

Ministry of Education, Republic of Vanuatu

Code of Ethics for Kindy Teachers

Caring Professionals



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CODE OF ETHICS FOR KINDY TEACHERS IN THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

Introduction

A code of ethics was prepared for teachers in the South Pacific Region to embody and uphold the relevant UN conventions and the appropriate South Pacific regional frameworks and laws on education. (A South Pacific Teachers' Code of Ethics)

The Ministry of Education in Vanuatu has used this excellent source to prepare a code of ethics for all Kindy teachers in the six provinces of Vanuatu. This document will support the teachers hired by local communities to ensure that interaction with children, with each other and with parents and based on professionalism and trust.

Young children are particularly vulnerable and have little power over their lives and few skills to protect themselves from harm. This places Kindy teachers in a relationship of special trust and power.

The code promotes the importance of quality when working with young children, the need to establish a safe and creative learning environment, the encouragement of parental engagement and the respect and trust demanded when relating to other teachers in the profession.

The code defines the core values of the teaching profession and provides guidance for teachers should they encounter conflicting obligations and or complex issues in their daily work. The code is not a prescriptive solution to everyday issues but it provides an opportunity for teachers to engage in critical reflection and discuss solutions to problems that might have to be dealt with.

It is hoped that this code will guide the daily behavior and interaction of Kindy teachers with children, with each other and with the community.

The most important principle of this code is to ensure that no teacher participates in intimidating, harassing or hurting children in any way. Children must be protected at all times and feel safe and secure in their environment. This code of ethics focuses on a child centered approach to teaching and learning. It is important to understand that learning happens everywhere and all the time: indoors, outdoors, in rural and urban areas, meetings, and in other social settings. Teachers are therefore expected to honour their profession and create learning environments that are supportive, caring, and inclusive.

Values are an important component of a code of ethics. The Vanuatu Kindy teachers who are hired to teach young children shall ensure that:

1. They value, celebrate and respect the uniqueness of each child
2. They value and appreciate the local chiefs, elderly community, and community leaders
3. They value and understand the role and responsibility of parents and their relationship to their children

4. They value and promote the vernacular language, culture, environment, and customs of the community they serve
5. They value and believe in justice, inclusion and equity as well as democracy and reconciliation
6. They respect other teachers in their profession and behave in a professional manner at all times

The following outlines the commitments and principles that a Kindy teacher adheres to in their daily professional lives:

Responsibility to Children

1. All children will have access to a quality education
2. All children will be educated in their first language and their culture and tradition will be respected
3. All children will be treated with respect regardless of their language, religion, gender, economic status, disability or race
4. All children will be exposed to different teaching styles so that they can learn
5. All learning activities will be based on developmentally appropriate practices
6. All children with special needs will be treated with dignity and supported to succeed in Kindy
7. All Kindy teachers will appreciate that the early years are part of the life cycle and one of the most important and unique stages of brain development
8. All children will be observed and assessed to support and identify children who may need special attention and support
9. All teachers will try to base their teaching on the latest research and knowledge of early childhood education
10. All teachers will maintain a healthy, safe, creative, and motivating learning environment
11. All children will be protected from physical, verbal, and emotional harm and or abuse and teachers will create a secure environment

Responsibility towards Parents, Community Members and Society

1. All professional relationships will be based on mutual trust and respect and used to relate to parents, the community and others
2. All discussion and feedback to parents, community and society at large will be inviting and participatory.
3. All feedback on children's progress will be shared with parents in a positive manner
4. All parental and community committees will be supported to engage in the everyday education of their children
5. All promotion of early learning will be a constant theme with parental, community and societal discussions.

6. All efforts to protect and respect the language, tradition, culture and environment of the community and society will be upheld
7. All Kindy Committees will be encouraged to understand their roles and responsibilities and acknowledged for their contributions

Responsibility to the Teaching Profession

1. Engagement with other teachers will always be based on professional collegiality
2. Equitable treatment of all teachers will be part of everyday interaction
3. Ongoing professional development and a strong commitment to creating professional learning communities will be upheld
4. High standards of behavior will guide all interactions with each other
5. Ministry policies and programs will be used to ensure that all children meet expected learning goals and have successful results
6. Transition to primary grades will be made seamless and work with grade 1-3 teachers will be a constant effort to ensure a continuum of learning

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