

PRECIOUS GEMS
CHILDCARE
Trading as



Educator's Handbook

Welcome To Our Centre

This Centre is operated by Precious Gems Childcare, which is a privately-owned company.

We are glad to have you join our team in the capacity in which you have been employed and encourage you to participate to your fullest to help us create confident children who enjoy coming to our Centre every day.

Precious Gems Childcare endeavours to provide a productive, harmonious work environment that fosters communication and mutual respect. Our Management team is dedicated to promoting a positive work environment that will help you to grow as an individual and as a team member. You are actively encouraged to give your input and feedback to this vital resource. You can be assured that issues will be listened to, and suggestions are welcome.

General Information

This centre caters for children aged from 6 weeks to 6 years.

Operational hours are 7am-6pm, Monday to Friday. Please ask your centre Director or PIDTDC for clarification as to operation times. We are open 52 weeks per year and are only closed on gazetted public holidays.

This handbook contains information relevant to Educator's, further information can be found in the Parent Handbook, Policies Handbook, Regulations and the Industrial Awards, all of which are available in the foyer or tea room. Ask your centre Director or PIDTDC for assistance.

Key Operational Educator's

Precious Gems Childcare is a family operated Centre by Rima Kanj. The Centre will be licensed by the Department of Education & Early Childhood Development and the approved provider is Rima Kanj.

Your centre Director or (Person in a day-to-day charge) PIDTDC is Nelly Hoibater who is available 5 days a week from 7.30am-4.00pm.

We here at Precious Gems Childcare are bound by the code of ethics, by which we promote and implement within our service. As an educator you are required to adhere to these code of ethics.

Australia Early Childhood Association (AECA) Code of Ethics

In relation to children I will:

1. Acknowledge the uniqueness and potential of each child.
2. Recognise early childhood as a unique and valuable stage of life and accept that each phase within early childhood is important in its own right.
3. Honour the child's right to play, in acknowledgement of the major contribution play makes to development.
4. Enhance each child's strengths, competence and self-esteem.
5. Ensure that my work with children is based on their interests and needs and lets them know they have a contribution to make.
6. Recognise that young children are vulnerable and use influence and power in their best interests.
7. Create and maintain safe, healthy settings that enhance children's autonomy, initiative, and self-worth and respect their dignity.
8. Help children learn to interact effectively, and in so doing balance their own rights, needs, and feelings with those of others.
9. Base my work with children on the best theoretical and practical knowledge of each child's development.

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10. Respect the special relationship between children and their families and incorporate this perspective in all my interactions with children.
11. Work to ensure that young children are not discriminated against on the basis of gender, age, race, religion, language ability, culture, or national origin.
12. Acknowledge the work of the cultural and linguistic diversity that children bring to the environment.
13. Engage only in practices that are respectful of and provide security for children and in no way degrade, endanger, exploit, intimidate, or harm them psychologically or physically.
14. Ensure that my practices reflect consideration of the child's perspective.

In relation to families I will:

1. Encourage families to share their knowledge of their child with me, and share my general knowledge of children with them, so that there is mutual growth and understanding in ways that benefit the child.
2. Strive to develop positive relationships with families that are based on mutual trust and open communication.
3. Engage in shared decision-making with families.
4. Acknowledge families' existing strengths and competence as a basis for supporting them in their task of nurturing their child.
5. Acknowledge the uniqueness of each family and the significance of its culture, customs, language, and beliefs.
6. Maintain confidentiality.
7. Respect the right of the family to privacy.
8. Consider situations from each family's perspective.
9. Assist each family to develop a sense of belonging to the service in which their child participates.
10. Acknowledge that each family is affected by the community context in which it operates.

In relation to colleagues I will:

1. Support and assist colleagues in their professional development.
2. Work with my colleagues to maintain and improve the standard of service provided in my workplace.
3. Promote policies and working conditions that are non-discriminatory and that foster competence, wellbeing, and positive self-esteem.
4. Acknowledge and support the use of the personal and professional strengths, which my colleagues bring to the workplace.
5. Work to build an atmosphere of trust, respect, and candour by:
 - Encouraging openness and tolerance between colleagues.
 - Accepting their right to hold different points of view.
 - Using constructive methods of conflict resolution.
 - Maintaining appropriate confidentiality.
6. Acknowledge the worth of the cultural and linguistic diversity my colleagues bring to the workplace.
7. Encourage my colleagues to accept and adhere to this code.

In relation to the community and society I will:

1. Provide programs, which are responsive to community needs.
2. Support the development and implementation of laws and policies that promote the wellbeing of children and families and that are responsive to community needs.
3. Be familiar with and abide by laws and policies that relate to my work.
4. Work to change laws and policies that interfere with the wellbeing of children.
5. Promote cooperation among all agencies and professions working in the best interests of young children and families.
6. Promote children's best interests through community education and advocacy.

In relation to myself as a professional I will:

1. Continually update and improve my expertise and practice in the early childhood field through formal and informal professional development.
2. Engage in critical self-reflection and seek input from colleagues.
3. Communicate with and consider the views of my colleagues in the early childhood profession and other professions.
4. Support research to strengthen and expand the knowledge base of early childhood, and where possible, initiate, contribute to, and facilitate such research.
5. Work within the limits of my professional role and avoid misrepresentation of my professional competence and qualities.
6. Work to complement and support the child rearing function of the family.
7. Be an advocate for young children, early childhood services, and my profession.
8. Recognise the particular importance of formal qualifications in early childhood studies, along with personal characteristics and experience, for those who work in the early childhood profession.
9. Act in the community in ways that enhance the standing of the profession.

National laws and Regulations and Family Assistance Law

Every educator and PIDTDC employed at Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd will comply with the National Law and National Regulations, Family Assistance Law and all applicable Commonwealth and state laws. All employees are required keeps pace with legislative changes in the family assistance law and educational and care services national law.

Educator's Code of Conduct

Rationale

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to guide and enhance the conduct of Educator's in performing their duties. The Code of Conduct applies to all employees of Precious Gems Childcare. There are five fundamental ethical principles from which the ethical obligations contained in the Code of Conduct are derived. The ethical obligations are summarised in this section.

Ethical Obligations

Respect for the Law

Educator's should observe the laws of the State and the Commonwealth. This obligation is not intended to detract from the concept and practice of academic freedom, which is essential to the proper conduct of teaching.

Respect for Persons

Educator's should treat students, other Educator's and of the community equitably and with respect.

This involves:

- Courtesy and responsiveness in dealing with others
- A responsibility of fairness in supervising other Educator's
- Making decisions that are procedurally fair to people
- Avoiding discrimination, for example, on grounds such as gender, race, religion
- Avoiding behaviour which might reasonably be perceived as harassing, bullying or intimidating
- A responsibility for fairness and the encouragement of independent scholarly learning in the teaching role

Precious Gems Childcare seeks to create an environment where all persons are treated equitably and with respect, where persons' rights are respected and where

Educator's and child, and student efforts are encouraged and their achievements given due recognition.

Integrity

Educator's should be honest in carrying out their duties, and avoid conflicts between their private interests and their responsibilities with respect to:

- Personal relationships
- Sexual relationships
- Financial relationships
- Receipt of gifts
- Outside work
- Use of confidential information obtained in the course of their duties
- External activities and public comment

Diligence

Educator's should carry out their duties in a professional and conscientious manner. This involves:

- Carrying out official decisions and policies faithfully and impartially
- Seeking to attain the highest possible standards of performance
- Exercising care for others in employment related activities
- Ensuring that personal use of alcohol and other drugs does not interfere with performance in the workplace, or work related activities
- Adhering to professional codes of conduct where applicable

Precious Gems Childcare aims to achieve the highest standards of excellence in education and administration. All Educator's contribute to the achievement of this aim when they carry out their duties honestly and to the best of their ability.

All educators are expected to carry out their duties in a professional, responsible and conscientious manner, and to be accountable for their official conduct and decisions.

Economy and Efficiency

Educator's should use Precious Gems Childcare material and resources only for legitimate educational purposes.

- Educator's should avoid waste
- Educator's should maintain adequate security over Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd property, facilities and resources

Educator's should familiarize themselves with the Code of Conduct and endeavour to ensure that its principles are observed at all times. Significant departures from the standards of conduct outlined in the Code of Conduct may amount to misconduct on the part of the individual Educator's member.

While the Code of Conduct expresses the professional commitment of Educator's in their service to Precious Gems Childcare as an institution, educators are encouraged to aspire to the highest standards of conduct. The focus is therefore supportive and educative. However, the Code of Conduct does regulate Educator's behaviour and where conduct falls below the standards outlined in the Code of Conduct, Educator's may be counselled in accordance with normal performance management strategies. Significant departures from outlined behavioural expectations may amount to misconduct on the part of the individual Educator's member and may result in dismissal.

The Code applies to all Educator's of Precious Gems Childcare, whether full time, part time or casual. Educator's having concerns regarding the application or contravention of the Code in a particular situation should raise their concerns with the Approved Provider, Director or PIDTDC.

Making Fair Decisions

When making a decision, taking action of a discretionary nature or resolving a grievance which may adversely affect a person's rights, liberties, interests or

legitimate expectations, the principles of procedural fairness should be applied. This means that persons affected should have the opportunity to respond to allegations or assertions made and to have a decision made without bias.

Decisions should be based on considerations relevant to the matter at hand. Decisions may be accepted more readily if reasons are given. For example, where an adverse report is received concerning an Educator's performance or conduct, that Educator's member should be given the opportunity to respond.

Educator's must not discriminate

Educator's should treat other persons equitably, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, race, disability or medical condition, cultural background, religion, marital status, age or political conviction.

Respect for the Opinions of Others

Rational debate presupposes open communication and the freedom to voice alternative points of view. Educator's should not cut off rational debate by verbal or physical violence or intimidation. For example, criticism of ideas should be distinguished from personal criticism; and Educator's should not verbally abuse, vilify or belittle children or other Educator's (including their supervisors) either personally or to others. Defamatory or inflammatory comments against Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd will result in disciplinary action.

Avoiding Conflicts of Interest

The trust that is placed in Educator's requires that Educator's conduct themselves with honesty, fairness and propriety. This means that Educator's should avoid conflicts between their private interests and work responsibilities and should avoid situations where there is a reasonable basis for the perception of such a conflict. The obligations outlined in the following paragraphs detail specific occasions when conflicts of interest might occur.

Personal Relationships

A conflict of interest can arise where an Educator's member makes or participates in decisions affecting another person with whom the Educator's member has a personal relationship (such as near relative, spouse, close friend or personal associate). There are a number of situations in the course of an Educator's duties in which a conflict may arise.

Where such a conflict arises in a clear case, an Educator's member should withdraw himself or herself from the situation. Where the relationship is not so close, the Educator's member should discuss the issue with someone in authority.

Sexual Relationships

While it is recognised that Educator's may sometimes form consensual sexual relationships with other Educator's, such relationships should not intrude or be seen to intrude on the workplace generally, since workplace practices may be compromised. Such relationships may also create difficulties in maintaining the boundaries between professional and personal life and may compromise the professional or personal standing of either one or both of the persons involved. Difficulties may also arise from the unequal power of the persons concerned. Educator's in supervisory positions, in particular, must be alert to the conflicts which such a relationship may create in the workplace, and to the need to handle such situations in a sensitive manner.

Financial Relationships

Financial relationships (for instance, where an Educator's member has a pecuniary interest in a company from which equipment is purchased or services obtained) can also give rise to a conflict of interest. Such a relationship must be disclosed before any question of purchasing or other financial or contractual decisions or dealings may arise. In general, Educator's should avoid involvement in such transactions.

Acceptance of Outside Work

Precious Gems Childcare permits Educator's to undertake paid outside work, but it must be recognised that Educator's have a primary commitment to the duties of their appointment and position with any use of Precious Gems Childcare resources in connection with outside work may only occur where prior approval has been obtained.

In the case of academic work, prior approval must be sought and obtained from the Director or PIDTDC before outside work is undertaken. It is recognised that such work can be beneficial in forging links between Precious Gems Childcare and the community.

Appropriate use of Information

Educator's will gain access to information while engaged in caring, teaching, administrative, and technical and support activities. Some information may be unavailable to the community generally or the public. Educator's should respect the privacy of others and ensure that information of a personal nature, for instance, is accessed and used only for the intended purposes and is not disclosed except where policy expressly permits this.

Information of a commercial or strategic nature should also be handled with the utmost sensitivity, and should not be used for personal gain. For example, Educator's having computerised access to personal information about others should not access or use that information for private purposes, and where a student, child, or parent confides in a Educator's member, the information should not be discussed with or revealed to others, except where this is necessary to take action or decisions concerning the person who has provided the information.

Public Comment

Public comment by Educator's in their capacity as private citizens is certainly permitted. In making private comment (including via electronic means such as electronic mail and the internet), every effort must be made to ensure that the opinions expressed are not represented as an official view of Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd or Kids Haven Childcare. Comment made by an Educator's member in a private capacity should not compromise or be perceived to compromise the Educator's ability to carry out his or her duties or implement duly approved Company policy. Any offense to this can result in termination of employment.

Public comment by an Educator's member pertaining to Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd or Kids Haven Childcare will only be made when approval has been given by the Director or PIDTDC.

Duty to Carry out Official Policies and Decisions

Generally, Educator's have an obligation to carry out official decisions and policies faithfully and impartially. This obligation applies even though Educator's have the right to institute grievance procedures where they believe a decision is improper or they seek to have decisions or policy changed through appropriate channels.

Standards of Performance

Educator's should endeavour to maintain and enhance their skills and expertise and keep up to date the knowledge associated with their particular field or area of work. High standards of performance and a focus on client service (whether clients are children, parents, students, other Educator's, and of the academic or wider community) are expected. Educator's should not allow outside work to interfere with the performance of their duties.

Duty to take Care

Educator's should exercise due care in undertaking their activities, particularly where others will rely on advice or information offered. Educator's have a duty to take reasonable care to avoid causing harm (including physical harm) to anyone. Thus, Educator's should actively promote safe working practices and environments for everyone using our facilities.

Orientation Procedures

Prior to Commencement

- Tour of the Centre
- Introduction to other Educator's
- Request for Current resume including, copies of qualifications, first aid certificate, Anaphylaxis Management certificate, working with Children Check. One copy is to remain at the centre.
- Shown or given handbooks, Policies and Job descriptions (to be explained and discussed)
- Employment application form and Employment declaration given to be filled out
- Tax declaration to be returned signed

On Commencement

- Return of all forms
- Discussion of all handbook, policies, and job description, opportunity for questions
- Signing of employment contract
- Supervisor allocated

Post commencement

- A review process will ensure the Educator's get regular constructive feedback about their job performance
- All full time Educator's will participate in a self-appraisal process once a year or may be bi-annually if required.

Review Process

- For new Educator's an informal review will be held within the first three month of employment to ascertain how the educator's is settling into the position.
- There is one formal review periods during the year. Educator's are given prior notice of their performance review and given information that details what aspects of their job will be reviewed and how.
- During the process the Educator's being reviewed are asked to add their own comments to the review to assist in gaining a balanced overall picture of the Educator's performance.
- The completion of the review process will produce constructive feedback regarding the Educator's performance and also identify collaborative goals and plans of action for the Educator's member to work towards following the review.
- We encourage all new educator's and students to ask questions if you are not sure of what to do or what is expected of you.

Employment Policy

Objective

To set down clear guidelines so that prospective and existing team knows what is expected of all parties in regard to employment.

Implementation

- Educator's will comply with the National Law and National Regulations, family assistance law and all applicable Commonwealth and state laws relating to the charge of a Kids Haven Childcare service.
- Employment of all team will meet regulatory and industrial requirements for their role.
- Educator's will work according to all conditions as set out in the Educator's Handbook. Rostered hours will be accordance with the relevant award. Should overtime be required by any team member, or the Director or PIDTDC, management must approve the overtime prior to it being worked.

- All new employees have a probationary period of three months. On completion of the probation period the team member's performance will be evaluated and a decision made with regard to any further requirements for additional training and/or their ongoing employment with Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd.
- All employees will read and familiarise themselves with the educator's handbook and the enclosed checklist will be signed and returned to the team members Centre Director or PIDTDC. This checklist will be kept with the team member's personnel file.
- Educator's employed under casual conditions will be offered shifts according to the requirements of their specific area. Should the situation arise whereby insufficient work is available to sustain the employment of a casual team member, said team member's employment will be terminated as per award requirements.
- As per award conditions permanent employment status can be altered should management decide on restructuring of individual rooms, to cater for fluctuating attendance patterns; or centre wide, to cater for economic and/or child attendance trends; or for administrative team members, where changing workloads or infrastructural changes dictate. Should this happen all permanent entitlements will be paid out up to the date of the change, with restructured employment conditions taking effect from this date forward. Any such changes will be done in accordance with the relevant awards.
- Leave requests will be accommodated wherever possible, however final approval will be dependent upon the operational requirements of Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd. (See employment conditions in Educator's Handbook).
- Educator's are expected to present a positive reflection of the centre and Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd to the community as a whole. Any concerns that team members have regarding their area is to be dealt with according to the grievance procedure included in the Educator's handbook.

- Educator's are expected to handle any sensitive information regarding families, children, their colleagues and Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd in general that they may be privy to with confidentiality. Any breaches of confidentiality will result in mediation and/or disciplinary processes being instigated.
- Formal Educator's evaluations will take place 6 monthly or as required by management.

Employment Conditions

Terms and Conditions of Employment

Award

Precious Gems Childcare operates under the Children's Services (Victoria) Award. Hereinafter, this award shall be referred to as "**the Award**". A copy of the award is always available in the Centre for your perusal, ask the Director or PIDTDC for assistance.

Breaks

Ten (10) minutes in the morning and ten (10) minutes in the afternoon as per the award. All breaks must be organised with other Educator's, never compromising Educator's child ratios and always communicating to other Educator's your movements.

Lunches

As per award conditions you will be allocated an unpaid lunch break of at least 30 minutes after working your 5 hour shift. Your break will be allocated to you with the smooth operation of the centre in mind. As with breaks, ratios must be considered and movements communicated with other Educator's.

Holidays

As per the award, full time Educator's are entitled to 4 weeks annual leave per year incurring a 17.5% holiday loading. Applications for annual leave must be in writing and approved by your Director or PIDTDC at least 4 weeks prior to the requested date of commencing such leave. While we will attempt to accommodate Educator's requests for leave wherever possible, final approval for leave will be dependent on the operational requirements of the centre at that particular time.

Rosters

Rosters are arranged to cover the correct Educator's to child ratio as stated in the regulations. Your shifts, including starting and finishing times may be allocated at any time during the ordinary operating hours of the Centre. You will be given notice, as per the Award, of any changes to the existing roster which may be made on a periodical basis and you will be required to work the shifts as allocated.

New rosters incorporating changes will be posted 3 days prior to changes occurring. You will be required to be at work ready to commence work at the nominated starting time, and at the time for the resumption of work following a meal break.

Time in Lieu & Rostered Days Off (RDO)

Time in Lieu is only given when Educator's attend monthly Educator's meetings and not at any other time other than approved by the Director or PIDTDC. Time sheets need to clearly identify any time worked in this manner. Should you be required to work in excess of your rostered hours this will need to be approved by the centre Director or PIDTDC wherever practicable or the most senior Educator's member on duty at the Centre at that particular time. This approval is to be authorised on your time sheet.

Rostered days off will be offered to all full time permanent employees only and will be given once per calendar month. Educator's maybe asked to work on their

scheduled rostered day off to which the centre Director or PIDTDC will allocate another rostered day off within the same week if practical.

Time Sheets

Time sheets are located in the Educator's room. They must be completed at the start and end of each shift.

Please remember that your time sheet is a legal document and must be filled in accurately and signed. No one can alter your time sheet without your express permission and counter signature to any changes.

Sick Days

Sick leave is accumulated as per the relevant Award. It is advised that you familiarise yourself with this area of your relevant Award, most particularly the section on 'Single Day Absences'. This section advises that an employee will not be entitled to single days of paid sick leave on more than three occasions in any one year of service unless a medical certificate is supplied on resumption of work as required. Any sick days taken without support of a medical certificate will be unpaid. Any sick days taken before or after a weekend or public holiday needs to be accompanied with a medical certificate.

Sick Day Procedure

Should you be unable to attend work due to illness, you are required to verbally call in a replacement of the relief staff on the staff phone number list only and take into consideration of the current weekly roster as to who is Rostered on. You are to then verbally inform the centre Director or PIDTDC of your absence. The staff member you are calling in as your replacement should cover your whole shift, and not just part of your shift.

Rate of Remuneration

Your pay rate has been detailed to you in your “Offer of Employment” and is based on the award. Precious Gems Childcare process pays on a fortnightly basis by electronic funds transfer. Your pay cycle details will be advised to you by your centre Director or PIDTDC on induction.

Pay Queries

Please lodge any queries regarding your pay in writing. Bring your queries to your Centre Director or PIDTDC’s notice as soon as possible so that your issue can be addressed in a timely manner. Please ensure that if you change your bank account you advise your centre Director or PIDTDC and fill out a change of bank detail form. Any changes such as this must be sent through to pay office no later than the Friday before pay week. Details which are not received in this time frame may not be actioned until the next pay fortnight.

Superannuation

In addition to your fortnightly wage, Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd contributes for superannuation at the rate of 10% of your weekly rate into the approved superannuation fund. The rate of contributions may be adjusted from time to time in accordance with the Superannuation Guarantee Charges Act and the relevant award. You will need to complete a “Choice of Superannuation Fund Standard Choice Form” upon commencement.

Other Terms and Conditions of Your Employment

Programming

Non-contact program planning time is a condition of employment for qualified educator’s and as such will be facilitated for as per award conditions. Team Leaders will be allocated non-contact program planning time of 5 hours per week in order to ensure that program planning meets our expectations and quality necessary. Program times will be allocated by the centre Director or PIDTDC. Your allocated program planning day is subject to change but any change will be notified

to you by the centre Director or PIDTDC. Your non-contact time will be allocated to you with the smooth running and regulatory compliance of the centre in mind.

Precious Gems Childcare has an experienced educational leader XXXXX. As the educational leader XXXXXX is able to support all staff with their programming. They have every Friday for educational leader time for 2.5 hours to which checks and assistance is conducted.

Training and Development

Precious Gems Childcare has a commitment to lifelong learning and professionalism within the childcare and education field. In line with this philosophy we provide to all educator's a component of in-service training delivered by external companies to help extend the skills and experience for all educators. If in-service training is provided outside of normal centre hours, time in lieu should be claimed on your time sheet and will be paid with your wages.

Intellectual Property

It is a condition of employment that any intellectual property (including but not limited to forms, policies, curriculum, handbooks, assessment tools and professional development materials) that you are involved with during the course of your employment remains the sole property of Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd. Any unauthorised use of this property will result in legal action against you and will justify grounds for instant dismissal.

N.B. this condition excludes common law rights.

First Aid Certificates

All Educators are required to hold a current first aid certificate. The costs of gaining and maintaining a current first aid certificate is the responsibility of the employee. Failure to meet this legal requirement, the employee will be ineligible to work within the centre until such time as the certificate can be produced.

Working with Children Checks

All educators as per state licensing requirements are required to produce a Working with Children Check on employment. Failure to meet this legal requirement for the eligibility for educator's to work in the centre will mean that employment will not be commenced until the relevant documentation can be provided.

Checks will be conducted bi-annually to ensure that WWCC are current.

Police Checks

All educators, nominated supervisors or PIDTDC are required to produce Police Check on employment. This will also be required annually. Failure to meet this legal requirement for the eligibility for educator's to work in the centre will mean that employment will not be commenced until the relevant documentation can be provided.

Dress Code

The dress code is designed to reflect Educator's' professionalism whilst taking into account the practicalities of working with young children. You will be provided with a uniform which will consist of polo shirt, and a jacket. Educators are required to return all pieces of clothing on completion of employment.

The Precious Gems Childcare dress code is as follows:

- Uniform polo
- Co-coordinating shorts, skirts or pants in black.
- All clothing is to be clean and in good repair. Clothes and shoes that are threadbare or have tears or holes in them are not acceptable.
- Shorts and skirts length will be no shorter than midway between the knee and thigh.
- Stretch fabrics such as leggings material are not acceptable.
- Long hair is to be neatly brushed and tied back
- Fingernails are to be kept trimmed, clean and at a safe length

- Dangling jewellery including earrings that may be pulled by children and provide a hazard and cause potential injury are not to be worn.
- Tattoos that are visible should, where practicable, be covered by clothing or other means. Tattoos that have offensive language or depictions of violence or images not suitable for children to see will need to be covered up regardless.
- Shoes are to be sturdy, safe and enclosed for workplace health and safety reasons. High heels, runners/sneakers, slip on scuffs (Crocks) or thongs are not appropriate. Shoes must be **black** and worn at all times – if it is necessary to remove them for a particular activity, they should be put back on immediately afterwards.
- Educators are expected to wear a hat whenever they are outside during sun smart months with the children as per the centre sun smart policy. Our centre Educator's will assist in modelling sun safe practices to the children. Sun safe hats as recommended by the skin cancer council Victoria.

Behaviour Management Expectations

Precious Gems Childcare has a very strong emphasis on behaviour management. Please make yourself familiar with this policy and seek advice and support from other centre Educator's on commencement with the centre.

The following general expectations regarding speech manner and tone are to be followed by Educator's at all times:

- Educator's are expected to address children with a respectful tone and manner. Educator's should role model correct speech and language to children. Any lack of respect for the children shown through inappropriate discipline, speech, tone or manner will not be tolerated.
- Educator's are at **no time** permitted to use discipline strategies that demean the child or threaten the child in any way.
- Educator's are at **no time** to use any form of physical punishment with children. (The use of any form of physical punishment will be a ground for instant dismissal).

- Educator's who fail to adhere to these expectations will be formally counseled and dealt with in accordance with industrial requirements.

Professional Qualities and Job Descriptions

Job descriptions are included in your Educator's pack. These job descriptions relate to the typical work that you will be expected to perform and need to be read in conjunction with the position description outlined in your award. They have been written to give all educator's a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the positions for which they have been employed. Please ensure that you are familiar with your job description. It is an expectation of your employment that you fulfill the roles and responsibilities of the position you have been employed for.

Collection of Children

Releasing children into the care of another adult is a huge responsibility. It is **VERY** important that educator's are aware of who children are allowed to leave the centre with. A list of persons authorised to pick up each child is held at the centre. You should familiarise yourself with the location of these files. No child can be released to any person **NOT** listed or a person less than 18 years of age. If you are in any doubt as to the authority of the person who has arrived to collect a child you must ring the parent first before releasing the child or speak to the person in charge of the centre at the time.

Developmental concerns and children at risk

All concerns **MUST** be reported to the Director or PIDTDC.

Grounds for Instant Dismissal

As per the award, the employer has the right to dismiss Educator's for serious misconduct in the performance of their job. **Regulatory Breaches or Unlawful Behaviour** as follows may result in terminating your employment without notice:-

- Consumption of drugs or alcohol while at work or within the work environment. If you are found to be evidencing the effects of drugs or

alcohol, your employment may be terminated without notice on the grounds of serious misconduct.

- The verbal, physical, sexual or other abuse of children, other educator's, parents or any person associated with Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd will be regarded as serious misconduct.
- Unlawful possession of property belonging to Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd, other employees, parents or anyone associated with the centre without the relevant permission or authority.
- The disclosure of any knowledge or information relating to the financial, business or confidential affairs of Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd gained by you during your employment to any other person or entity without the specific prior authorisation of Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd. *N.B. This does not excuse the employee from their obligation to report any unlawful activity, or limit the employees' legal right to speak to the union.*
- The fabrication of records, including time and wage records, child care subsidy, enrolment, and booking information.
- Leaving a child in your care unattended.
- Releasing child/children to any person, including non-custodial parents, family members or friends without proper authorisation.
- Failure to adhere to the regulations which impact upon Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd or the centre's operations, or perform your duties as per statutory requirements (such as Educator's/child ratios, the need for responsible persons to supervise children etc).
- Failure to report and record any illness or accidents involving children at the centre.
- Any action or omission that places children's health and safety at significant risk, with regard to, but not limited to medication, allergies, serious dietary requirements, etc.

educators who have allegedly breached the above will be suspended until a full investigation and a determination can be made.

RESIGNATION

The employee is to give minimum 2 weeks' notice of resignation. Less than two weeks' notice the employee can withhold one week annual leave for the employee.

All centre property such as uniform, equipment and any monies owing must be returned to centre before resignation. The employer has the right to withhold any Owings to the employee until all property is returned.

BACKBITING

Is when educator's talk inappropriately about other educator's to another resulting in gossip within the centre as well educator's not following directions from management and answer back in an inappropriate tone and manner.

Backbiting is **NOT TOLERATED** at Precious Gems Childcare; it is unacceptable and can lead to a breakdown of unity between educator's within the centre, making it an unpleasant place to work. Any educator's member caught back biting may result in immediate dismissal or formal warnings.

Internet and Email Policy

Objective

To minimise potential damage to you, you're colleagues, or Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd which may arise as a result of the misuse of Information Technology in the workplace.

Implementation

Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd holding the centre license is the owner of copyright in all email messages created by authorised users of the IT facilities.

Security:

- From time to time, the contents and usage of email may be examined by management or by a third party.

Monitoring:

- Our computer network is a business and educational tool to be used primarily for business or educational purposes. You therefore have a

responsibility to use these resources in an appropriate, professional and lawful manner.

- All messages on the centre's system will be treated as business or educational messages, which may be monitored. Accordingly, you should not expect that any information or document transmitted or stored on the centre computer network will be private.
- You should also be aware that management may monitor your use of the Internet both during work hours and outside of those hours. This includes the sites and content that you visit and the length of time you spend using the Internet.
- Emails may be archived by management as it considers appropriate.

Personal Use:

- Outside work hours, you are permitted to use the Internet and email facilities to send and receive personal messages, provided that such use is kept to a minimum and does not interfere with centre business. Any such use of the internet or email for personal purposes outside work times is still subject to the same terms and conditions as otherwise described in this Policy.
- In the case of shared IT facilities, you are expected to respect the needs of your colleagues and use the Internet and email in a timely and efficient manner.
- Excessive or inappropriate use of IT facilities for personal reasons during work hours may lead to restrictions of usage rights being placed upon you.
- In addition, use of the technology system; and any information documents, files or other intellectual property on the technology system; for personal commercial or personal business is prohibited unless the written consent of the Managing Director or PIDTDC (or equivalent) is first obtained for that specific purpose and use.

Content:

- You and/or the approved provider may be liable for what you say in an email message. **Email is neither private nor secret. It may be easily copied, forwarded, saved, intercepted, archived and may be subject to discovery in litigation.** The

audience of an inappropriate comment in an email may be unexpected and extremely widespread.

- Never use the IT facilities for the following purposes:
- to abuse, vilify, defame, harass or discriminate (by virtue of sex, race, religion, national origin or other) to send or receive obscene or pornographic material;
- to injure the reputation of the centre or in a manner that may cause embarrassment to the approved provider;
- to spam or mass mail or to send or receive a chain email;
- to infringe on the copyright or other intellectual property rights of another person; or
- To perform any unlawful or inappropriate act.

Educator's Maternity Policy

Objective

To put in place guidelines for management and Educator's to manage pregnancy and employment conditions during pregnancy and following confinement.

Eligibility

Employees who have had at least 12 months' continuous service with Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd prior to the date upon which they proceed upon maternity leave are entitled to up to 52 weeks unpaid maternity leave upon production of certification. Maternity leave of up to 52 weeks may be taken provided that such leave shall not extend beyond the child's 1st birthday.

As specified in the award, this entitlement shall be reduced by any period of parental leave taken by the employee's spouse, apart from parental leave of up to one week at the time of confinement.

An employee may, in conjunction with maternity leave, take any annual leave or long service leave to which she is entitled and must not exceed 52 weeks in aggregate.

Requirements for leave

The employee shall produce the certification not less than 10 weeks prior to the presumed date of confinement.

The employee shall give no less than 4 weeks' notice in writing of the date upon which she proposes to commence maternity leave and state the period of leave to be taken.

The employee is also required to produce a statutory declaration stating particulars of any parental leave sought by her spouse as per the Award, and that for the period of maternity leave, she will not engage in any conduct inconsistent with her contract of employment.

Should the employee wish to continue to work within the 6 week period immediately prior to the expected date of confinement, she will be required to provide a medical certificate stating she is fit to work her normal duties on a weekly basis.

Requirements for return to work

The employee shall confirm her intention to return to work in writing not less than 4 weeks prior to the expiration of her maternity leave.

Should an employee wish to return to work after the birth of the child prior to the period stipulated in the relevant State Award, she will be required to provide a medical certificate stating she is fit to work her normal duties.

Should the position the employee held before the leave no longer exist, she shall be entitled to a position as nearly comparable in status and pay to that of her former position, as per the Award.

Infectious Disease Transmission

Whilst working at a childcare facility pregnant educator's are at risk of acquiring infectious diseases that may cause fetal infection.

Pregnant educator's are encouraged to seek advice from a medical practitioner with regard to the risk of acquiring infectious diseases that may impact on pregnancy.

In the case of a risk to the health or safety of the employee or her unborn child, where possible, the employee's working conditions or hours of work will be adjusted to avoid exposure to the risk, or the employee may be transferred to a 'safe' job. If this is not practicable, the employee may be required to take leave for such period as is certified necessary by a registered medical practitioner.

Such leave shall be treated as maternity leave or available paid sick leave, for as long as a doctor certifies it is necessary to avoid exposure to risk.

Procedures for infection control relating to Covid-19

The current advice from Victoria's Chief Health Officer and the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) is that early childhood education and care services can continue to operate, with appropriate risk-mitigation measures in place (unless instructed by the Department of Health and Human Services to close).

Precious Gems Childcare will operate, with appropriate risk-mitigation strategies in place – unless otherwise instructed by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Precious Gems Childcare will also operate having strong hygiene practices to adopt the risk-mitigation strategies advised by the Chief Health Officer and the AHPPC. Some families may choose to be at home, but they need to know that attending on-site is available and encouraged for all families (except those with health vulnerabilities).

Conclusion

Employees should read the relevant Award for further clarification of situations, terms and conditions not mentioned in this policy.

Requirements for leave

The employee shall produce the certification not less than 10 weeks prior to the presumed date of confinement.

The employee shall give not less than 4 weeks' notice in writing of the date upon which she proposes to commence maternity leave and state the period of leave to be taken.

The employee is also required to produce a statutory declaration stating particulars of any parental leave sought by her spouse as per the Award, and that for the period of maternity leave, she will not engage in any conduct inconsistent with her contract of employment.

Should the employee wish to continue to work within the 6 week period immediately prior to the expected date of confinement, she will be required to provide a medical certificate stating she is fit to work her normal duties on a weekly basis.

Requirements for return to work

The employee shall confirm her intention to return to work in writing not less than 4 weeks prior to the expiration of her maternity leave. Should an employee wish to return to work after the birth of the child prior to the period stipulated in the State Award, she will be required to provide a medical certificate stating she is fit to work her normal duties.

Should the position the employee held before the leave no longer exist, she shall be entitled to a position as nearly comparable in status and pay to that of her former position, as per the Award.

Infectious Disease Transmission

Whilst working at a childcare facility pregnant educators are at risk of acquiring infectious diseases that may cause fatal infection.

Pregnant Educator's will be provided with an information pack containing information about each of the relevant diseases and disease-specific strategies to

manage the risks. Educators will be required to sign a declaration that they have been advised of these risks and strategies.

Pregnant educators are encouraged to seek advice from a medical practitioner with regard to the risk of acquiring infectious diseases that may impact on pregnancy.

In the case of a risk to the health or safety of the employee or her unborn child, where possible, the employee's working conditions or hours of work will be adjusted to avoid exposure to the risk, or the employee may be transferred to a 'safe' job. If this is not practicable, the employee may be required to take leave for such period as is certified necessary by a registered medical practitioner.

Such leave shall be treated as maternity leave or available paid sick leave, for as long as a doctor certifies it is necessary to avoid exposure to risk.

Conclusion

Employees should read the relevant Award for further clarification of situations, terms and conditions not mentioned in this policy.

Educator's Privacy Policy

Objective

Our aim is to provide you with the highest standard of service, in order to do this our organisations is required to collect personal information from you about your child/ren and parents/guardians before and during the course of a child's enrolment in our service. We are committed to protecting your Privacy and we abide by the National Privacy Principles contained within the Privacy Act.

Privacy of your personal information is important to us and we conduct our business with respect and integrity.

Implementation

What information do we collect, why and how it is used?

Basic details are usually collected directly from parents such as your names, address, phone contacts but it is also necessary for Educator's collect details

regarding your child's name, date of birth, medical details, health, routines, likes and dislikes which make up a personal profile.

In addition we are required to hold information regarding your child's Child Care Subsidy entitlements.

All this information is vital in assisting us to provide the best possible individual care for your child and for processing payments. Some of the information we collect is to satisfy the services legal obligations under the relevant childcare legislation.

The Centre from time to time may disclose personal and sensitive information to others for administrative purposes. This includes to the Department of Community/Human Services, Family and Community Services, Family Assistance Office, Department of Health, Family Law Court and other child care professionals. Naturally, much of this information is of a personal nature and some of it might be regarded as 'sensitive' and not the sort of information that you would wish to have unnecessarily disclosed to others.

We assure you that:

- This information will only be used by our child care professionals in order to deliver your child's care to the highest standards
- It will not be disclosed to those not associated with the care of your child without your express consent
- You may ask to seek access to information held about you and your child and we will provide access without undue delay
- This access might be inspection of your child's records or by providing copies of information
- We will take reasonable steps to ensure at all times that the details we keep about your family are accurate, complete and up to date
- We will take reasonable steps to protect this information from misuse or loss and from unauthorised access or disclosure
- Our Educator's are committed to respect these principles at all times

- If a student has valid training requirement that involves the gathering of certain information pertaining to your child or family, the student must have written consent from you and the Director or PIDTDC
- All documentation will be stored in safe and secure area at Precious Gems Childcare

What is personal information?

In the Privacy Act personal information is defined as information about an individual whose identity may be worked out from that information. This includes names, addresses, phone numbers etc.

What is sensitive information?

Sensitive information refers to information such as a person's racial or ethnic origin, religious or health information and requires a higher level of protection because of the sensitive matters it relates to. For detailed information about the legislation, go to the Federal Privacy Commission website: www.privacy.gov.au. If you have any concerns or questions about the way your personal information is being managed please contact the Director or PIDTDC.

Educator's Health and Safety

Back problems are common in educator's working with children, so be aware and ensure you know the correct lifting techniques. No Educator is ever expected to put their back at risk. Always get help with lifting heavy equipment and avoid lifting children, instead crouch to their level to communicate.

When lifting any weights please ensure that the appropriate technique is used. Bend at the knees and keep your back straight as you lift. Do not over reach as you lift and make sure that you are not lifting items that are too heavy to safely lift on your own. IF IN DOUBT CALL FOR ASSISTANCE.

All accidents and incidents **MUST** be recorded on the appropriate form. This is applicable for children's injuries, educator's injuries and incidents

Educator's who are feeling unwell or have a contagious illness are encouraged to stay at home until well. We encourage parents to ensure that sick children are kept at home to protect the overall health of the rest of the Centre. We apply the same expectations to our educators.

We have a variety of Health and Safety policies which you must be familiar with, which are located in the policy book. Knowing the evacuation plans for the centre is an important expectation of Educator's within the centre. An evacuation plan is on the wall of each classroom, and emergency telephone numbers are on a poster on the wall near each phone of the centre.

For further information please ask the Director or PIDTDC

Educator's Grievances

The Educator's Grievance Policy is reprinted in full below; so that all Educator's has ready access to the way Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd expects that grievances will be dealt with.

Objective

Precious Gems Childcare is committed to ensuring that Educator's' work related problems, concerns or complaints are resolved to further ensure a work environment that is productive and maintained.

Implementation

Educator's who have a grievance should talk directly to the Educator's member they have the grievance with. Together, they should try to resolve the issue and develop possible solutions to ensure the situation does not arise again.

If the Educator's are unable to resolve the grievance they should talk to the centre Director or PIDTDC as soon as possible. The Director or PIDTDC will try all

avenues to solve the problem at centre level. If this is not possible the Director or PIDTDC will call on the Operator/Approved Provider to mediate the situation. The Director or PIDTDC's role is to be non-judgmental, unbiased and fair.

It is not ethical to involve other Educator's or parents in an individual concern, and it is not ethical to have that concern affect Educator's relationships. It is also not appropriate to involve outside agencies before seeing the Director or PIDTDC or Operator/Approved Provider with your concerns.

Educator's are always encouraged to communicate openly with Management, the Director or PIDTDC and other Educator's and to discuss any concerns informally, or at Educator's meetings. Working as a team is also encouraged, and having respect for other members of the team is imperative.

At all times Management will address and respond to issues appropriately and maintain confidentiality. Only relevant Educator's will be advised of the outcomes of any grievances and resolutions.

Educator's who belong to a trade union may contact the union at any time if they have major concerns.

Dispute Resolution

Where a dispute arises with respect to work related matters there is an expectation that the Educator's involved will work towards a mutual resolution. It is expected that the parties involved, at a minimum, attempt to resolve the issue with the Educator's member/s directly involved, and/or feedback from the Director or PIDTDC. Should a solution to the dispute not be forthcoming, Educator's are referred to the Complaints & Grievance Policy.

Precious Gems Childcare has a 'zero tolerance' for negative communication between Educator's including gossip, and deliberate undermining of Educator's. Educator's found engaging in this form of communication with either parents or other Educator's will be counselled accordingly. Should an Educator's member have concerns regarding another Educator's member or parent we expect the issues be dealt with in an adult and professional manner as per the Educator's or Parent Grievance policy.

Educator's Communications

All Educator's communications are expected Director or PIDTDC to be positive and professional. Should any issues arise that cannot be resolved, the Director or PIDTDC/Area Manager must be informed immediately. The Director or PIDTDC will initiate a meeting between parties and act as a mediator to resolve the conflict.

Confidentialities must be observed in the centre by all Educator's at all times with regard to information about Educator's, children and families and Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd. No information can be divulged on any matter regarding a child or Educator's member over the telephone, and the presence of any child can never be confirmed or denied to any person (or access given to any person) other than those stated on that individual's enrolment form.

Communications to parents should be positively put even if sometimes there are some difficult issues to discuss. All written communication to parents such as newsletters, child reports, incident reports etc must be shown to the Director or PIDTDC or the most senior Educator's member on duty before the parent is given the communication.

Educator's may only give advice on issues which they are qualified to discuss. A record must be kept of advice given to parents – either in a personal diary; program planning evaluation forms, on an incident report; or in a formal written form with the Director or PIDTDC's approval.

Communication with parents regarding a child's development, progress, and behaviour should only be discussed by the Team Leader or Director or PIDTDC with the parents. Educators are encouraged to be welcoming and communicative with parents but to recognize that developmental issues can be highly sensitive and a sound understanding that comes with training in this area is necessary to ensure that parents are receiving accurate information, delivered in the appropriate way.

From time to time Assistants may be asked to talk to a parent if the Team Leader will not be available when the parent arrives. In these circumstances, Team Leaders will ensure that the assistants are given clear instructions as to the information that needs to be passed on.

Educator's Meetings

The agendas for Educator's meetings will be available to Educator's prior to the meeting. Educators can add to this agenda if they have an issue that needs to be discussed. The meetings are a forum for discussing Centre operations, accreditation, licensing issues, children and families, general housekeeping issues and upcoming events.

Precious Gems Childcare sees that your participation in Educator's meetings is an essential part of the successful operation of a child care centre, as much in your interest as the Centre's. We encourage your regular participation in these meetings which will be held so far as practicable to minimize any effect on personal lifestyles. Please be aware that Time in Lieu will be calculated and given for Educator's meetings. Educator's meetings are one of the few opportunities for Educator's to get together to discuss Centre issues without interruptions from children or parents.

We expect that Educator's will use positive communication skills at all times and not discuss personal issues, and an Educator's meeting is no different. Should an Educator's member have something of a personal nature to discuss they are directed to discuss the issue with the Centre Director or PIDTDC.

Opening and Closing Procedures

When the centre opens early Educators are required to open windows and doors throughout the building, and set up the family grouping room with appropriate

activities. The outdoor yards need to be set up according to plans from the individual classes. The sandpits **MUST** be raked, and the yard checked for foreign objects and safety.

When the group moves outdoors, the indoor classroom must be tidied, and equipment put away. All children must have sunscreen applied and a hat. Regulation Educator's ratios must be observed at all times. Before closing the yards must be packed up, equipment stored, sandpits raked and covered, and shed locked.

Each room is responsible for their own cleaning and washing and this should be concluded before the last Educator's member for each room finishes. Check for washing in other classes before putting on a small load. The drier should only be used in wet weather.

Before the centre closes the late shift Educator's must ensure the kitchen, the workrooms, bathrooms and class room last used are tidy.

Lock up should be carried out twice, once by the Assistant, then again by the Team Leader when the last child has departed. This double check is essential for the security of the Centre.

Any children picked up after closing time must be recorded on the late sheet filed in the late folder at the reception desk. Any children still at the centre at closing time, without a telephone call from parents will be treated in accordance to our Late Children Policy. The Director or PIDTDC must be contacted and informed before action is taken.

Miscellaneous Information

Medical and Drug Testing

Precious Gems Childcare may seek objective evidence to verify individual capacity and capability that will be required for effective undertaking of job related systems, tasks and activities. Pre-employment medical tests may be necessary to determine whether the applicant qualifies for the physical requirements of the position and to discover any medical limitations that should be taken into account before placing the applicant. These medical tests may be used only after ensuring all Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) issues have been taken into consideration and approval from senior management has been given. Pre-employment medical tests, questions and information should relate exclusively and directly to the genuine and reasonable requirements of the job and not unfairly discriminate against individuals with disabilities and impairments. (Precious Gems Childcare will advise Educator's at commencement of employment on when this will occur)

Telephone Calls

All incoming private calls are to be kept to a minimum and personal calls may be taken as a message and Educators can return calls in own breaks.

Mobile Phones

It is expected that Educator's will turn their mobile phones off or place them on silent without vibration at all times while working. NO mobile phones shall be taken into the rooms at any time. Failure to do so may mean that children are not adequately supervised which may result in disciplinary action as per the "Grounds for Instant Dismissal". There is no objection to Educator's use of mobile phones while on a lunch break and before or after work.

Account Enquiries

Make a note of the enquiry and leave a message for the Director or PIDTDC. Tell the parent the issue will be dealt with as soon as possible.

Messages and Communications

A communication books are situated in each room. All messages are to be written in this book clearly and time stated if appropriate. It is an expectation that all

Educator's check the communication book a few times a day for any messages or important information that may be relevant to them. Please note the communication book is about positive communication, it is not a vehicle for gossip, or destructive criticism. Should serious issues need to be discussed they should **ALWAYS** be conducted in private with the Director or PIDTDC. We have a strong philosophy with Educator's morale, and problem solving:

WORK THE PROBLEM NOT THE PERSON

Take the time to pass on positive comments about your colleagues; it can be a rewarding experience for all involved.

A Word on our Policies and Procedures

Precious Gems Childcare has developed a number of policies and procedures to guide the way in which we work. A copy of the Policy Handbook is kept in the Centre Foyer. You are required to read and understand the policies of the Centre, as you will be expected to work in accordance with these policies and procedures.

Conclusion

If you have any queries regarding this Educator's handbook, please feel free to ask and seek assistance from the centre Director or PIDTDC. Once you have read this handbook and understand its contents please sign the last page of this handbook. This signatory page then goes to your centre Director or PIDTDC.

***Welcome to our Team.
We look forward to a long and positive working
relationship with you.***

**Educator's Declaration
Precious Gems Childcare
(Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd)**

Employee's Name:

Centre Name: Kids Haven Childcare

Centre Director or PIDTDC: Nelly Hobaiter

I confirm that I have read and understand the Educator's Handbook. I confirm that I have read and understand the associated information and other documentation, including the Policy Handbook, as detailed in this handbook. I confirm that by signing this handbook I agree to abide by the terms and conditions as set out in the Centre Handbooks.

Educator Signature:

Date:

Approved Provider, Centre Director or PIDTDC Signature:

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Date: