



BOURKE AND DISTRICT CHILDREN'S SERVICES

QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

POLICY NAME: INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

POLICY STATEMENT

We are committed to the promotion of a positive atmosphere within our services and providing attentive care and quality interactions with children. We aim to build positive and respectful relationships with children through collaboration and interactions, ensuring children feel safe and supported and that their individual needs are responded to. Educators will encourage positive relationships between children and their peers.

We endeavour to ensure that children experience relationships that are built on respect, fairness, cooperation and empathy and will support children to develop these qualities for themselves. We aim to give children positive experiences of interactions to promote their development and understanding of themselves as significant and respected, and to feel a sense of belonging.

BACKGROUND

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the Approved Provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for interactions with children. The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) identifies secure, respectful, and reciprocal relationships with children as one of the principles that underpin practice. Relationships directly affect how children form their own identity, whether or not they feel safe and supported, and ultimately, their sense of belonging. Our Service Philosophy guides our interactions and relationships with children. We aim to ensure all educators develop positive relationships with children based on respect and fostering children's self-esteem, self-reliance, self-expression and development.

In order to build and maintain positive and respectful relationships with children, all educators will adhere to the ECA Code of Ethics. We promote a respectful, child safe culture where children's concerns are always responded to, and children feel empowered to participate in decisions and provide feedback to educators. The values and practices that guide the attitudes and behaviour of all staff are guided by the implementation of the Child Safe Standards and related National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

OVERALL STRATEGIES / HOW WILL IT BE DONE?

Children's Rights, Family and Cultural Values

All children have a right to feel accepted and respected and this is a principle set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention emphasises the importance of children developing connections to culture and community as a means of fostering a strong sense of personal identity and belonging. Our service is committed to ensuring all educators and staff are aware of the UNCRC and to educate children on their rights while encouraging children to participate in decisions which affect them within our service.

Educators and staff are respectful of diversity and are culturally responsive, respecting multiple cultural ways of knowing, doing and being and celebrate the benefits of diversity. By respecting diversity, educators' value and reflect the practices, values and beliefs of families within the curriculum. Educators value children's unique and diverse capacities and capabilities and respect families' home lives. We promote cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

Listening

Educators 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.

Role Modelling

Educators implement teaching techniques and strategies to establish secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships with children. Educators role model positive interactions by demonstrating care, empathy and respect for children, educators and families. Role modelling also provides the opportunity for educators to demonstrate appropriate communications strategies, e.g. turn taking during a conversation.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

Should educators find that children are demonstrating some undesired behaviours, they will reflect on the points below and determine appropriate actions necessary to guide children's behaviour in a positive way.



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- Is the environment adequately set up to support positive behaviour?
- Are toys and resources appropriate, in good condition, and available in sufficient number?
- Are expectations clear and appropriate?
- Are educator's expectations age and developmentally appropriate?
- Are expectations consistent and consistently adhered to?
- Is the daily routine adhered to?
- Are educators modeling respectful relationships?
- Are children being offered appropriate choices and agency?
- Are praise and encouragement being used effectively and sincerely?
- Have feelings underlying the behaviour been considered? Frustration, anger, happiness, excitement...
- Have underlying factors for inappropriate behaviour been identified?
- Have triggers for inappropriate behaviour been identified?

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

THE APPROVED PROVIDER AND NOMINATED SUPERVISORS WILL:

- Ensure there are policies and procedures in place for interactions with children and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed.
- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Ensure educators (including casual staff) receive information and induction training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of the Interactions with Children policy, their responsibilities in implementing it, and any changes that are made over time.
- Ensure students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy.
- Provide a child safe environment at all times.
- Ensure minimum staff requirements are met including educator to child ratios and staff qualifications.
- Ensure all staff, educators and volunteers have completed child protection training including mandatory reporting requirements.
- Create a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere in which children experience equitable, friendly and genuine interactions with all educators.
- 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 educational program considers the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and considers the individual differences of each child.
- Promote interactions with children that are positive and respectful.
- Ensure all educators are aware of the service's expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and reactions when working with children.
- Consider the size and composition of groups to ensure all children are provided with the best opportunities for quality interactions and relationships with each other and with educators at the service.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- Form warm and nurturing relationships with each child to support a secure attachment.
- Be positive role-models by demonstrating appropriate communication skills and behaviour and treating everyone with empathy and respect.
- Support and encourage children to be aware of their own feelings as well as the feelings of others.
- Empower children to express themselves and their opinions.
- Ensure children know how to raise concerns or provide feedback and respond to children regarding how this has been acted upon – where age appropriate.
- Respect the rights, dignity and agency of children.
- Provide appropriate supervision so children feel safe in their interactions with other children.
- Encourage children to work through differences appropriately and with guidance where necessary.
- Use a variety of communication strategies inclusive of verbal and non-verbal cues to support the development of relationships with children, considering the age and level of development of the child.



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- Ensure that daily routines such as toileting, are used for positive one to one interaction with children and a time to strengthen the bond and get to know each other better.
- Speak to children in a positive manner at all times, promoting respect, tolerance and empathy.
- Engage in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning.
- Respect each child's uniqueness, be attuned to, and respond sensitively and appropriately to children's efforts to communicate and use the child's own language, communication styles, and culture to enhance interactions.
- Support children's home language when communicating and interacting to build trust and positive relationships.
- Ensure that the values, beliefs, and cultural practices of the child and family are considered and respected.
- Respect and value diversity and not tolerate any discriminatory practices.
- Treat all children fairly and with no preference.
- Ensure that no child is ever isolated for any reason other than illness, during which time, they will be under adult supervision.
- Listen to children and take them seriously.
- Genuinely seek children's input, respect their ideas and take their suggestions on board.
- Take an interest and participate in what children are doing.
- Communicate with children by getting down to their level and using eye contact.
- Regularly reflect on their relationships and interactions with children and how these can be improved.
- Support children's independence and provide opportunities to develop self-esteem.
- Promote a safe, secure and nurturing environment.
- Be authentic and responsive.
- Encourage children to express themselves and their opinions and allows children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem.
- Promote children's bodily integrity (respecting their physical space and only using touch when necessary and appropriate).
- Support children's consent by acknowledging and respecting a child's right to refuse or say no.
- Never force a child to do something against their requests: this includes rest, eat, participation in group experiences and activities.
- Respect each child's uniqueness, displaying appreciation and respect for children as individuals.
- Use a positive and non-threatening tone when interacting with children in all situations.
- Sit with children during mealtimes to engage in respectful conversations.
- Encourage children to initiate conversations about their experiences at home encouraging them to express their ideas and feelings.
- Encourage children to request assistance when taking on new challenges, inspiring children's independence and confidence.
- Understand reporting requirements and respond to any incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse or harm.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our Interactions with Children Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators, and management.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Standard 1	Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture
Standard 2	Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
Standard 3	Families and communities are informed and involved
Standard 4	Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account
Standard 5	People working with children are suitable and supported
Standard 6	Processes to respond to child abuse are child focussed
Standard 10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

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5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
5.2	Relationships between children	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.
5.2.1	Collaborative learning	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.
5.2.2	Self-Regulation	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS AND NATIONAL LAW

Sec. 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Sec. 166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
Sec. 168	Offence relating to required programs
Sec. 169	Offence relating to staffing arrangements
73	Educational program
84	Awareness of Child Protection law
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
117A	Placing a person in day to day charge
118	Educational leader
123	Educator to child ratios – centre based services
126	Centre based services – general educator qualifications
145	Staff record
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
157	Access for parents
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures must be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures

STATUTORY LEGISLATION & CONSIDERATIONS

- [Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 \(Amended 2023\)](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations \(Amended 2023\)](#)
- [Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998](#)

SOURCES



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 Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2023).
 NSW Department of Education. (2021). Implementing the Child Safe Standards: A guide for early childhood education and outside school hours care services.
 Revised National Quality Standard. (Amended 2023).
 UN General Assembly. (1989). Convention on the Rights of the Child. Simplified version available at <https://www.unicef.org.au/Upload/UNICEF/Media/Our%20work/childfriendlyrcr.pdf>.

RELATED POLICIES

- Arrival and Departure Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Clothing and Comfort Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Educational Program Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Family Participation and Communication Policy
- Governance and Management of the Service Policy
- Induction of Staff, Volunteers and Students Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Nappy Change, Toileting and Bathing Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Promoting a Child safe Environment Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Transition to School Policy

RELATED DOCUMENTS

POLICY AUTHORISED BY	Prue Ritchie	POLICY REVIEWED	August 2024
NEXT REVIEW DATE	August 2025		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New policy format • Child Safe Standards added • Regulation amendments incorporated • Behaviour Management section incorporated into Behaviour Management Policy 		
PREVIOUS REVIEW			
POLICY AUTHORISED BY	Prue Ritchie	DATE	January 2021