

Queanbeyan Family Day Care

Policy and Procedure Manual

Quality Area 5

Relationships with Children

Quality Area 5 – Relationships with Children

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Interactions with Children Policy

1. OUTCOMES:

Educators and staff interactions with children will be positive and respectful.

2. POLICY:

Educators and staff will interact with children in ways which enhance each child's self esteem and respect their dignity and rights, while guiding them towards behaviour that is socially acceptable. Educators and staff will interact with children in ways which assist the child to develop increasing self control and self reliance, a sense of responsibility and social competence.

3. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

4. CONTENT

Behaviour Guidance

Behaviour guidance requires a broad approach which will in the first instance keep children physically and psychologically safe and will gradually guide them to communicate needs verbally, to learn the skills to relate socially with others, to solve their own problems and to ask for help when needed. It also means that adults create a physical and emotional environment that facilitates personal and social growth.

Inclusive Behaviours

The culture of the childcare environment should be respectful and supportive of individuals. It is important that children know that differences exist and are valuable. Families using childcare are diverse and a service may contain a variety of family structures: traditional, sole or same sex parents, blended or extended families. Children in care may also come from a diverse range of communities, family culture and lifestyles.

Children construct their knowledge of diversity by adopting the perceptions of people in their immediate environment.

Educators must reflect on their own attitudes, biases and behaviour as well as their knowledge about the diversity in contemporary Australian society and how this might be communicated in the service. Anti bias early childhood environments must actively encourage children to respect others by helping them to listen to peers and empathise with others. Ultimately an inclusive early childhood environment is one where everyone feels welcome and comfortable.

Self Help Skills

Developing the ability to manage aspects of their own care, including health and hygiene tasks, is an important aspect of each child's journey toward independence and autonomy. Each child will develop their self help skills according to their unique experiences, personalities and abilities.

5. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- The number of complaints in relation to educators' interactions with children
- The comments made by CDO's about educator visits

Interactions with Children Policy

6. KEY RESOURCES:

www.careforkids.com.au

www.education.gov.au/child-care-service-handbook-0

Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011

Staying Healthy in Childcare 5th Edition;

www.humanservices.gov.au

www.kidsafe.com.au

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012

Education and Care Services National Law 2011

7. RELEVANT PROCEDURES

[Behaviour Guidance – Procedure](#)

[Inclusive Behaviours – Additional Information](#)

[Self Help Skills – Additional Information](#)

[Helping a Child Settle into Care – Additional Information](#)

[Importance of Play - Procedure](#)

[Communicating with Children – Additional Information](#)

Behaviour Guidance – Procedure

Educators and staff will interact with children in ways which enhance each child's self esteem and respect their dignity and rights, while guiding them towards behaviour that is socially acceptable. Educators and staff will interact with children in ways which assist the child to develop increasing self control and self reliance, a sense of responsibility and social competence.

Crucial to the success of behaviour guidance is the role of families play, especially parents. Families should be provided with regular opportunities to contribute to the development and review of their child's behaviour guidance strategies and plans, along with the service's overall strategies to promote positive outcomes for the child.

Behaviour Guidance

Behaviour guidance requires a broad approach which will in the first instance keep children physically and psychologically safe and will gradually guide them to communicate needs verbally, to learn the skills to relate socially with others, to solve their own problems and to ask for help when needed. It also means that adults create a physical and emotional environment that facilitates personal and social growth.

Learning to manage feelings and behaviour is a developmental process just like any other, and children need time and practice to master the skills associated with positive behaviour. They also need adults to help them avoid harm to themselves or others and to begin to learn what personal social behaviour is expected of them. It is the responsibility of adults in the child's life to try to understand the reasons for the child's negative behaviours, and where appropriate to try to avoid these situations occurring.

Educators should develop open two-way communication with parents regarding all aspects of their child's development. The use of interpreters if language barriers are hindering communication should be considered.

In determining what behaviour management strategy to use it is imperative that thought be given to why the behaviour has occurred:

- Is the child bored?
- Are the activities being provided, age appropriate, stimulating etc.?
- Has the activity been repeated too many times?
- Has there been any changes in the child's life?
- Has there been any changes in the educator's routine?

Asking these questions, may give you an answer as to why the behaviour is occurring.

STRATEGIES TO USE:

- Acknowledge appropriate behaviour
Encourage positive behaviour of children and acknowledge it.
- Praise
Let the child know if you are happy about something the child has done. Use appropriate, positive language and acknowledge the appropriate behaviour.
- Increase supervision
Remain in close proximity.

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- Have clear rules
Children like to know exactly what is expected.
 - Rule reminder
Calmly, privately remind the child of the rule that they are breaking. Give wait time and acknowledge any positive move.
 - Clarify Question
Get down to the child's level, don't encroach on their personal space "Is there something you don't understand ...?"
 - Individual Direction
"Peter can you.....?" Give wait time, acknowledge appropriate behaviour.

"Thankyou for"
 - Acknowledge and Redirect
If child responds argumentatively acknowledge the child's feelings and redirect.

"Peter I know you don't want to do that now and we can talk about it when you put your chair away" Give wait time and acknowledge any positive move. If necessary, explain why you are asking e.g., safety reasons
 - Lots of Feedback
If things are going well, let the child know.
 - Offer a Choice
Make the child aware of the consequences of their actions, allow the child to make a choice of continuing the behaviour or, give wait time and acknowledge any positive move.
 - Ask the Child for Ideas
When everyone is calm, ask the child what is the best thing to do when he/she is angry.
 - Cool Off
Approach the child separately and say, 'Peter I can see you have chosen to work away from the other children for 5 minutes. Go now please". This is just time away from other distractions to cool off

Thinking time is not the first method of behaviour management to be used: it should be the last option after all other avenues have been pursued.

Thinking time is a time when children are given the opportunity to reflect on what has occurred or the inappropriate behaviour. This obviously means that they must have the ability to reflect and so thinking time should not be used for children under age 2. (This is a general rule and educators will need to use their own judgement about its applicability to children in care)

If educators decide to use thinking time the following guidelines apply:

- A general rule is 1 minute per year of age
- Children must be in direct supervision of the educator
- Children are not to be placed in another room

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- Children are not to be belittled or humiliated
- It should not be used for one off incidents, like swearing
- It is a period of time away from any reinforcement – extreme ignoring
- There should be no rewards or stimulation during this time

All staff and educators are expected to comply with the behaviour guidelines outlined below:

- No corporal punishment
- No use of controlling, humiliating or belittling techniques
- Positive guidance directed towards acceptable behaviour with praise freely given
- Guidance in a constructive form will be used:
 - Suggesting alternative acceptable behaviour
 - Keeping the child busy by re-directing the activities
 - Talking with the child about feelings and consequences of their behaviour
 - Focussing on the inappropriate behaviour and not on the child
- A positive relationship is re-established with the child as soon as possible after any form of behaviour management strategies
- Behaviour guidance and management strategies should be framed in positive language to enhance the child's self-esteem, encouraging the children to believe that acceptance does not depend upon their behaviour
- The environment will be arranged which assists in reducing the incident of undesirable behaviour
- Ensure that the environment is not cluttered
- Ensure there is sufficient space for the number of children in care
- Ensure that there are a number of spaces which serve different functions- places to play independently, be boisterous, read quietly, leave a project undisturbed to come back to later
- Ensure the environment does not invite unwanted behaviour, and does not require the educator to say "no" or "don't touch"
- Supply sufficient resources or materials for the number of children in care
- Use resources that are suitable for the developmental stage of the children in care. Resources that are too challenging or not challenging enough do not engage children and hold their interest
- Ensure that routines do not require children to wait, queue or to watch and listen rather than being directed engaged
- Ensure that adequate supervision can be maintained in all areas

Role of Staff Members – Procedure

- Ensure that children are not overstimulated, e.g., loud TV, radio
- There is convenient storage available so that the children may easily assist with "packing up" and activity selection
- That there is a balance of quiet and active spaces (indoor and outdoor)
- The older children should be involved in the development of their group's behaviour guidelines. Developing their own rules gives children a greater understanding of acceptable behaviour

Guidelines for Staff and Educators

- Staff and educators will present as good models of behaviour for the children and shall be encouraged to adopt the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics;
- Staff and educators will give consistent and clear messages to the children about their behavioural expectations, so that children are not confused by different approaches;
- Staff and educators should become familiar with stages of child growth and development so that they may hold reasonable behavioural expectations. Some child behaviour may be displeasing for adults, but should be considered acceptable and age appropriate, e.g., toddlers find it difficult to share or take into account other's feelings;
- Staff and educators should trust and respect the children in their care as unique and special, and recognise that each child's behaviour is an expression of feelings or an attempt to meet immediate or underlying needs;
- Staff and educators will need to be aware of the different discipline styles and behavioural expectations that parents may have, as child rearing practices vary greatly from culture to culture;
- Staff and educators should take into consideration each child's whole life situation when dealing with their behaviour, consulting regularly with parents to develop collaborative strategies to meet children's needs in childcare

Where educators are experiencing difficulty in using the most appropriate behaviour management technique, contact must be made with Co-ordination Unit staff. Educators and staff will work in close collaboration with families and appropriate professionals to ensure consistency and appropriateness.

Inclusive Behaviour – Additional Information

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Self Help Skills – Additional Information

Developing the ability to manage aspects of their own care, including health and hygiene tasks, is an important aspect of each child's journey toward independence and autonomy. Each child will develop their self help skills according to their unique experiences, personalities and abilities.

Modelling and talking about self help tasks, even with very young children, can help to make their later attempts to master those tasks less daunting. Supporting the development of children's self help skills may occur most successfully where educators use opportunities for one to one and small group interactions. Ensuring that children are able to actively engage in real tasks will assist them to become more proficient and confident in undertaking these.

It is essential to offer lots of positive feedback for children of all ages when they are undertaking self help activities and it is important for educators to be support of children's attempts to master tasks, even when these attempts are not entirely successful.

Educators can assist children to develop self help skills in the following ways:

- Encouraging children to pick up toys
- Encouraging children to wash hands, toilet themselves, push the button etc.
- Encouraging children to dress themselves
- Encouraging children to support and mentor younger children

Helping a Child Settle into Care – Additional Information

- Prepare the child by talking to them in advance, tell them where they will be going, what they will be doing
- Take the child to visit the educator's home on a few occasions before the child is left for the first time. Show the child where they will be going. Answer any questions they may have openly and honestly reassuring them that everything is OK
- Allow plenty of time so that the child can settle into an activity. They are less likely to protest the parent's departure if they are having fun and involved with an activity
- Familiar objects such as a favourite stuffed animal or security blanket should be on hand. The child may find it easier to adjust to a particular care situation having a favoured toy to hold when feeling anxious or upset
- Parents need to pay attention to their own body language when saying good bye to the child. If the parent is feeling uncertain about the new arrangement this could be conveyed to the child
- Resist the temptation to sneak out the door while the child isn't looking. This will create more problems. Fearing that the parent is going to disappear again, the child may become unwilling to let the parent out of sight for a minute – even when at home
- If the child reacts strongly see if someone else can drop the child off instead. They might actually be protesting the parent's departure more than the particular child care environment
- Ask the child's educator if they can provide insights about the problem. For instance maybe the child doesn't like one of the other children in the group or is having difficulty settling down for an afternoon nap
- Consistency is important so stick to a routine. Avoid making other changes to the child's routine while getting used to a new child care arrangement. For example this would not be a good time to move them from a cot to a bed
- Accept the fact that it takes time for young children to adjust to a new child care setting and some children take longer than others
- Be alert to the possibility of an underlying problem. If the child hasn't settled into the arrangement after a couple of weeks, it may just be a poor choice for the child. The problem could be something as simple as a personality conflict between the child and educator.

Importance of Play – Procedure

Play is more than just fun for babies and children. It's how they learn best, and how they work out who they are, how the world works and where they fit into it.

Playing is one of the most important things a parent, educator can do with a child, because play is essential for children's brain development. The time spent playing gives children lots of different ways and times to learn.

Play also helps children to:

- Build confidence
- Feel loved, happy and safe
- Develop social skills, language and communication
- Learn about caring for others and the environment
- Develop physical skills.

Unstructured, free play is play that just happens, depending on what takes a child's interest at the time. Free play isn't planned and lets a child use his/her imagination and move at his/her own pace.

Structured play is different. It's more organised and happens at a fixed time or in a set space, and is often led by a grown-up.

Structured and unstructured play can happen indoors or outdoors. Outdoor play gives a child the chance to explore, be active, test physical limits – and get messy!

As a child grows, **the way he/she plays will change** – he/she will get more creative and experiment more with toys, games and ideas. This might mean he/she needs more space and time to play.

Also, children move through different forms of play as they grow. This includes playing alone, playing alongside other children and interactive play with other children.

Communicating with Children – Additional Information

One of the most important responsibilities for child care professionals is to engage all children in meaningful conversations to support their learning. As social beings, children learn best through participation and communication with others. While children's participation in learning experiences can take different forms, conversations with others during these experiences provide support for their learning.

Conversations are a key element in a range of communication and interaction processes within child care services.

Respectful conversations with children, involving reciprocity or two-way communication processes of careful listening, appropriate responses and balanced contributions, assist educators to:

- Learn more about each child's interests, skills and family experiences which can inform planning decisions
- Better understand the ways children think and reason
- Support children's development especially in the areas of communication, cognition and socialisation
- Enjoy mutually rewarding experiences when time is allowed for unhurried conversations with children
- Facilitate a sense of group belonging by talking with children about the meaning of group membership

If children seem reluctant or unable to initiate conversations, child care professionals can help to facilitate this by looking for opportunities when they can sit quietly with a child and initiate an interaction. A child care professional can encourage a child in what they are doing, or talk aloud about something they might be planning.

There are a range of teaching strategies to support and extend the skills that will help children to become effective and ethical communicators. These include:

- Modelling positive behaviours. For example, how to think, listen, speak, and take turns in conversations when talking with adults and with other children
- 'Gate-keeping' to ensure that everyone has a turn to speak and to contribute to the conversation so that children learn how to be respectful communicators
- Coaching by providing children with suggestions such as 'I don't think Davis can hear you well, you could use a louder voice or move closer to him to explain what you mean'
- Allowing children time to respond to comments or questions to promote an understanding that thinking takes time, and that this is okay