# BERMAGUI PRESCHOOL

# 1.15 Babysitting and Professional Boundaries Policy

*The safety, rights and best interests of children are the paramount consideration in all decisions and actions relating to the operation and delivery of education and care at Bermagui Preschool.*

This policy has been developed by Bermagui Preschool in consultation with the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators and families.

**Date Approved:** September 2026 **Review Date:** September 2029

## Aim

Bermagui Preschool is committed to maintaining a child-safe environment and clear professional boundaries between employees, children and families. This policy establishes clear expectations for employees who may undertake private babysitting or child-minding arrangements for children and families who currently attend Bermagui Preschool. It aims to protect children, families and employees by identifying and managing potential professional boundary issues, conflicts of interest and child safety risks.

## Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Bermagui Preschool, including permanent, part-time, casual and temporary employees.

## Policy Statement

Bermagui Preschool strongly discourages employees from undertaking private babysitting or child-minding arrangements for children who currently attend the Preschool.

Bermagui Preschool recognises that employees and families may establish private relationships outside the Preschool. However, any private babysitting arrangement must remain separate from the employee's employment and must not compromise child safety, professional boundaries, confidentiality, professional judgement or the employee's responsibilities to the Preschool.

Babysitting undertaken by an employee for a current Preschool family is a private arrangement and is not provided, arranged, endorsed or supervised by Bermagui Preschool.

## Professional Boundaries

Employees are expected to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and families at all times, including outside the Preschool environment.

Employees must not:

- use their position at Bermagui Preschool to seek or arrange private babysitting work;
- use information obtained through their employment, including family contact details, enrolment information or knowledge of family circumstances, to initiate or arrange private babysitting;
- organise or discuss babysitting arrangements during paid working hours;
- use Preschool contact details, communication systems, devices, accounts or resources to arrange babysitting;
- provide preferential treatment to a child at Preschool because of a private babysitting relationship;
- allow a babysitting relationship to influence their professional judgement, responsibilities or relationships at Preschool; or
- represent a private babysitting arrangement as being provided, approved, recommended or supervised by Bermagui Preschool.

Employees should carefully consider the potential risks before accepting any babysitting arrangement with a current Preschool family, including:

- the blurring of professional and personal relationships;
- being alone with a child outside the safeguards and supervision arrangements of the Preschool;
- actual or perceived conflicts of interest;
- potential impacts on professional judgement;
- confidentiality concerns; and
- the potential impact on the employee, child or family if concerns or disputes arise.

**Private Babysitting Arrangements**

Any babysitting undertaken by an employee for a current Preschool family is outside the employee's duties and employment with Bermagui Preschool.

When babysitting, the employee is acting in a private capacity and not as an employee, representative or agent of Bermagui Preschool.

Bermagui Preschool does not:

- arrange or broker private babysitting;
- employ or pay employees for private babysitting outside their preschool duties;
- supervise or manage private babysitting arrangements;
- accept responsibility for private babysitting arrangements; or
- represent that private babysitting is covered by the Preschool's insurance or employment arrangements.

Employees and families are responsible for making their own enquiries regarding any insurance, payment, taxation, Working with Children Check or other legal requirements that may apply to their private arrangement.

**Disclosure of Babysitting Arrangements**

Employees must disclose any existing or proposed babysitting arrangement with a child who currently attends Bermagui Preschool to the Nominated Supervisor. Disclosure enables the Preschool to identify and manage any potential child safety concerns, professional boundary issues or conflicts of interest.

Disclosure of a private babysitting arrangement does not mean that Bermagui Preschool has approved, endorsed, arranged or accepted responsibility for the arrangement.

Where a disclosed arrangement creates an actual or potential conflict of interest, child safety concern or professional boundary concern, the Nominated Supervisor may provide direction to the employee about maintaining appropriate professional boundaries or take other appropriate action.

**Private Babysitting Arrangement – Family and Employee Acknowledgement**

Where an employee undertakes or proposes to undertake private babysitting for a child who currently attends Bermagui Preschool, the employee and parent/carer must complete the Private Babysitting Arrangement – Family and Employee Acknowledgement.

The completed acknowledgement confirms that the employee and family understand the private nature of the arrangement and the professional boundary, confidentiality and child safety expectations that apply.

The Nominated Supervisor will acknowledge receipt of the disclosure. This does not constitute approval, endorsement or recommendation of the babysitting arrangement by Bermagui Preschool.

**Separation of Professional and Private Roles**

Employees must maintain a clear distinction between their professional role at Bermagui Preschool and any private babysitting role.

Employees must not:

- use their professional position to obtain private work;
- use Preschool resources or information for private babysitting purposes;
- allow private babysitting responsibilities to interfere with their preschool duties;
- allow a private relationship with a family to affect their treatment of the child or family at Preschool;
- use their professional knowledge of a child or family for personal purposes; or
- allow private arrangements to influence decisions relating to the child at Preschool.

Where an employee is involved in a preschool matter concerning a child or family for whom they provide private babysitting, including a complaint, incident, concern, assessment or other matter that may create a conflict of interest, the employee must notify the Nominated Supervisor.

**Confidentiality and Information**

Employees participating in private babysitting arrangements continue to be bound by their professional obligations regarding confidentiality and privacy.

Babysitting does not provide permission to access, use or disclose information obtained through an employee's role at Bermagui Preschool.

Employees must not:

- discuss confidential Preschool information with a family while babysitting;
- discuss other children, families or staff;
- discuss incidents, complaints, allegations or other confidential Preschool matters;
- share information about a child obtained through their professional role for private purposes;
- use Preschool records or information for private babysitting purposes; or
- disclose information that is confidential to Bermagui Preschool.

Employees must comply with Bermagui Preschool's Confidentiality Policy when undertaking private babysitting.

**Communication and Social Media**

Employees must maintain appropriate boundaries when communicating with children and families in connection with private babysitting.

Employees must not:

- use Preschool communication systems or accounts to organise babysitting;
- use their professional relationship with a child to establish inappropriate personal communication;
- communicate inappropriately with children through personal social media or messaging platforms;
- share Preschool photographs, records or information with families for private babysitting purposes; or
- use personal communication channels in a manner that compromises professional boundaries or child safety.

Private communication with a parent or carer about practical babysitting arrangements must remain appropriate and must not involve the disclosure of confidential Preschool information.

**Child Safety Concerns**

Any child safety concern, disclosure, allegation or concern regarding inappropriate conduct arising in connection with private babysitting must be managed in accordance with the 4.18 Child Protection Policy and relevant reporting and response procedures.

Employees must not attempt to manage a child safety concern privately or make their own determination about whether a concern should be reported.

Concerns regarding professional conduct or boundaries will also be managed in accordance with relevant Preschool policies, procedures and the Code of Conduct.

**Responsibilities**

Employees are responsible for:

- completing the Private Babysitting Arrangement – Family and Employee Acknowledgement with the family before commencing a babysitting arrangement;
- maintaining clear and appropriate professional boundaries;
- keeping private babysitting separate from their preschool duties;
- not arranging or discussing babysitting during paid working hours;
- protecting confidential Preschool information;
- disclosing existing or proposed babysitting arrangements with current Preschool families to the Nominated Supervisor;
- notifying the Nominated Supervisor of any actual or potential conflict of interest;
- following the Preschool's Code of Conduct and relevant policies; and
- raising child safety or professional boundary concerns with the Nominated Supervisor.

Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- receiving and securely retaining completed Private Babysitting Arrangement – Family and Employee Acknowledgements;
- providing guidance to employees regarding professional boundaries;
- considering disclosed babysitting arrangements and any potential conflicts of interest;
- responding appropriately to identified child safety or professional boundary concerns;
- ensuring relevant policies and procedures are communicated to employees; and
- ensuring the safety, rights and best interests of children remain the paramount consideration.

**Related Documents**

- 7.40 Private Babysitting Arrangement – Family and Employee Acknowlegement
- 1.05 Interaction with Children, Families and Staff Policy
- 1.09 Feedback, Grievances and Complaints Policy
- 1.11 Photography – Digital Media – Social Media and Online Safety Policy
- 2.02 Staff Employment Policy
- 2.06 Confidentiality Policy
- 2.10 Code of Conduct Policy
- 4.18 Child Protection Policy
- 4.41 Paramountcy in Child Safe Practice Policy
- 5.10 Interactions with Children Policy

## National Quality Standard

This policy supports:

- Quality Area 2 – Children's Health and Safety
  - 2.2.1 Supervision
  - 2.2.2 Incident and emergency management
- Quality Area 4 – Staffing Arrangements
  - 4.2.1 Professional collaboration
- Quality Area 5 – Relationships with Children
  - 5.1.1 Positive educator to child interactions
  - 5.1.2 Dignity and rights of the child
- Quality Area 7 – Governance and Leadership
  - 7.1.2 Management systems
  - 7.1.3 Roles and responsibilities
  - 7.2.1 Continuous improvement

## Legislation and Regulatory Requirements

- Education and Care Services National Law (NSW) – particularly sections 166, 166A and 167
- Education and Care Services National Regulations (NSW) – particularly Regulations 155, 156, 168 and 170
- Children's Guardian Act 2019 (NSW)
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)

## References

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) – National Quality Framework
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) – National Quality Standard
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) – Information Sheet: Inappropriate Conduct
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) – Information Sheet: Understanding Paramount Consideration
- NSW Office of the Children's Guardian – Child Safe Standards
- NSW Office of the Children's Guardian – Child Safe Scheme
- NSW Office of the Children's Guardian – Working with Children Check
- Early Childhood Australia – Code of Ethics

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or earlier where required due to changes in legislation, regulatory requirements, guidance, identified risks, incidents, complaints or changes to Preschool practice.

## Version History

V1.0 – September 2026: First published. Developed to establish clear expectations regarding private babysitting arrangements between employees and current Preschool families and to strengthen professional boundary and child safety requirements.