

Interactions with Children Policy

BELLA GRACE EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Background

Positive communication and interactions with children at our service are crucial to supporting children's growth and development. "Constructive everyday interactions and shared learning opportunities form the basis of the relationships that educators and co-ordinators build with each child. These relationships provide a solid foundation from which to guide and support children as they develop the self-confidence and skills to manage their own behaviour, make decisions and relate positively and effectively to others."

Policy statement

This Policy sets out the Service's expectations for educators to ensure positive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships between educators and children.

Strategies and practices

- The Service's wide variety of resources, materials and equipment meets the needs (e.g. age, development, culture) and interests of the children, and supports children's learning and harmonious play.
- The educational program is based on the knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests of each child as communicated to educators by their parents, observed by educators and contributed to by the children. In addition, each child's learning and development are assessed as part of the programming cycle of planning, documentation and evaluation.
- The Service's expectation that educators relate to children in accordance with this Policy, the *Behaviour Guidance Policy* and the *Service's Educator Professionalism and Ethics Policy* is emphasised during their induction.
- Educators acknowledge the importance of establishing and maintaining open, respectful and positive interactions with children. Strategies used by educators and other adults working with children include, but are not limited to;
 - Communicating in a warm, supportive and encouraging way
 - Being responsive to children's needs and demonstrating understanding with children
 - Encouraging children to express themselves and their opinions
 - Providing positive behaviour guidance
 - Communicating with respect and acknowledgement of similarities and differences
 - Encouraging children to engage with educators in meaningful, open interactions.
 - Supporting babies' early attempts to communicate by acknowledging and responding sensitively to their cues and signals and devoting one-on-one time to them
 - Being patient, gentle, calm and reassuring even when children strongly express distress, frustration or anger
 - Preserve and promote children's self-esteem by using encouraging words and recognising successes
 - Listening actively to children and responding appropriately
 - Provide children with choices where possible
 - Get children's attention before communicating and get down to their level

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- Using positive messages instead of negative, eg; “Please use your walking feet inside” instead of “Don’t run inside”.
- Using positive, respectful language, including choice of words, tone, volume, facial expressions and body language
- The Service’s rosters ensure continuity of care so that the children are with educators who know them well and are interested in what they think, feel and do. Further, the educators promote the children’s wellbeing, self-esteem and sense of security by being responsive, warm, trusting and respectful.
- Educators and all other adults are to consistently model positive social skills in their everyday interactions with other adults and children.
- The Service is committed to working in partnerships with parents to best meet the education and care needs of their children.
- The program has extended periods of uninterrupted play which accommodate child-initiated, educator-initiated and co-constructed activities. This blend provides children the opportunities to make choices, contribute their own ideas, thoughts and feelings – and to develop social competence. Children then know that they are valued as capable and competent.
- Routines are unhurried, largely social occasions. Refer to the Service’s *Educational Program Policy*.

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Regs	155	Interactions with children
	156	Relationships in groups
QA	1.1.1	Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child’s learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators
	1.1.2	Each child’s current knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program
	1.1.3	The program, including routines, is organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child’s learning
	1.2.3	Each child’s agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world
	1.3.1	Each child’s learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection
	1.2.2	Educators respond to children’s ideas and play and extend children’s learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback
	2.1.1	Each child’s wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child’s need for sleep, rest and relaxation
	2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
	2.2.3	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect
	4.1.2	Every effort is made for children to experience continuity of educators at the service

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5.1.1	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included
5.1.2	The dignity and the rights of every child are maintained
5.2.1	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other
5.2.2	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts
6.1.1	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions
6.1.2	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing
6.2.2	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program
7.1.1.	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations
7.2.3	The educational leader is supported and leads the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle

Sources

- Abbey, B. (2007). *Behaviour management of children in long day care centres: The effects of training on carers' practices*. PhD thesis
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Gartrell, D. (1995). Misbehaviour or mistaken behaviour. *Young Children*. 50(5) 27-34
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011
- "Guide to the National Quality Standard", Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (Jan 2017)

Further reading and useful websites

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority – <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/> accessed 24 December 2017
- Early Childhood Australia – <http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/> accessed 24 December 2017
- Tebyani, V. (2009). *Guiding children's behaviour in child care*. http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/family-resources/factsheets/guiding_children's_behaviour.pdf accessed 24 December 2017

Policy review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

REVIEW DETAILS:

Review Date	Details of Changes
January 2018	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 Feb 2018
April 2018	Originally named "Relationships with Children". Original information now separated into 2 policies – "Behaviour Guidance" & "Interactions with Children"