

POLICY: 2.1 Interactions with Children

Procedure: 2.1 Interaction with Children

In relation to working with children, the Service expects all service staff, Educators and Educator Assistants to encourage children to express themselves and their opinions, recognise their agency and allow children to be involved in experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem. Staff, Educators and Educator Assistants will strive to maintain the dignity and rights of children and guide children's behaviour by positive reinforcement and encouragement.

2.1.1 Linking to Policy

This procedural guidance should be read in conjunction with the Service's **2.1 Interactions with Children Policy** and will assist the Approved Provider, management, staff (Nominated Supervisors, Coordinators and administrative staff members), Educators (including Educator Assistants where applicable) and parents to implement this policy. The procedure covers:

[2.1.2 Role and Responsibilities - Interaction with Children](#)

[2.1.3 Involvement of Children](#)

[2.1.4 Invitation to Play](#)

[2.1.5 Behaviours Development](#)

[2.1.6 Safety](#)

[2.1.7 Communication with Parents](#)

2.1.2. Role and Responsibilities - Interactions with Children

At all times when interacting with children, service staff and Educators will consider the views and cultural values of families, each child's age and stage of development and their abilities. All staff and Educators do this by implementing the principles and practices of Belonging, Being and Becoming, the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia and My Time, Our Place Framework for School Age Care.

In addition, staff and Educators will abide by the ECA (Early Childhood Australia) Code of Ethics which commits Educators, Educator Assistants and service staff to collectively:

- Acknowledge the uniqueness and potential of each child by getting to know children through conversations with families, observations and ongoing assessment of learning
- Recognise early childhood as a unique and valuable stage of life and accept that each phase within early childhood is important in its own right
- Honour the child's right to play, in acknowledgment of the major contribution of play to development which allows children blocks of time to engage and grow

- Enhance each child's strengths, competence and self-esteem by providing opportunities for leadership, leading play, routines and highlighting their areas of interest and strength
- Ensure that work with children is based on their interests and needs and lets them know they have a contribution to make, by planning WITH children rather than FOR children
- Recognise that young children are vulnerable and use influence and power in their best interests
- Create and maintain safe, healthy settings which enhance children's autonomy, initiative and self-worth, and respect their dignity
- Assist children to learn to interact effectively and in doing so, to learn to balance their rights, needs and feelings with those of others by being present, observing children and as required, supporting their participation
- Base our work with children on the best theoretical and practical knowledge about early childhood, as well as on particular knowledge of each child's development
- Respect the special relationship between children and their families and incorporate this perspective in all interactions with children by building supportive relationships with both children and their families and providing space and opportunity for positive interactions between children, their family members and others
- Work to ensure that young children are not discriminated against based on gender, age, race, religion, language, ability, culture or national origin by undertaking an audit annually of the office and Educator's environments to ensure this is enacted
- Acknowledge the worth of the cultural and linguistic diversity that children bring to the environment by actively engaging in learning about each child's cultural and linguistic heritage
- Engage only in practices which are respectful of, and provide security for children and in no way degrade, endanger, exploit, intimidate or harm them psychologically or physically
- Ensure that practices reflect consideration of the child's perspective by actively seeking out children's perspectives.

2.1.3 Involvement of Children

Staff and Educators will ensure children have a voice and can influence their experience while at the Service by actively involving children in an age-appropriate way in the ongoing development of:

1. The educational program and practice (*refer Policy 3.1 Educational Program and Practice*), reflecting each child's strengths, needs, abilities, emerging development and learning styles

2. The rules (and consequences) of behaviour through a collaborative approach between the Educator and children (*refer Procedure: 2.2 Guiding Children's Behaviour*) and reflecting on this regularly

3. The physical aesthetics of the Educator's learning environment through opportunities to set up play spaces. Identify what resources are required and contribute ideas about how the play space is used.

2.1.4 Invitation to Play

Educators will ensure:

- All learning and play opportunities are inclusive, respectful of individual differences and the child's cultural and religious background (*refer Policy 3.1 Educational Program and Practice*) by reflecting on these aspects when considering the experiences being offered and gaining feedback from children and families
- The environment they offer provides children with opportunities to interact and develop positive relationships with each other and others.

Staff (the Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader or Coordinator) will ensure the Educator's environment is safe, inclusive, respectful to each child's interests, strengths, capacity, emerging development, individual differences and the child's cultural and religious background by:

- Ensuring the Educator's residence is suitable to facilitate positive interactions with children (*refer to 6.1 Procedure Assessment of Educator Residence*) and has age-appropriate resources and materials available for children's learning and social and emotional development
- Providing ongoing support through mentoring processes which build the capacity of the Educator (e.g at play session, training and visiting the Educator's residence)
- Monitor the Educator's environment, as well as the Educators, Educator Assistants and all occupants at the residence interactions with children to ensure children are engaged in play experiences and their behaviour demonstrates they are active participants and welcome in the environment (during Coordinator monitoring and support visits to the residence)
- Reflect and engage with the Educator's program (curriculum) at each monitoring and support visit to ensure the Educator's program demonstrates a strong commitment to a child-led practice and is a responsive curriculum to each child's interests and focuses on teaching and learning.

2.1.5 Behaviour Development

Staff and Educators will at all times, treat children with respect including times in which behaviour guidance strategies are developed and utilised. Behaviour guidance strategies will at no time harm, demean, isolate or embarrass the child

Children shall be made aware of the expectations governing appropriate behaviour in the Educator's residence as well as the consequences for inappropriate behaviour.

Children will be responded to positively when requiring the attention of Educators, Educator Assistants or service staff and be encouraged toward acceptable behaviour. *Refer Procedure 2.2 Guiding Children's Behaviour* for further advice and support strategies.

2.1.6 Safety

Educators (and where appropriate Educator Assistants) will:

- Consider the health and safety of children at all times (*refer Policy 2.2 Child Protection*)
- Supervise children at all times (*refer Procedure 2.5 Supervision of Children*)
- Ensure the equipment provided to children will not pose a health or safety hazard (*refer Policy 6.2 Child Safe Equipment*) by undertaking regular checks and annually, a full audit of the care environment (*refer Policy 6.1 Child Safe Environment*)
- Ensure they supervise children at all times by never leaving children in the care of any other person unless this is approved by the Service prior to this occurring and with the permission of families (*refer 2.13 Authorisations*)
- Use the principles of supervision (*refer to Procedure 2.5 Supervision of Children*) as the key process used to observe children, as this will support their capacity to recognise and respond to any behaviour of concern.

2.1.7 Communications with Parents

The service staff and Educators recognise that parents have the primary responsibility for the upbringing, protection and development of their child. Also, positive communication with parents and being respectful of them and their choices sends a positive message to children.

Educators will strive to develop positive relationships with families which is based on mutual trust and open communication and ensure that they engage parents in shared decision-making in relation to their child (*refer Policy 9.2 Communication and Media Policy*).

Educators (and where applicable the Educator Assistants) will assist children in making positive transitions between home and care and in reuniting happily with their families.

Reviews

	Date	Details
Revision 00	07/2015	Original Policy Issued
Revision 01	12/2016	Reviewed
Revision 02	08/2017	Reviewed
Revision 03	10/2020	Reviewed and separated from Policy

Related Documents

Policy

2.1 Interactions with Children Policy

Procedures

2.2 Guiding Children's Behaviour

2.4 Visitors to the Educators Home and Service Office Procedure

2.5 Supervision of Children Procedure

2.13 Authorisations

References

Refer to 2.1 Interactions with Children Policy