

CODE OF CONDUCT



Related Quality Area	QA1: Governance and Leadership QA4: Staffing Arrangements QA6: Collaborative Partnerships with families and communities
Related Policies	Child Protection Policy (definitions of child abuse, neglect, grooming; reporting obligations) Prevention of Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation Policy Safe Use of Technology Policy Social Media Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Grievance Policy and Procedure (Staff) Grievance Policy and Procedure (Families) Recruitment Policy (safeguarding requirements in hiring, reference checks, child-safety interview questions) Supervision Policy (ensuring visibility, preventing grooming, strengthening oversight).

PURPOSE

We believe in maintaining an inclusive and welcoming environment and workplace that motivates and facilitates personal growth and development for staff and educators. The values that underpin our work, and which are central to NFC’s Strategic Plan 2025–26, include community connection, child-centred care, sustainability, and staff development.

This Code of Conduct outlines the standards of behaviour expected at the Nightcliff Family Centre (NFC). We aim to establish a common understanding of workplace standards and ethics expected of all employees and families of the Centre. We are committed to a culture of child safety and zero harm, where the safety, wellbeing, and dignity of all children, families, educators, and staff are proactively protected. This includes recognising our positive duty under the Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Act to take reasonable and proportionate steps to eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment, victimisation, and other forms of unlawful conduct before harm occurs. In addition, NFC is committed to preventing bullying, supporting psychological safety, and fostering a workplace and community culture based on diversity, inclusion and respect. We uphold the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations in all our work. All staff, educators, students, volunteers, committee members, families and visitors will at all times conduct themselves in an ethical manner and strive to ensure that all interactions are positive and respectful and are in accordance with the Centre’s philosophy. Detailed expectations of families, employees, and management are contained in the relevant policies listed at the end of this Code.

All responses to complaints and grievances will be conducted in a trauma-informed manner, recognising that disbelief, minimisation, or institutional betrayal can cause further harm. NFC commits to transparent, supportive, and person-centred processes for all forms of harm, including discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying, victimisation, and abuse.

SCOPE

The following people are expected to behave in a respectful manner and comply with this code of conduct:

- All committee members, management, educators, students, volunteers, and other staff members.

- Parents/guardians of children enrolled.
- All others involved with our centre (visitors, professionals, contractors).

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

Be Respectful

All staff, educators, students, volunteers, committee members, families and visitors will:

- Treat all people - children, families, colleagues, and community members - with dignity, respect and fairness.
- Promote cultural safety, and actively include people of all backgrounds, abilities and identities.
- Respect the environment, equipment and materials, and support sustainable practices in line with NFC's Strategic Plan.
- Respect privacy and confidentiality, using information and technology responsibly.
- Model respectful communication, including listening, acknowledging others' perspectives, and managing conflict constructively.
- Provide safe, nurturing, and positive environments for children.

Be Safe

All staff, educators, students, volunteers, committee members, families and visitors will:

- Actively support NFC's commitment to zero harm, ensuring physical, emotional, and cultural safety for children, staff, and families.
- Follow all safety procedures and take reasonable care of their own health, safety and wellbeing, and that of others.
- Recognise and speak up about risks to safety for both staff and children, including physical and psychosocial risks such as abuse, neglect, discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying, and intimidation. Comply with Northern Territory mandatory reporting laws by reporting any reasonable belief that a child has been or is at risk of harm or neglect to Territory Families or Police, as required under the Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT).
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from harm or abuse.
- Uphold the rights of the child and prioritise their safety and wellbeing at all times.
- Maintain professional boundaries, both in-person and online, using only Centre-approved platforms for communication with families.
- Support children to understand their rights to safety, privacy, and consent in age-appropriate ways.

Be Cooperative

All staff, educators, students, volunteers, committee members, families and visitors will:

- Work together respectfully and constructively, acknowledging that collaboration strengthens care for all children.
- Engage positively with colleagues, offering support, sharing workload fairly, and contributing to a safe, inclusive workplace.
- Listen to and value children's voices and respond to their concerns appropriately.
- Welcome families and carers to participate in decisions about their child's learning and wellbeing.
- Raise concerns in a timely and appropriate way, following grievance or reporting procedures.
- Seek help when challenges cannot be resolved alone and be willing to find solutions together.
- Participate in professional learning, reflection, and community engagement activities to strengthen NFC's culture of care and inclusion.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

All staff, educators, volunteers, committee members, families and visitors must not engage in behaviours that are unlawful, unsafe, or inconsistent with NFC's values.

Child Abuse and Neglect

- Engaging in any behaviour that causes or risks harm to a child, including physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, neglect, or grooming.
- See the NFC Child Protection Policy for detailed definitions of child abuse, neglect, and grooming.

Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Victimisation

- Discriminating against any person based on protected attributes such as race, sex, sexuality, disability, age, caring responsibilities, or religious or political belief.
- Engaging in sexual harassment or harassment of any kind.
- Victimising or retaliating against someone who raises a complaint.
- See the NFC Prevention of Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation Policy for detailed definitions.

Bullying

- Repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a person or group that creates a risk to health and safety, including verbal, physical, or psychological abuse.
- See the NFC Prevention of Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation Policy for detailed definitions and processes.

Technology and Online Environments

- Using personal devices to take or store images or videos of children.
- Communicating privately with children or families via social media, messaging, or other online platforms outside of approved NFC channels.
- Sharing, creating, or accessing child abuse material (a criminal offence).
- Failing to respect children's rights to privacy and consent in digital environments.
- See the NFC Safe Use of Technology Policy for detailed definitions and procedures.

General Prohibitions

- Breaches of confidentiality or privacy.
- Using physical punishment or degrading treatment.
- Offering children alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, or inappropriate gifts.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs at the Centre.
- Any behaviour that risks harm to a child, family, staff member, or visitor.
- Showing favouritism, secrecy, or forming inappropriate relationships with children.
- Being alone with a child without a professional reason, approval, and transparency.
- Fail to maintain appropriate visibility when supervising children, or deliberately seek private, unsupervised access to children.
- Failing to report suspected abuse, neglect, or unlawful conduct.
- See the NFC Child Protection Policy for detailed definitions and processes.

PROACTIVE STRATEGIES

We actively strive to create an environment that supports the health, safety and well-being of the children and staff by:

- Having realistic and developmentally appropriate expectations for children's behaviour.
- Setting up the environment and materials to encourage appropriate behaviour and reduce potential for inappropriate behaviour.
- Planning a program based on children's interests and developmental needs.

- Establishing consistent yet flexible schedules and routines that help children gain trust, security and self-control.
- Modelling respectful communication, addressing conflict early, and supporting staff wellbeing and reflective practice.
- Embedding anti-bias practices in programming, celebrating cultural events, and promoting diversity and inclusion across the Centre.
- Proactively contributing to a safe workplace culture by preventing all forms of discrimination, sexual harassment, victimisation, bullying, abuse and neglect. Contributing to a culture of speaking up by encouraging staff, families, and children to raise concerns and making sure safe, confidential, and anonymous channels are available.

We create a positive environment for children, parents/guardians, staff and others involved in our centre by:

- Developing positive relationships, including making time to talk and listen.
- Establishing clear, consistent, simple limits.
- Stating limits in a positive way and periodically reminding people.
- Providing explanations for limits.
- Working together to solve problems.
- Modelling and encouraging appropriate behaviour.
- Promoting a culture of zero harm and ensuring psychological safety for staff, children and families.

REPORTING BREACHES

All staff, educators, students, volunteers, committee members, families and visitors are expected to uphold this Code of Conduct and report breaches of this Code.

- Reports can be made to an Educator, Team Leader, the Nominated Supervisor (Director), or the Approved Provider (Parent Committee).
- Concerns may also be raised through the Grievance Policy (Staff) or Grievance Policy (Families).
- Concerns may also be raised anonymously through NFC's designated reporting tools (e.g. letterboxes, QR codes). NFC will treat all disclosures seriously, whether anonymous or named, and no person will be victimised for raising a genuine concern.
- Reports will be managed confidentially and fairly, and no person will be victimised for raising a genuine concern.
- Reports will be managed in line with NFC's Grievance Policies (Families and Staff), which provide informal, facilitated, formal, and appeal pathways for resolution.
- All reports will be acknowledged and managed within the timeframes set out in the Grievance Policies.
- Disclosures of harm may be made without requesting a formal grievance or investigation. Staff and families can choose whether they want acknowledgement, support, workplace adjustments, restorative options, or a formal process.
- Unreasonable, abusive, or vexatious complaints will be managed in accordance with the Grievance Policies, including the option to close frivolous or malicious complaints with written reasons provided.

CONSEQUENCES OF BREACH

Breaches of this Code of Conduct will be taken seriously. Depending on the nature and severity of the breach, possible consequences include:

- For staff: informal resolution, verbal or written warning, performance management, further disciplinary action up to and including suspension or dismissal.
- For families: informal resolution, meeting with the Director or Parent Committee, written warning, or termination of enrolment.
- For visitors: being asked to leave the premises or not permitted to return.

- For all: referral to external authorities (e.g. NT Department of Education and Training, NT Police, Fair Work Commission, Anti-Discrimination Commission, NT WorkSafe) where required by law.
- For staff, volunteers, and students: breaches may also affect current or future eligibility for employment, volunteering, or involvement with NFC.

RELATED POLICIES

This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the following NFC policies:

- Child Protection Policy (definitions of child abuse, neglect, grooming; reporting obligations)
- Prevention of Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Safe Use of Technology Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Grievance Policy and Procedure (Staff)
- Grievance Policy and Procedure (Families)
- Recruitment Policy (safeguarding requirements in hiring, reference checks, child-safety interview questions)
- Internal Promotions Policy (screening for child safety responsibilities)
- Supervision Policy (ensuring visibility, preventing grooming, strengthening oversight).

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	OCTOBER 2021	NEXT REVIEW DATE	OCTOBER 2023
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Modifications 		
POLICY REVIEWED	October 2023	NEXT REVIEW DATE	October 2025
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy reviewed as per review cycle Sources checked for currency 		
POLICY REVIEWED	October 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	October 2027
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy reviewed as per review cycle Sources checked for currency Updated for alignment with current NFC Strategic Plan Removed content where content was better suited in specific policies (social media and drug use content moved to respective policies) Updated for consistency with Families and Staff Grievance Policies Explicitly referenced victimisation under Unacceptable Behaviours Referenced positive duty under NT Anti-Discrimination Act, Duty to minimise Psycho-social hazards under WH&S legislation and a commitment to zero harm Added cross-references to grievance stages and timeframes Added clause on managing unreasonable and vexatious complaints. 		