BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

The right for children to receive positive guidance and encouragement in a supportive and respectful environment is promoted within Education and Care Services National Regulations. Children learn to face a variety of challenges throughout their lives and through this develop not only self-regulation, but positive dispositions such as resilience and perseverance. Learning the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour assists children to regulate their own behaviours in different social and emotional environments when interacting with peers and adults.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	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	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

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.

QUALITY AREA 6: PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service

7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
84	Awareness of child protection law
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
174	Time to notify certain circumstances to Regulatory Authority
175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority

RELATED POLICIES

Anti-Bias and Inclusion Policy Educational Program Policy Family Communication Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Interaction with Children, Family and Staff Policy	Medical Condition Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Respect for Children Policy Enrolment Policy Supervision Policy Termination of Enrolment Policy

PURPOSE

We aim to create positive relationships with children by helping them to feel safe, secure, and supported within our Service. We will ensure children are treated fairly and equitably and with respect and consistency, as they are supported to develop the skills and knowledge required to behave in a socially and culturally acceptable manner.

Supporting children to develop socially acceptable behaviour and self-regulation is a primary goal for educators and families. This is embedded in fundamental documents including the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), Education and Care Services National Regulations, and the National Quality Standard (NQS).

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, educators, staff, approved provider, nominated supervisor, management, and visitors of the Service.

DEFINITIONS

Behaviour guidance- this term is used to reflect current thinking about the most positive and effective ways to help children gain understanding and learn skills that will help them to manage their own behaviour. Using appropriate behaviour guidance, educators aim to support each child regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

Self-regulation- The ability to manage energy states, emotions, behaviour and attention: the ability to return to a balanced, calm and constant state of being. Self-regulation is a key factor for mental health, wellbeing and learning (KidsMatter, Early Childhood, 2014).

Inclusion- taking into account all children's social, cultural and linguistic diversity (including learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstance and geographic location) in curriculum decision-making processes. (EYLF)

IMPLEMENTATION

The behaviour and guidance strategies used by staff and educators at our Service are designed to provide children with the opportunity to expand their experiences of life in a productive, safe environment that allows individuals the right to safety, tolerance, self-expression, cultural identity, dignity and the worth of the individual.

Educators understand that as children grow and develop, self-regulation becomes an important aspect of social and emotional development as they begin to understand how their actions affect others.

We believe in providing clear, consistent guidelines for children's behaviour as part of a caring and trusting relationship with children and families to help them feel secure and self-confident. Children benefit from knowing that their environment is stable and that a competent adult is taking care of them. There are three key aspects to promoting positive behaviour:

1. Creating a quality learning environment that is positive and supportive and provides developmentally appropriate experiences and resources
2. Implementing guidance strategies for building skills and strengthening positive behaviour based on age-appropriate behaviour expectations
3. Employing strategies for guiding children's behaviour resulting in decreasing undesired behaviours.

Positive behaviour guidance strategies

Guiding children's behaviour is an important aspect of caring for and educating children. Positive strategies need to be developed to assist children to learn appropriate ways of behaving. Corporal punishment and unreasonable discipline are not permitted at any time in children's services, not only because the child may be physically harmed, but also because it nearly always has detrimental effects on the child's self-esteem and feelings of security. All educators and staff at our Service will role model appropriate behaviour and language, encouraging children to socialise with other children, including children of different cultural backgrounds as well as from different age groups and different genders.

Behaviour guidance strategies implemented within our Service are appropriate to the child's age and developmental capacity. Children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves and are provided with opportunities for independence and self-regulation. Children are given the opportunity to make choices and experience the consequences of these choices when there is no risk of physical or emotional harm to the child or anyone else. They are acknowledged when they make positive choices in managing their behaviour.

Strategies may include using visual cues, prompting, redirection, re-teaching strategies, developing logical consequences and conferences with children. In the instance of adverse behaviour being persistently observed, educators will evaluate their program, room set up, supervision etc. to identify triggers and sources of inappropriate or challenging behaviour.

Regular routines and consistency in implementing behaviour guidance strategies are critical to support children's wellbeing and promote children's agency. All staff implement an active and positive approach to guiding children's behaviour within our Service.

Management/Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will ensure:

- no child being educated and cared for by the service is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances
- every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury
- connections are built between our service and local primary schools to support positive learning environments
- behaviour guidance does not involve making judgements about children or their families
- information is gathered from families about their children's social skills, relationship preferences, family and cultural values which will be recorded in the child's individual file

- educators will use this information to engage children in experiences that support children to develop and practice their social and decision-making skills
- positive and respectful relationships with children are established and maintained
- children are empowered to use language and other forms of non-hurtful communication to communicate their emotions
- positive, empathetic relationships are promoted between children assisting them to develop respectful relationships
- the dignity and rights of each child are maintained at all times
- positive and inclusive strategies are implemented to enable educators to encourage positive behaviour in children in order to minimise adverse behaviour
- general information about behaviour guidance is provided to families through parent interviews and newsletters
- a partnership is developed with other professionals or support agencies that work with children who have diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties to develop plans for the inclusion of these specific children. This information will be kept confidential and in the individual child's file
- excessive or challenging behaviour is managed and communicated with families
- strategies are implemented to re-direct a child who may be causing or about to cause harm to himself or herself, another child, or adult. Incidents may include a child who is kicking, spitting, biting, throwing furniture or toys, punching or hitting, or being disruptive. Redirection may also include an incident where a child places him/herself in a dangerous situation, for example, climbing a fence or hiding in a potentially dangerous position. Safety is a priority, and this may mean using physical re-direction in which an educator will actually remove the child from the harmful situation if required. It may be necessary to remove other children from the area while the child calms down.
- families are notified and the incident/behaviour is addressed sensitively. In an instance where a child or children's safety has been jeopardised, parents are required to sign the *Behaviour Incident Report*
- should the behaviour continue to impede or interrupt the learning of themselves or other children, or cause harm or injury to children or educators, the child's behaviour will be observed and carefully documented, including a risk assessment and/ or ABC documentation and /or cluster of behaviour charts.
- procedures will be followed as outlined in the attached flow chart. (This flow chart was developed in consultation with educators, families, members of the Management Committee and other professionals within our community). The Management Committee supported this development in response to concerns with injuries caused to other children and staff.

  - a meeting with the child's parents/carers and educator will be arranged to discuss behaviours or concerns that have been observed. The flow chart will be discussed with the parents and A *Behaviour Guidance Plan* will be developed in consultation with families and other health professionals and educators, which outlines in detail appropriate responses from the lowest level of support to the highest level of support required.
- families and professional agencies are consulted to ensure that a consistent approach is used to support children with diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties
- *Behaviour Guidance Plans* are to be reviewed on a periodic basis reflecting changes that have been applied through the implementation of the plan in consultation with the child's family
- application for additional support for educators to build their capacity and capabilities to include children with additional needs will be made through the Inclusion Support funding.
- an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is developed and guided by local support agencies as required for individual rooms or groups of children
- the ILP is reviewed on a periodic basis reflecting changes that have been applied through the implementation of the plan
- professional development is provided for educators to be informed, trained and supervised to implement the ILP created, ensuring that information is composed and recorded for reflection on its effectiveness for the individual room or group of children
- The temporary removal of a child from a particular situation or the Education and Care Service is at all times the last action. All strategies and procedures would have been implemented before staff reach this decision. This will be the result of determining that the child is unable to cope with and engage in the educational program at the time.
- Throughout every step of this process, communication with families is ongoing through conversation, email and phone calls. At all times the needs, rights and decisions of the family are respected, whilst families are encouraged to seek help to access specialist assessment as soon as is practicable.
- notification is made to the regulatory authority within the legislated time frames of any circumstance that poses a risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of a child or children, or of any complaint alleging that a serious incident has occurred at the Service.
- notification is made not relevant bodies. E.g. Approved Provider/Insurance company, of any circumstance that poses a risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of a educator/staff member or visitor.

Educators will:

- encourage and support each child's social and emotional development, striving to develop children's self-regulation and an understanding of the feelings of others

- actively work with younger children to promote and role-model positive ways to interact with others
- teach behavioural expectations
- support appropriate behaviour- visual cues, prompting, positive verbal feedback and quality learning environments
- children are provided with positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour
- promote children's initiative and agency
- actively work with all children to support them in constructing and conveying ways of expressing needs, resolving conflict, and responding to the behaviour of others
- at all times provide positive role-modelling in their dealings with children, other educators and staff, and families
- discuss guidelines, rules, limits, and what is fair with children, and use their contributions in setting limits and guidelines
- guide children's behaviour, teaching them how to be considerate of others – to think about the effects of their actions on others. It is important that children understand what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is and how to manage their emotions.
- talk calmly with children about the consequence of their actions, and the reason for rules
- use corrective consequences- prompt, redirect, re-teach, provide choice, logical consequence, conference with child and educator
- provide positive feedback and focus on children's strengths and achievements and build on their abilities
- take into consideration the child's past experiences as their behaviour could be a result of past trauma such as changes in routine, changes or losses within the family, placement in care, or more serious circumstances involving abuse, neglect, or family violence
- be responsive to these former experiences, designing and implementing behaviour plans with the individual child that include strategies which will assist alternative and positive behaviour
- provide age appropriate, challenging, and interesting activities, experiences, and equipment for children to use and become engaged with
- ensure there are sufficient materials and equipment for individual, small and large group activities
- set up the environment (indoor and outdoor) for children to engage in activities and experiences in accordance with their abilities and interests
- adapt a positive approach, excluding cruel, harsh, humiliating or demeaning actions
- commit to professional development and keep up to date with industry information regarding behaviour guidance strategies
- support children to explore different identities and points of view and to communicate effectively when resolving disagreements with others

- participate in planned and spontaneous conversations with children about emotions, feelings and issues of inclusion and fairness, bias and prejudice, and the consequences of their actions, as well as the appropriate rules and the reasons for the rules
- provide children with the language and vocabulary needed to express their emotions and feelings and verbalise their concerns
- encourage children to listen to other people's ideas, consider pro-social and altruistic behaviour and collaborate and negotiate in problem solving situations
- listen empathetically to children when they communicate their emotions, provide encouragement as they reassure the child it is normal to experience positive and negative emotions
- guide children to remove themselves from situations where they are experiencing frustration, anger, or fear
- support children to negotiate their rights and rights of others and mediate perceptively when children experience difficulty in resolving dissimilarity
- learn about children's relationships with others and their relationship preferences they have and use this knowledge to encourage children to manage their own behaviour and expand on their empathy skills
- use positive language, gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice when redirecting or discussing children's behaviour with them
- remain calm, respectful and tolerant as they encourage children who are strongly expressing distress, frustration or anger
- guide children's behaviour with a focus on preserving and promoting children's self-esteem as they learn to self-regulate their behaviour
- implement "*time with*" an adult, which will be used when all other strategies (above) have been exhausted. "Time with" allows educators to offer reassurance and support so the child can settle and regain self-control, develop some self-calming behaviours and gain composure. Once calm, educators can assist the child to identify what happened, reflect on their actions and consider how they may have done something differently. "Time with" will always occur under the supervision of other educators or staff.

Families will:

- provide consent for the service to consult with professional agencies to assist with implementing a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) for the room or group of children
- work collaboratively with educators and professional agencies when required in order to develop a broader understanding of the child's developmental level and share any recent events which may be influencing the child's behaviour

- consult with educators and provide consent when the Service is applying for Inclusion Support Funding
- work in partnership with educators and health professionals in the development of a behaviour guidance plan to assist with the identification of challenging behaviour, the development of supportive strategies and the review of strategies implemented within a behaviour guidance plan where required
- create consistency in behaviour guidance strategies used at the service and at home

Source

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REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	JULY 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	JULY 2027

MODIFICATIONS • Introduction of the Flowchart for support of Positive Behaviour • Adjustments to the paragraphs on Behaviour Guidance Plans and the temporary removal of children from situations or The Education and Care Service			
	OCTOBER 2022		OCTOBER 2023
MODIFICATIONS	• policy maintenance - no major changes to policy • minor formatting edits within text • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
MAY 2021	• additional links to the National Quality Standard • additions to policy related to behaviour guidance plans • removal of '*children will*' section- policy is written to guide adults- so not appropriate to be included in policy • sources checked for currency		MAY 2022
MAY 2020	realignment of content within the policy deleted content that was repeated in different sections or moved into a different section changed order of some points additional definitions added rewording of some points notification to regulatory authority added additional information added for clarity further sources included sources updated and checked for currency		MAY 2021
MAY 2019	Additional information added to points. Rearranged the order of points for better flow Sources/references corrected, updated, and alphabetised. Information added to sources. 'Related policies' alphabetised.		MAY 2020
AUGUST 2018	Updated to include 'self-regulation' concepts and terminology.		MAY 2019
MAY 2018	Updated to include terminology 'Inclusion Support Plans' which replace Behaviour Management Plans.		MAY 2018
OCTOBER 2017	Updated the references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard		MAY 2018