



Interactions with Children

Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children

Relevant Legislation

Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) ACT 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Section 165, 166, 169, 169, Regulations 73, 84, 115, 117A, 118 123, 124, 126, 145, 155, 156, 168, 170 - 172

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care: Elements: 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 4.2.2, 5.1, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2, 5.2.2

Aim / Rationale

A positive atmosphere and the wellbeing of children within an education and care setting is promoted through attentive care and quality interactions with children. Emotional development and social relationships are enhanced through thoughtful and sophisticated approaches to conversation, discussion and promotion of children's language and communication.

Children who experience relationships that are built on respect, fairness, cooperation and empathy are given the opportunity to develop these qualities themselves. When children have positive experiences of interactions, they develop an understanding of themselves as significant and respected, and feel a sense of belonging.

Policy Goals

- ✧ Maintain the dignity and rights of each child at the service, particularly the rights of all children to feel safe, and be safe at all times, including:
- ✧ Promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children.
- ✧ Promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- ✧ Promoting the safety of children with a disability.
- ✧ Encourage children to express themselves and their opinions, and to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem.
- ✧ Consider the health, safety and wellbeing of each child, and providing a safe, secure and welcoming environment in which they can develop and learn.
- ✧ Always maintain a duty of care and taking all reasonable steps for each child's safety and wellbeing.
- ✧ Consider the diversity of individual children at the service, including family and cultural values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child.

- ✧ Build collaborative relationships with families to improve learning and development outcomes for children.
- ✧ Encourage positive, respectful and warm relationships between children, families educators and staff at the Pre-School.

Strategies: What will we do?

The Approved Provider will:

- ✧ Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- ✧ 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
 - gives each child positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour
 - has regard to the family and cultural values, age, and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child (regulation 155).
- ✧ 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, have undertaken current child protection legislation training, including for the mandatory reporting requirements and obligations in their jurisdiction.
- ✧ 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:
 - affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or
 - significantly impact the service's education and care of children or
 - significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service.

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- ✧ 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, have undertaken current child protection legislation training, including for the mandatory reporting requirements and obligations in their jurisdiction.
- ✧ Ensure that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances.

Educators and staff will:

- ✧ 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.
- ✧ Support children in line with the strategies in the ACECQA Relationships with children information sheet.
- ✧ Provide education and care in a way that:
 - encourages children to express themselves and their opinions.
 - allows children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem.
 - always maintains the dignity and rights of each child
 - offers positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour.
 - has regard to the cultural and family values, age, and the physical intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for.
- ✧ Respond to children's communication in a just and consistent manner.
- ✧ Respond sensitively to children's attempts to initiate interactions and conversations.
- ✧ Initiate one to one interaction with children during daily routines and conversations with each child.
- ✧ Support children's efforts, assisting and encouraging as appropriate.
- ✧ Support children's secure attachment through consistent and warm and nurturing relationships.
- ✧ Support children's expression of their thoughts and feelings.
- ✧ Encourage children to make choices and decisions.

- ✧ Acknowledge children's complex relationships and sensitively intervene in ways that promote consideration and alternative perspectives and social inclusion. Guidance strategies should be reflective of this approach.

- ✧ Acknowledge each child's uniqueness in positive ways.
- ✧ Respect cultural differences in communication and consider alternative approaches to own.

Careful questioning is a skill for staff to develop to increase learning through interactions. Questioning should be open ended, show lateral thinking and can lead thought in a direction. Children's responses should be responded to authentically. They should be taken seriously if in a discussion context. An important part of children learning is for their ideas to be considered. Children are seen as being in control of their own learning. This means that they choose where to play throughout the day.

Children's Rights, Family and Cultural Values:

Interactions within the setting 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.

Children should be encouraged to do things for themselves as part of the Montessori Method of education, with minimal adult assistance when appropriate for e.g. dressing, toileting, pouring, tidying the environment and participation in the learning environment. Children should be given the opportunity to solve problems about their play and other learning environment issues autonomously.

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 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.

It is important to remember that quality interactions increase children’s knowledge and understanding of themselves, each other as unique individuals and develop the skills and understandings they need to interact positively with others.

Evaluation

Interactions between educators and children are genuine, positive and responsive and based on respect, fairness, acceptance, co-operation and empathy. This is evident in conversations, communication, pedagogy, and planning for children and families.

Procedures and Forms

Enrolment
About Me

Links to other Policies

Enrolment
Child Safe Environment
Staffing Recruitment
Guiding Children’s Behaviour

Governance and Management
Curriculum, Planning and Assessment for Learning
Supervision

Sources and References

DEEWR (2009), *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework V2.0 (EYLF)* www.deewr.gov.au
ACECQA – Guide to the National Quality Framework
ACECQA – Inappropriate discipline information sheet
ACECQA – Opening a new service
ACECQA – Relationships with children information sheet
ACECQA – Supporting agency: Involving children in decision-making information sheet
ACECQA – Supporting children to regulate their own behaviour information sheet
Australian Human Rights Commission – Child Safe Organisations
Commonwealth of Australia – My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care V2.0 (MTOPI)
Starting Blocks – Developing children’s positive behaviour in child care
UNICEF – United Nations Convention on the rights of the child

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
2013	Developed	2015
February 2018	Reviewed	2020
November 2024	Updated in line with ACECQA information sheet	Nov 2026 or when procedure, practice or legislation changes

Person/s responsible for policy

Director / Administrator