knowledge and experiences to understand your child.

We appreciate when families share information with our educators about their child. This may include informing the educator when your child has a restless night, sharing something your child has disclosed, or even talking about an activity or experience your child would like to do or share with others.

This continued information helps our educators support your child throughout the day. Communication is vital within our Service, ensuring children's needs are being met. We ask that families nominate their preferred method of communication which will be amended as required, so we can do our best to be open and responsive.

MEETING WITH EDUCATORS OR MANAGEMENT

It is not always possible or effective to discuss issues 'on the spot'. Usually, most communication between families and educators occurs at child drop-off and pick-up times. This transition time typically is not conducive to meaningful exchanges; families can be rushed, educators are understandably focused on children's transitions, and in the case of full-day programs, educators who spend the largest amount of time with your child may not be available or not rostered on that day.

We encourage families to arrange a time away from the learning environment, where the educator can give families their full attention and make decisions that have been given careful consideration.

RESPECTING OUR EDUCATORS

We request that all stakeholders involved with the Service are respected. This includes respect for our educators, respect for the children and respect for the families.

If we work to share information, contribute ideas and together, reflect on practices we will have a network for your child that not only supports their time here at First Five Early Learning, but will also see them thrive.

We all have a common goal: *What's best for your child*. With that in mind, this journey will be rewarding for all. Parents and family members are expected to model appropriate behaviour and suitable conduct when interacting with children and staff at our Service, including various communication methods such as written, spoken or through social media. If the behaviour of a family member or visitor within the Service is deemed threatening or violent, the Police may be informed.

COMPLAINTS OR GRIEVANCES

If there is an incident that has occurred that families are concerned with, we always want to hear and discuss the issue. We ask families to be mindful about discussing or talking about sensitive issues in front of others, including children. Where possible, ask your child's educator or relevant educator for a suitable time to discuss your complaint.

Families are encouraged to document their concerns by completing a '*Complaints/Grievance Form*' outlining the incident or concern and submit this to the approved provider or nominated supervisor. Management will

acknowledge your complaint and endeavour to achieve an outcome that supports the best interests and wellbeing of the child where possible. (See our *Dealing with Complaints Policy*). We encourage all parents, carers and family members to work cooperatively with the person managing the complaint. Inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated, and a meeting may be arranged.

Management will adhere to privacy and confidentiality laws however if the complaint is a notifiable incident (related to child protection or fraud), we are required to notify relevant authorities immediately.

Should you wish to raise concerns regarding the management of Child Care Subsidy, please speak to the nominated supervisor as soon as possible. Concerns can also be directed to the Department of Education via their [Online contact form](#) or potential fraud breaches can be reported anonymously through an online report form: [Reporting fraud via a tip-off](#).

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is something we will not waiver on and expect the same from everyone involved, educators and families alike. We request that management is kept up to date with any parenting court orders or parenting agreements under Family Law if applicable.

Information, including personal information (addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses) will not be disclosed to any individual without obtaining prior written permission of the respective person, including educators, staff, family members and parents. Families must ensure they do not share data or personal information of other family members, children or staff members from the Service with anyone, including other families of the same Service. (See *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*).

All families are not to use or share images obtained from the Service, via the Service's app, Facebook pages or other format. Families are not to share photographs taken during special events for publishing on any social media or for sharing in any format.

Families are asked to respect that staff are prohibited to share information about other children, families or staff members without expressed written consent to whom the information relates to. Additionally, families are not to connect with staff on social media platforms.

If you do have concerns regarding your child, please see your child's educator to arrange a time to meet. The meeting will be in a private area within the Service. If issues are still unresolved, then contact your centres nominated supervisor and reschedule a second meeting.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY OBLIGATION

We remind families that there are some issues that the Service has no influence over such as Child Care Subsidy, and timing of payments to the Service and your account. When families enrol their child into our Service, it is the family's responsibility to provide us with the required information to receive Child Care Subsidy. This includes the correct Customer Reference Number (CRN) and date of birth of the child and parent/guardian the child is linked with.

To receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS) families must apply through the [myGov](#) website/app. This includes completing the Child Care Subsidy activity test. The approved provider and family will enter into an agreement regarding the planned arrangements for care. This is called a Complying Written Arrangement (CWA) and is an agreement to provide care in return for fees. Once the provider submits an enrolment notice, the family will be asked to confirm the enrolment through their myGov account. This is the final step to complete the Child Care Subsidy. It is important for families to understand that until this step is complete, Child Care Subsidy entitlements will not be confirmed.

Families are required to advise Centrelink of any changes to circumstances within 14 days to avoid a debt. Changes to circumstances may impact CCS payments.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Our policies and procedures are reviewed at least annually or in the event of legislation changes, or upon critical reflection when modifications are required. We ask families to contribute and provide feedback to our policies and procedures to ensure child safety and wellbeing remains our priority. We aim to provide an environment that promotes and enables children's participation and is welcoming and culturally safe and inclusive for all children and families. We request that your feedback and contribution to policy review is through relevant communication channels and not derogatory in any way to our Service.

BREACH OF FAMILY CONDUCT GUIDELINES (CODE OF CONDUCT)

If parents or family members are consistently in breach of these guidelines and following an evaluation by the nominated supervisor and/or the approved provider, any related enrolment/s may be at risk of being terminated.