

Policy Statement

This policy acts to ensure that:

- Interactions with children are caring, genuine, respectful and without bias
- A positive atmosphere and the wellbeing of children is promoted through attentive care and quality interactions

Explanation

Positive Educator to child interactions are central to ensuring quality outcomes for children's education and care.

We value the important role our Educators play in children's education and care. We equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to interact positively with the children and promote positive relationships between children.

Our educational program encourages children's self-expression, promotes self-reliance, maintains their dignity and rights, gives positive guidance and recognises their culture, values and abilities.

Emotional development and social relationships are enhanced through thoughtful approaches to conversations and the promotion of children's language and communication.

Children, who experience relationships in an early education and care setting that are built on respect, fairness, acceptance, co-operation and empathy are given the opportunity to develop these qualities themselves. When children have positive interactions, they develop an understanding of themselves and feel a sense of belonging.

Goals

- Guide children and Educators on the importance of developing respectful and positive relationships with each other and with the other children and Educators
- Encourage a child-centred approach that promotes self-expression, self-reliance, self-esteem and maintains each child's dignity and rights
- Be responsive to children's strengths, interests and abilities
- Uphold children's rights, dignity and agency
- Provide positive behaviour support
- Promote a safe, secure and nurturing environment
- Be authentic and responsive

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- Show fairness, acceptance and empathy with respect for cultural and linguistic rights, as well as the rights of people with differing needs and capabilities

Strategies

Children's Rights, Family and Cultural Values

Interactions within the service are greatly enhanced when children's rights and family and cultural values are given due consideration and respect. Administrative procedures, initial conversations, documentation and ongoing communication with children and families are a reference point for interactions and a foundation for authentic and respectful communication.

Listening

Educators and staff must use listening as a foundation for interactions. Listening is based on observation and in leaving spaces in conversations and communication, suspending judgement and in giving full attention to children as they communicate. Truly attending to children's communication promotes a strong culture of listening.

Children and Families

A culture of respectful interaction is promoted when children's attempts to communicate are valued. Turn taking and regulating children's conversations promotes active engagement. Respectful communication with families generates greater confidence in interacting.

Reflection and Consideration

- Time is dedicated to reflecting upon interactions within children
- Reflections should consider how to spend extended periods engaged in interactions with children that comprise of communication and listening

Role Modelling

Educators model positive interactions when they:

- Show care, empathy and respect for children, Educators and staff and families
- Learn and use effective communication strategies

Principles for Behavioural Management

Educators/staff respect individual children's needs and differences in age, ability and experience regarding issues surrounding behaviour and they are happy to discuss individual family expectations with parents. There may be times when Educators/staff will need to negotiate strategies with parents to suit the needs of individual children.

- Wherever possible, children and Educators/staff will negotiate and determine boundaries and form agreements in relation to expectations for how we treat each other
- Agreements will be reasonable considering the age, development and individual characteristics of the children
- Agreements will be consistently enforced and reflected on to evolve, along with children's developing skills and self-regulation competence
- Children will be encouraged to understand the boundaries, agreements and expectations and build their skills to interact with each other within these
- It is the child's skill development in relation to their behaviour that is praised or addressed, children are never shamed
- Educators acknowledge that they are there to support and teach skills that build children's self-control and regulation and always present a good example through positive role modelling, compassion and understanding

In response to challenging behaviour, Educators/Staff:

- Will recognise the situation as an opportunity to help the child develop skills, including their language and communication, attention and working memory, emotion and self-regulation, cognitive flexibility and social thinking skills
- Recognise certain reactions as understandable behaviour, a reflection of communication and social development
- Acknowledge the child's intent with that behaviour
- Clarify the preferred skills to be used and teach, role model and practice how to use them
- Redirect the child or remove the child from the situation if necessary
- Advise children of the consequences of continuing with the behaviour
- Explain to children how their behaviour makes others feel
- Actively listen to children's feelings and discuss the skills to use in future
- Help children to return to play

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider

- Ensure the service provides education and care to children in a way that:
 - Encourages the children to express themselves and their opinions
 - Allows the children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem
 - Maintains at all times the rights and dignity of each child

- Gives each child positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour
- Has regard to family and cultural values, age and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child
- Ensure the educational program contributes to the development of children who have a strong sense of wellbeing and identity, and are connected, confident, involved and effective learners and communicators
- Ensure the service provides children with opportunities to interact and develop respectful relationships with each other, and with Educators and staff, having regard to the size and composition of the group
- Ensure all Educators and staff have undertaken current child protection legislation training, including mandatory reporting requirements and reporting obligations

Nominated Supervisor/Coordinator

- Guide professional development and practice with Educators and families to promote interactions with children that are positive and respectful
- Role model respectful and positive interactions with the children
- Devise systems to lead the development and implementation of quality practices across the service
- Support Educators to promote quality practice during interactions with children
- Ensure all Educators are aware of and have knowledge of their role in relation to child protection and their mandatory reporting requirements
- Communicate information about children with relevant parties in a confidential manner and respectful
- Participate in professional development
- Treat each child without bias
- Use the Children's Code of Conduct and Educator's Code of Conduct as a regular discussion point to guide behavioural expectations
- Assist Educators to develop and implement educational programs, in accordance with an approved learning framework, that are based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and take into account the individual differences of each child
- Ensure that Educators and staff provide education and care to children in a way that encourages children to express themselves and their opinions and allows children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem

Educators

- Contribute to the development of, and implement quality practices that ensure positive and respectful interactions with children
- Be aware of current child protection legislation, including mandatory reporting requirements and obligations
- Have regard to cultural and family values, age, and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child
- Use the Children's Code of Conduct and Educator's Code of Conduct as a regular discussion point to guide behavioural expectations
- Role model respectful and positive interactions with the children
- Be responsive to children's strengths, interests and abilities
- Promote a safe, secure and nurturing environment
- Be authentic and responsive
- Maintain positive interactions
- Maintain the dignity and rights of each child
- Listen to children's experiences and perspectives and show interest in their ideas
- Ensure children feel valued
- Ensure children have opportunity to be involved in decision making
- Respect children as individuals and encourage each child to voice their opinions, concerns and ideas in a supportive forum
- Support children in feeling confident in the environment by never using strategies such as shouting, threats of corporal punishment or the refusal of food or other basic need
- Treat children with respect, courtesy and understanding
- Treat children equally and without bias, regardless of race, cultural background, religion, culture, gender, family structure, economic status or ability and ensure interactions between children and Educators exhibit this
- Sensitively manage children who are having difficulty conveying their message or managing their emotions
- Ensure children understand what is being communicated to them during interactions and allow them time to question or respond
- Speak to children at their level and use voice intonations, facial expressions and body language to assist in conveying messages
- Ensure when using humour with children that it is age appropriate, not sarcastic and is suitable to the situation and each individual child
- Engage in one on one conversations with all children and develop an understanding of their likes, dislikes and interests

- Collaborate with children regarding the daily routines and practices within the service including programming of experiences in order to meet their individual needs, interests and abilities
- Organise environments and spaces that promote small and large group interactions and meaningful play and leisure
- Collaborate with children to develop a set of rules or boundaries to guide their behaviour in the service and discuss clear expectations and consequences of inappropriate behaviours
- Ensure that all Educators enforce the expectations and consequences consistently at all times, and that consequences are relevant to the situation
- Follow up all issues that arise by discussing the situation with the child and strategising for better solutions in future issues
- Collaborate with family members and schools regarding appropriate behaviour management practices to ensure there is a consistent approach
- Access professional development and resources related to positive behaviour management and include this in professional development planning
- Respect children's agency and encourage them to express themselves and their opinions
- Act as a positive role model for appropriate and expected behaviours in the service being mindful of respectful language and tone
- Focus on the behaviours being displayed and not the child displaying them
- Assist children in developing self-discipline skills and regulating their own behaviours by using simple conflict resolution skills, building self-reliance and self-esteem, role modelling and positive direction
- Provide children with opportunities to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other, Educators and visitors to the service
- Ensure that appropriate physical contact is maintained in regard to comforting children, application of first aid, safety provisions such as holding hands and maintaining respectful bodily space
- Identify when interactions with a child are not appropriate and refer to the services Child Safe Environment policy to address these concerns
- Maintain defined boundaries in regard to appropriate behaviour with children and engagement with their families
- Provide an environment that is secure and interesting with a positive atmosphere
- Create opportunities for children to be independent and self-reliant
- Allow children to undertake experiences that develop their self-esteem
- Ensure that the routines and experiences children encounter during care are appropriate and reflect each child's family and cultural values, age and physical and intellectual development

- Encourage children to express themselves and their opinions
- Show an interest and participate in what the child is doing
- Support children through periods of change
- Manage children's positive behaviour to encourage acceptable and responsible Interactions
- Respond to all children in a fair and consistent manner
- Share information with families regularly in a constructive manner about children's interactions in a confidential manner
- Support children to be involved in meaningful and positive participation at the service
- Acknowledge children's complex relationships and sensitively intervene in ways that promote consideration and alternative perspectives and social inclusion

Families

- Families are encouraged to:
 - Respond to all children in a fair and consistent manner
 - Share relevant information with Educators and staff regularly
 - Interact with all children at the service in an appropriate manner
 - Role model effective communication skills to their children

Continual Monitoring and Improvement

Continual improvement and monitoring will occur in the following ways:

- Incidental and planned consultation with families
- Approved Provider and Coordinators accessing current relevant information
- Approved Provider, Coordinators and Educators accessing current and relevant training
- Internal evaluation of incidences and the improvement of systems

LINKS TO:

- **Education & Care Services National Law**
165, 166, 168, 169
- **Education & Care Services National Regulations:**
73, 84, 115, 117a, 118, 123, 126, 145, 155, 156, 168, 170, 171, 172
- **National Quality Standards/Elements:**
1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1.1, 7.1.3, 7.2.2
- **Child Safe Standards:**
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

SOURCES

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- [Education and care Services National Law](#)
- [Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- [Guide to the National Quality Standard](#)
- [Implementing the Child Safe Standards: A Guide for Early Education and Outside School Hours Care Services](#), NSW Department of Education, 2021
- [A Guide to the Child Safe Standards](#), NSW Office of the Children's Guardian, 2020
- [Be You](#)
- My Time Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia
- The Early Years Learning Framework
- ECA Code of Ethics
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Commission for Children and Young People's Act 1998
- NSW Curriculum Framework for Children's Services – The Practice of Relationships
- [ACECQA Factsheet – Relationships with Children](#)

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES:

- Child-Safe Environment
- Curriculum
- Enrolment & Orientation
- Governance & Management
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Socialisation
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staffing