

Respect for Children Policy

Within an early childhood community many different relationships are negotiated with children, families, Educators and staff. The way in which these relationships are established and maintained, and the way in which they remain visible, impacts on how the early childhood community functions as a whole.

Relationships directly affect how children form their own identity, whether or not they feel safe and supported, and ultimately, their sense of belonging.

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children		
5.1	Relationships between Educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Positive Educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
5.2	Relationships between children	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.
5.2.1	Collaborative learning	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.
5.2.2	Self-Regulation	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law	
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups

PURPOSE

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) highlights Educators' relationships with children as central to supporting their learning. Principle 1 in the EYLF is about secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships.

Our Service philosophy guides our interactions and relationships with children. We aim to ensure that all Educators and staff develop positive relationships with children based on respect and fostering children's self-esteem and development.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, Educators, staff, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

RELATED POLICIES

Additional Needs Policy	Multicultural Policy
Service Philosophy	Service Value
Code of Conduct Policy	Anti-Bias & Inclusion Policy
Behaviour Guidance Policy	Gender Equity Policy
Interactions with Children, Families and Staff Policy	Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

IMPLEMENTATION

All children have a right to feel accepted and respected. This is a principle set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention emphasises the importance of children developing connections to culture and community as a means of fostering a strong sense of personal identity and belonging.

We aim for children to feel safe and secure and we believe in forming strong attachments and connections with children families, Educators and staff at the Service. Educators and staff will find techniques to establish positive relationships with children and their families.

By teaching respect for cultural diversity, Educators and staff will assist children to:

- Learn about their cultural background and develop a strong sense of self identity.
- Learn about and appreciate cultures and traditions other than their own.
- Learn to enjoy and respect differences and recognise universal characteristics we all share.
- Learn about racial prejudice and understand why it should be challenged.

Management / Nominated Supervisor / Educators and staff will:

- Provide a comfortable and happy environment.
- Respect each child's uniqueness, displaying appreciation and respect for children as individuals.
- Use positive and non-threatening tones when interacting with children in all situations.
- Ensure mealtimes are relaxed and unhurried.
- Sit with children during mealtimes, engaging in respectful conversations.
- Never force a child to do something against their request, including sleep or rest, eating, or participation in group experiences and activities.
- Role model respect to children in every day dealings with both adults and children.
- Endeavour to be aware of each individual child's values, culture and feelings and respond appropriately.
- Encourage children to initiate conversations about their experiences at home encouraging them to express their ideas and feelings.
- Encourage children to pursue assistance when taking on new challenges, inspiring children's independence and confidence.
- Regularly reflect on their relationships and interactions with children and how these can be improved to benefit each child.

- Inspire, encourage and accept each child and encourage them to do the same with their peers by actively:
 - Fostering each child’s construction of a knowledgeable, confident self-identity;
 - Fostering each child’s comfortable, empathetic interaction with diversity among people;
 - Fostering each child’s critical thinking about bias, to question and enquire;
 - Fostering each child’s ability to stand up for herself/himself and others in the face of bias.
- Respond respectfully and appropriately to children’s determinations as they participate and converse in sustained conversation about their interests.
- Implement a predictable routine for children with interest based activities and experiences.
- Provide a range of planned and spontaneous experiences for children to challenge and maximise learning opportunities.
- Use a variety of communication strategies inclusive of verbal and non-verbal cues to support the development of relationships with children.
- Support children’s home language when communicating and interacting to build trust and positive relationships.
- Respect children and families diversity and the development of cultural competency within the Service.
- Support children and build secure attachments through a collaborative partnership with families.

Sources

- The Business of Childcare, Karen Kearns 2004.
- Education and Care Services National Regulation 2015.
- National Quality Standards.
- The Anti-Bias approach in Early Childhood, Second Edition, Elizabeth Dau 2001.
- Early Childhood Australia.
- Respectful Relationships.
<http://www.cscentral.org.au/Resources/Publications/respectful-relationships.pdf>
- Relationships with children.
http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nqsplp/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/NQS_PLP_E-Newsletter_No36.pdf
- Revised National Quality Standard.

Review

Date Reviewed	Modifications	Next Policy Review Date
August 2017	Minor changes made to policy.	September 2018
October 2017	Updated references to comply with the Revised National Quality Standard.	September 2018