



INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Our service will provide an environment that reflects the principles in “My Time, Our Place.” The development of secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships with children are fostered and encouraged. Genuine respect for diversity and a commitment to equity is reflected in all our interactions with children. Through our interactions with children we will nurture their optimism, happiness and sense of fun. We will aim to recognise and respond to barriers which may impact on children achieving a positive sense of self-identify. Educators will use opportunities in their interactions with children to support and develop mutual recognition of each other's expectations.

This will lead to:

- ❖ • respect for others;
- ❖ • a deeper understanding of each other;
- ❖ • the negotiation of clear boundaries regarding safety; and
- ❖ • procedures for creating a caring environment.

PROCEDURES

(a) The Educators will:

- always treat children with respect, courtesy and understanding.
- maintain a positive attitude in all interactions with children.
- listen carefully to children's experiences and perspectives and show interest in their ideas and perspectives.
- respect children as individuals and encourage each child to voice their opinions, concerns and ideas in a supportive forum that is free from shame.
- support children in feeling confident in the environment by never using strategies such as shouting, threats of corporal punishment or the refusal of food or other basic needs.
- treat children equally by appreciating their individual identities, race, cultural background, religion, sex or ability and ensure interactions between children and educators exhibit this.
- sensitively manage children who are having difficulty conveying their message or managing their emotions.
- ensure children understand what is being communicated to them during interactions and allow them time to question or respond.
- speak to children at their level and use voice intonations, facial expressions and body language to assist in conveying messages.
- engage in one-on-one conversations with all children and develop an understanding of their likes, dislikes and interests.
- collaborate regularly with children regarding their program, daily routines and practices within the service. Planning and program development will provide experience which meet individual needs, interests and abilities of all children.
- organise environments and spaces that promote small and large group interactions through meaningful play and leisure.
- collaborate with children to develop an agreed set of boundaries and behaviours to guide their conduct in the service, discussing clear expectations and consequences of inappropriate behaviours.
- keep expectations simple and only have a small number of concise guiding statements and consequences that children easily understand. Focus for these will be on appreciating and caring for each other and the environment. All staff, families and children will be made aware of the statements and the related consequences. The statements will be clearly displayed.
- ensure that all educators enforce the expectations and consequences consistently at all



times. Consequences will be relevant to the situation and never demeaning.

- follow up all issues that arise by discussing the situation with the child and strategizing for better solutions in future.
- collaborate with family members and schools regarding guiding positive behaviour.
- access professional development and resources related to guiding positive behaviour and include this in professional development planning.
- act as a positive role model for expected behaviours and positive conduct in the service. Be mindful of respectful language, tone and nonverbal expression.
- encourage and reward positive behaviour by giving praise and specific, meaningful feedback to children as often as possible. This will reinforce their understanding and enhance their motivation.
- focus on the behaviours being displayed and not the child displaying them.
- assist children in regulating their own behaviours. Use simple conflict resolution skills.
- practice self-reliance and promote self-esteem, role modelling and positive direction.
- provide children with opportunities to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other, educators and visitors to the service.
- ensure that appropriate physical contact is maintained in regards to comforting children, application of first aid, safety provisions such as holding hands and maintaining respectful bodily space.
- identify any interactions which are not appropriate and refer to the services 'Providing a Child Safe Environment' policy to address these concerns.
- maintain defined boundaries and clear expectations regarding agreed behaviour with all children and their families.

(b) The Children will:

- be treated with respect, courtesy and understanding which embraces race, cultural background, religion, gender and ability.
- be encouraged to listen to others with respect, courtesy and understanding which embraces race, cultural background, religion, gender and ability.
- be encouraged to share humour and express themselves in a variety of ways.
- practice strategies for problem solving, debating, negotiating and interacting with others in a mutually agreeable way, with the guidance of educators.
- have opportunities to use and share their home language with other children and educators.
- collaborate with staff in developing service routines and procedures including expectations and boundaries and the consequences they should expect if these are not followed.
- encourage their peers to act according to agreed expectations and consequences.
- participate in experiences that will build relationships and promote interactions between each other, educators and visitors to the service.
- assist educators in developing programs and routines for the service that reflect their individual needs, interests and abilities.
- have their need for space, solitude and quiet time supported and respected by educators and children.
- develop an understanding of the choices they make and the responsibility they have to manage their own behaviours in conjunction with educators.

This policy links to the following:

National Quality Standards: 1, 5,6

Education and Care service National regulations : 73-74, 76, 155-156, 168

Other: My Time, Our Place Child Safe Standards