

# Interactions with Children: Positive Behaviour Policy

## National Quality Standard Area 1 | Educational program and practice

***Are child-centred, stimulating and maximise opportunities for enhancing and extending each child's learning and development.***

## National Quality Standard Area 5 | Relationships with children

***Relationships with children are responsive, respectful and promote children's sense of security and belonging.***

At Trinity Gardens Children's Centre we strive to develop and grow respectful, reciprocal, relationships with children and families and understand the importance that such positive relationships have on all aspects of children's learning and development. As a team we consistently use a child-centred approach, one that promotes self-expression, self-esteem and the ability to self-regulate while maintaining each child's dignity and rights. We are committed to meeting our regulatory requirements (regulations, 155, 156, 168, 169, 170) in relation to interactions with children and evaluating their effectiveness with children and families.

### Rationale

Children enter early years settings from a variety of cultural and social backgrounds and with differing knowledge, emotional maturity and behaviours. Young children need time to learn with and from other children – how to play, share, take turns and care for others as well as their environment. Children's behaviour is shaped by their stage of development, adult expectations, and any additional needs they may have. The early years provide the best window of opportunity for helping children to learn to recognise their needs, self-regulate and make appropriate behaviour choices.

At Trinity Gardens Children's Centre, we believe all children have the right to feel safe and have opportunities to learn in a psychologically and physically supportive environment.

Our Interactions with children: Positive Behaviour Policy, is aligned to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the practices and principles of the EYLF are implemented into everyday interactions with children and families.

### As educators we recognise:

- each family as the first educator of their child with their own understandings and beliefs around parenting and behaviour
- the most effective learning occurs when families and educators work together to develop goals for a child's wellbeing and learning
- all behaviour is seen as a form of communication and should be acknowledged as such
- children's individual needs, learning styles and context are crucial to successful learning and development of positive behaviour patterns

We also acknowledge that children can feel big emotions – get angry, frustrated and upset and may need adult support to express these feelings appropriately. We believe educators and families need to share responsibility for developing positive behaviour patterns by being consistent, creating safe and secure environments for all, and by modelling appropriate behaviours.

## Positive Behaviour outcomes

Our aim/goal is for all children to develop as socially engaged and competent individuals who:

- can experiment and take risks both physically and psychologically
- use social initiative and vitality
- demonstrate empathic, prosocial behaviour
- communicate and express ideas, feelings with others, including listening to others
- handle conflict in an appropriate manner – positive self defence
- are able to cope with some limits (safety, routines, play)
- regulate their emotions and demonstrate ability to at times rest and relax
- respect and care for self, others, and their environment

## Ways we maximise positive behaviour

- explicitly teaching and modelling pro- social and desirable behaviours
- having consistent routines, rules and expectations
- focusing on the behaviour and not the child.
- using a range of communication strategies including visual cues to support children's understanding of routines, expectations and choices
- helping children to understand the consequences of their behaviour – both positive and negative
- teaching appropriate strategies which may include:
  - FLO, acknowledging children's **feelings**, describing the **limit** and guiding them to choose an **option**.
  - Restorative Practices, which we have been adapted for Preschool and uses 3 questions:
    1. what happened?
    2. who has been hurt or what went wrong?
    3. what do we need to do to make things better?
- reminding children to STOP what they are doing, THINK about what needs to be done and then DO it.

Consequences: Children need to be aware of the consequences of their behaviour. Our aim is for all children to be responsible for their own behaviour. We support children to think about their actions and the effect on others. Educators understand each situation is different and while we will use the most relevant approach, the specific way this occurs may vary depending on our knowledge of the child, their age and developmental level.

## Ways we respond to challenging behaviours:

Involving children in goal setting and developing group norms

- modelling appropriate behaviour
- discussing consequences of unsafe behaviour
- providing clear and consistent guidelines
- acknowledging children's feelings so they feel heard
- making explicit the limits and working with children to find a different option so they develop the locus of control through making the choice
- explicitly teaching 'feelings' vocabulary to enable children to articulate their needs and feelings appropriately
- supporting children to manage potential conflicts through negotiation and problem solving
- providing areas within the preschool environment for children to safely withdraw to – giving the child time and space needed to calm down and re-enter play successfully and supporting the development of self-regulation skills
- Withdrawing children when they are at risk of hurting themselves or others, ensuring an adult is with them all the time

- regularly reflecting on our planned curriculum as a team and questioning how our learning environment supports positive interactions between children, is inclusive of all children and has a variety of open ended experiences so that every child can enter the play in a manner that suits their dispositions and abilities
- provide sensory experiences that support the calming of emotions and an array of strategies to support children to understand and respond to safety and group expectations

If children are at risk of hurting themselves or others it may be necessary to restrain them by physically holding the child with care. If this should occur, the family will be informed. Children with additional needs may have greater difficulty in self-regulation, responding to requests and understanding group norms. Educators will initiate discussions with families at the earliest opportunity when children are demonstrating unsafe or escalating behaviours to work together and develop strategies to support the child's learning and wellbeing.

## Partnerships with families

We believe the most effective outcomes for children occur when educators and families work together to support and guide children's behaviour. We support family involvement by

- giving this policy to all families on enrolment as part of their enrolment package
- being available to talk with families about this policy at any time
- communicating with, and involving families at the earliest opportunity to work together to assist each child's wellbeing and learning
- working collaboratively with families to share and agree on consistent strategies for the child
- utilising the services of allied health professionals to support families in their parenting role
- planning, implementing, monitoring and reviewing individual learning plans and goals to support the development of functional skills in partnership with families and support services seeking to understand cultural or external factors that may be affecting a child's behaviour through ongoing respectful, reciprocal relationships and communication with families and carers.

Children may exhibit challenging behaviours for a variety of reasons and it is very important that families develop trust in our team to inform us of any changes in family circumstances e.g. separation anxiety, a new baby, moving house, allergies, death of a family member, illness. Some events or needs will affect children in different ways and may result in challenging behaviours.

As a team we will:

- actively seek to develop relationships with families and provide assurance to them that we are experienced observers of young children and will talk with them if we are concerned about their child's behaviour and if it is interfering with their safety, development and learning.
- work in partnership with families to develop consistent strategies, which may include modifying routines or the curriculum to accommodate their child.
- seek further advice and support from the allied health team at the children's centre, the Department for Education Support Services team or other professionals who may be able to offer advice and support to a child, family and educators if needed.

## Educators will support this policy by

- contributing to discussions about maximising positive behaviour for all children
- contributing to the development of individual learning plans and ensuring strategies to support children are implemented and evaluated with educators and families
- modelling and explicitly teaching appropriate behaviours
- being consistent in their approach to behaviour
- maintaining confidentiality about individual children and their needs

- furthering their own knowledge through professional development opportunities
- being aware of their own personal limitations and seeking assistance when needed
- collaborate with the whole education team and families in reviewing the curriculum to evaluate its effectiveness in engaging all children
- reading, understanding, implementing and evaluating the policy for its effectiveness

### **The site leader will support staff by**

- developing and evaluating the policy and procedures with families and all stakeholders
- including this policy in the staff induction book
- provide access for all educators to current information and research regarding behaviour guidance, either through written information or access to professional development opportunities
- providing new educators to the team, including relievers a copy of this policy and providing information about any children with behavioural needs
- enabling time and space for evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategies to be undertaken as part of our continuous improvement practices and cycle of programming and planning; in staff meetings throughout the year and via communication with families.

### **Supporting information**

#### **References/Resources**

DECS - Supporting and Managing Children's Behaviour: An Early Childhood Resource (2004)  
National Quality Standard 5.1(2011)

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard/quality-area-5-relationships-with-children>

National Quality Standard 5.2

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard/quality-area-5-relationships-with-children>

Education and Care Services National Regulations – National Regulation155

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2011/653/chap4/part4.5/reg155>

Education and Care Services National Regulations - National Regulation 156

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2011/653/chap4/part4.5/reg156>

Playgroup SA – Playgroup Guide – Section 6 Exchanging ideas and sharing parent info

<http://www.playgroupsa.com.au/services-playgroup-guide.html>

Protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people (2nd Edition)

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/doc/protective-practices-staff-their-interactions-children-and-young-people>

Site Behaviour Code Exemplar

<https://edi.sa.edu.au/supporting-children/behaviour-and-attendance/behaviour-support/preschools-and-children>

Education and Care Services National Regulation 168(2)(j), r155 and r156,

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