



Interactions with Children Policy

1998, 2010, 2013, 2015, 2017

Rationale

This policy aims to support the development of positive relationships between children and with each child and their family.

We believe that everyone has the right to feel safe and secure, to feel a sense of belonging, and to have warm relationships with people they can trust. We believe that children learn best when they are treated with consistency and respect, experience success and have positive self-esteem. We acknowledge and accept that there are times that children will feel angry, frustrated and upset, and need help to express their feelings appropriately. We support a child's right to make decisions and to have choices. We encourage all children to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and its consequence, and to respond appropriately according to their developmental ability.

We share these responsibilities of creating safe environments for children, modeling appropriate behaviours and providing consistency with parents and caregivers.

What You Can Expect

Staff will:

- Value the dignity of each child as an individual
- Acknowledge and respect each child's strengths and development
- Be fair and understanding
- Be positive
- Help children to recognize their feelings
- Involve children in establishing agreements for appropriate behavior
- Model appropriate behaviours and provide clear guidelines and expectations for all
- Provide opportunities for children to take risks and experience success
- Encourage children to accept responsibility
- Provide opportunities for children to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other and with staff and volunteers
- Provide opportunities for problem solving and managing conflicts
- Provide many opportunities for talking and asking questions
- Make learning relevant and manageable for children
- Be consistent and follow through when supporting positive choices and behaviours
- Maintain confidentiality at all times when discussing children's behaviour
- Make themselves available for meaningful interactions with children and families
- Value and respect the home values of individual families
- Respond as Mandated Notifiers in accordance with the National Laws and regulations where required

Last revision description	Review date
Minor wording changes	May 2019

We support children to:

- Be safe and happy
- Be relaxed
- Share
- Be confident and take risks
- Become assertive and show initiative
- Solve problems
- Be able to communicate effectively
- Be able to express themselves and to be heard
- Be able to work together in a cooperative manner
- Show respect for others
- Take responsibility for their actions

When unsafe or unacceptable behaviour occurs staff will:

1. Remind children of expectations and offer choices
2. Redirect the play or the child
3. Talk about the problem, eg what would happen if... thereby encouraging children to consider the consequences and to set reasonable limits and boundaries
4. If unsafe or unacceptable behaviours are repeated 'reflection time' will be initiated
5. When inappropriate behaviour patterns continue to occur over an extended period of time the Centre will work with the family to provide additional support and agreed strategies to encourage the child to develop socially acceptable behaviour patterns and self-regulate. This may include referral to other professional services as appropriate to the situation.

NB **Reflection time** for a brief period in a quiet space away from activity provides time for individuals to think about their behaviour, what they have done, and what they can change. The child is accompanied by a staff member and supported to recognise their feelings and to consider how to react to them in a positive way. When the child is in control and ready, they are supported to rejoin the group. Actions are recorded and the parent is notified.

Below is a table providing some examples of respectful and responsible and unacceptable behaviours at kindergarten.

Respectful and Responsible Behaviours	Unacceptable Behaviours
Respecting and caring for others Sharing and taking turns Being cooperative Being polite Participating in activities Being friendly Listening Helping Using appropriate social language (eg "please stop, I don't like that") Valuing other people's property (including something they made or built) Using considerate movement patterns Washing hands before eating and after going to the toilet Following a reasonable instruction from an educator	Hitting Kicking Spitting Pushing Pinching Swearing Biting Throwing – sand, stones or toys Disrespecting the property of others (breaking, taking without knowledge or permission) Entering out of bounds areas without permission <u>Non-Physical (emotional behaviours)</u> Verbal abuse Threats Bullying Racial <i>or</i> sexist taunts Yelling and screaming Name calling Disrespecting the privacy of another

These lists are not exhaustive and are intended to provide guidance. Each situation is viewed individually in context and children and adult behaviour needs to be appropriate to the situation at hand. As such we use a

language of expectations and consideration, responsibility and respect with children rather than rules. There are however some rules that apply without exception. These are generally tied to our risk assessment process and include hats must be worn for outdoor play when the weather meets certain criteria, helmets must be worn when riding a bike.

If you have any queries or concerns, don't hesitate to speak to staff. We thank you for your support.

References

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2013), Guide to the National Quality Standard. Accessed 25 June 2015 <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/Quality-Areas>

Child Youth Health, Parent easy guide 02 (Discipline (0-12 years). Accessed 25 June 2015 http://www.parenting.sa.gov.au/pegs_general.htm#peg2

DECS (2010) Family Day Care *Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy*, accessed 20 August 2012, <http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/familydaycare/pages/fdc/policies/>