

D-14 INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

POLICY STATEMENT

Children's safety and wellbeing are paramount at our service and will be fostered through our child safe culture, responsive relationships, engaging experiences and safe and healthy environment. We will endeavor through our interactions with children to nurture their optimism, happiness and sense of fun and we will aim to recognise and respond to barriers which may impact on children achieving a positive sense of self identify. We believe that positive educator to child interactions are central to ensuring quality outcomes for children's education and care and we value the important role our educators and staff play in children's education and care. Our service encourages children's self-expression, promotes self-reliance, maintains their dignity and rights, gives positive guidance, and recognises their culture, values, and abilities.

PROCEDURES

a) The Educators will

- Maintain a positive attitude in all interactions with children.
- Always treat children with respect, courtesy and understanding.
- Listen carefully to children's experiences and perspectives and show interest in their ideas and perspectives.
- Respect children as individuals and encourage each child to voice their opinions, concerns and ideas in a supportive forum that is free from stigmatisation.
- 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 needs.
- Treat children equally regardless of race, cultural background, religion, sex 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.
- Engage in 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.
- Keep rules simple and only have a small number of concise rules that children understand, focusing on appreciating and caring for each other and the environment. All staff, families and children will be made aware of the rules and the expected consequences. The rules will be clearly displayed.
- Ensure that all educators enforce the rules and consequences consistently at all times. Consequences will be relevant to the situation and never demeaning.
- 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.
- Act as a positive role model for appropriate and expected behaviours in the service being mindful of respectful language and tone.
- Encourage and reward acceptable behaviour by giving praise and positive feedback to children as often as possible.
- 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 regards 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 'Providing a Child Safe Environment' policy to address these concerns.
- Maintain defined boundaries in regards to appropriate behaviour with children and engagement with their families.

b) The children will

- Be treated with respect, courtesy and understanding regardless of race, cultural background, religion, sex or ability.
- Be encouraged to listen to others respect, courtesy and understanding regardless of race, cultural background, religion, sex or ability.
- Be encouraged to share humour and express themselves in a variety of ways.
- Be supported to practice strategies for problem solving, debating, negotiating and interacting with others in an appropriate way with the guidance of educators.

- Collaborate with staff in developing service routines and procedures including rules and boundaries and the consequences they should expect if these are not followed.
- Participate in experiences that will build relationships and promote interactions between each other, educators and visitors to the service.
- Assist educators in developing programs and routines for the service that reflect their individual needs, interests and abilities.
- Have their need for solitude or quiet time supported and respected by educators and children
- Be supported to develop an understanding of the choices they make and the responsibility they have to manage their own behaviours in conjunction with educators.

c) Dealing with consistently inappropriate behaviours

Where a child demonstrates behaviours that are physically harmful, educators will:

- Remove the child from the situation as quickly as possible.
- Ensure any children or educators involved have not been hurt and apply first aid where required.
- Record the details of the incident including date, time, people involved, people injured and the action taken.
- Ensure that the family members of all children involved in the incident are notified.

Where a child demonstrates unacceptable behaviour consistently, educators will:

- Ensure the child is aware of the limits and what is appropriate behaviour.
- Ensure the expectations are appropriate for the child's level of development and understanding.
- Look for and assess possible causes for the behaviour such as environmental factors.
- Discuss the issue with the child and their family members.
- Record incidents that occur in relation to inappropriate behaviours, making note of the events leading up to the incident, the date and time, who was involved and how the incident was handled.
- Develop a behaviour support plan for the management of the specific behaviours and include a plan for regular discussions with all educators, children's families, school professionals etc. to review the action plans effectiveness and progression.

Exclusion for unacceptable behaviours:

- Should unacceptable behaviour continue and the above strategies have not worked effectively, the educators will inform the Nominated Supervisor and discuss the issue.
- Where, in the interest of the child and other children at the centre, exclusion is seen as a necessary step, this will be decided by the Nominated Supervisor and will only be considered after:

- Adequate support has been provided including via behaviour support plans
- Family members have been notified and given the opportunity to discuss the child's behaviour and strategies for creating change
- Referrals to other agencies have been suggested where appropriate
- Educators and the Nominated Supervisor have given careful consideration to the issue
- Clear procedures have been established for accepting the child back into the service
- SNCC management has been advised and consulted

d) Roles and responsibilities

Approved Provider:

- Ensure that 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 dignity and rights of each child.
- Ensure that the service provides children with opportunities to interact and develop respectful relationships with each other and with educators, staff and volunteers, having regard to the size and the composition of the groups in which children are being educated and cared for (regulation 156).
- Ensure the service meets minimum educator and staff requirements, such as qualifications and educator to child ratios.
- Ensure all educators and staff, including volunteers and students are aware of current child protection legislation, including the mandatory reporting requirements and obligations.
- Ensure that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or inappropriate in the circumstances.
- take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the Interactions with children policy and procedures.
- Ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, coordinators, educators, staff, volunteers and families, and available for inspection.
- Notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will significantly impact the service's education and care of children.

Nominated Supervisor:

- Implement the Interactions with children policy and procedures.
- Devise methods to lead the development and implementation of quality practices across the service that ensure that the requirements of regulations 155 and 156 are met.
- Support educators to promote quality practice approaches to interactions with children.
- Ensure minimum educator and staff requirements are met, such as qualifications and educator to child ratios.

- Ensure all educators and staff, including volunteers and students are aware of current child protection legislation, including the mandatory reporting requirements and obligations.
- Ensure that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances.

Educators:

- Contribute to the development of, and implement, quality practices that ensure that the requirements of regulations 155 and 156 are met.
- Promote quality practice approaches to interactions with children.
- Be aware of current child protection legislation, including the mandatory reporting requirements and obligations.
- Monitor and maintain staff to child ratios to ensure adequate supervision of children.

CONSIDERATIONS

National Quality Standards

1.2.1	Intentional teaching	Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions
1.2.3	Child directed learning	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
2.2.3	Child protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect
4.1.1	Organisation of educators	The organisation of educators across the service supports children's learning and development
4.2	Professionalism	Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical
4.2.2	Professional standards	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships
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
5.2.2	Self-regulation	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts
6.1	Supportive	Respectful relationships with families are developed and

	relationships with families	maintained and families are supported in their parenting role
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
6.2.2	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service

Education and Care Service National Regulations 2011

155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
123	Educator to child ratios—centre-based services
155	Interactions with children
156	Interactions in groups
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
Section 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards

Related Policies / Forms

<p>Family Information Booklet</p> <p>Service Philosophy</p> <p>D-12 Providing a child safe environment policy</p> <p>C-1 Staffing</p> <p>A-10 Governance and management</p>

ENDORSEMENT AND REVIEWS

Date	Action
06.12.2012	Approved by SNCC Board
20.08.2020	Previous Date Reviewed
01.04.2024	Policy Updated
April 2027	Next Review Date