

Guiding Children's Behaviour

Policy Statement

Samuel Gilbert Out of School Hours Care aim to create positive relationships with children ensuring that they feel safe, secure and supported within the service. Knowledge of the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour assists children to regulate their own behaviours in various social and emotional environments when interacting with peers and adults.

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children

5.1 – Relationships between educators and children

5.1.1 – Positive educator to child interactions

5.1.2 – Dignity and rights of the child

5.2 – Relationships between children

5.2.1 – Collaborative learning

5.2.2 – Self-regulation

Procedure

As an Approved Provider reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that experiences are encouraged that develop self reliance and self esteem.

Behaviour guidance strategies will take into consideration the context of the situation, acknowledging the age and developmental abilities of the child/ren, the experiences being provided and environment in which care is taking place.

General behaviour expectations and clear guidelines of acceptable behaviour will be established and continually reviewed through consultation with educators and children. Children in our care will be encouraged to become self-disciplined by providing consistent clear guidelines in regards to appropriate behavior and develop an understanding of consequences of their behaviour.

The behaviour expectations are as follows:

Our service works best when children, educators and families demonstrate

Respect

Education

Hygienic

Safe

Healthy

Expectations will be realistic, clear, minimal, achievable, consistent, and developmentally appropriate with an emphasis on encouraging respect.

The dignity and rights of each child will be maintained at all times.

Interactions will include opportunities for children to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other, educators and volunteers at the service.

Educators will be familiar with the school's disciplinary policy and key values to provide consistency for children and families.

Educators will remain up to date with the school's routine / special events etc as these may have an impact on children before and after school. This will be achieved by sharing school newsletters, discussing the schools termly calendar and communication with school staff, children and families.

Where consistent behaviour issues are evident within a particular context educator will review the following

- Is the environment noisy, over stimulating, crowded, or routines/transitions are slow?
- Are the activities being provided age appropriate and challenging for the children?
- Are there sufficient age appropriate resources to allow children to play alongside one another and with similar resources?
- Are the educator's expectations of the children's behaviour appropriate and applied consistently and equally with all children?
- Are educators engaging with the children and interacting with the experience?
- Are there inappropriate behaviours developing at school?

Educator Guidance practices & Partnerships with families

Children will be taught socially acceptable behavior and positive guidance, redirection and reinforcement.

Families and children's feedback will be encouraged regularly in regards to the behaviour expectations and behaviour management through the enrolment process, surveys, and policy reviews. Parents/guardians will be issued a copy of the parent/guardian code of conduct on enrolment and the behaviour guidelines for their children.

Guidelines/rules will be regularly reviewed through the program and in consultation with the educators and children. Educators, families and children will be familiar with the rules/guidelines expected with posters displayed, regular discussions and up to date information and resources readily available.

All consequences shall be relevant to the individual situation and not demeaning to the child. Focus is placed on the behaviour displayed by the child and not a personal attack, ensuring the child's self esteem and dignity is kept in tact.

Educators will educate the children by providing the skills for managing situations in their own lives e.g. negotiation/problem solving skills/group conflicts.

Children have the right (when they are developmentally ready) to make their own choices in relation to the program and appropriate behaviour within the services limits.

In highlighting that children have rights we are also recognising that there is a responsibility that accompanies this right.

Children are responsible for expressing their opinions and communicating these to educators, listening to other people's point of view and abiding by group decisions.

No child is to be subjected to, or threatened with, corporal punishment.

No child is to have food or other basic needs withdrawn as part of a punishment.

Positive behaviour will be encouraged by role modeling, redirecting children to more suitable activities, showing appreciation for appropriate behaviour and building on the individual child's strengths and achievements.

Children are to be provided with opportunities that enable them to be responsible for their own behaviour through the development of problem-solving skills.

Children will be encouraged to seek support when necessary.

Educators will have access to information on current trends/resources, training and support in positive approaches to behaviour management.

Educators and families are required to openly communicate to ensure that they are working towards the same outcome.

Educators and families are encouraged to share information regarding a child to ensure that positive guidance strategies are implemented at the service and within the home environment.

Educators will discuss with individual families any behavioural concerns and together develop a strategy based on observations of the child's behaviour.

Educators and families will raise concerns as they arise and discuss ways of working together to assist children to make changes in inappropriate behavior.

When discussing promoting positive behaviour and managing inappropriate behaviour, a holistic approach is vital. This is achieved by including educators, children, families and the school in developing best practice for the service.

The school counselor may be suggested as a resource for families.

If families wish to include the staff/school counselor in discussion written permission must be obtained by the family for the educators to discuss behaviour.

Sharing of information to ensure positive guidance strategies are implemented at the service and at home

When determined appropriate educators will provide information to families regarding external support agencies, resources that may be able to assist the service and the family

Time Away

- Every effort will be pursued to ensure that when discussing behaviours with individual children confidentiality is maintained.
- Points for this discussion are to include.
- Educators will use the ABC model of behaviour.
 - The **A**ntecedents: What happened immediately prior to the behaviour occurring
 - The **B**ehaviour displayed
 - The **C**onsequences what followed from the behaviour
 - Also consider the motivation behind the behaviour as this is a necessary step in promoting the positive behaviour process.

Educators will only use time away for short periods, where children are provided with space, encouraged to rest and reflect, think about what has occurred and how it might have been prevented or how they might have handled a situation differently. When utilising time away, educators will allow a realistic time and have the child sit separately but not in isolation. Educators will follow up all time away situations with a calm and thoughtful discussion by working together on better solutions for future behaviour.

To assist in maintaining a positive, safe and caring environment the staff and children will have the following responsibilities.

Children:

- Treat each other with respect, courtesy and understanding, respecting the rights of everyone including the person displaying the behaviour.
- Consider co-operation, care and the safety of others to be important.
- Encourage self-control and positive self talk with opportunities for listening and expressing views.

- Children will be encouraged to use language needed to resolve conflict or to ask for assistance such as “Stop I don’t like that” “Stop I don’t like you shouting at me”.
- Behaviour is expected to be safe, fair considerate and caring, based on co-operation and on acknowledgement of the feelings of others
- Be encouraged to maintain positive communication and relationships between their peers including educators, children and other adults.
- Use appropriate language
- Participate in play experiences where they can learn about co-operation, turn taking, skills and competition.
- Practice group dynamics and decision making in a calm manner with the support of others.
- Develop self -discipline skills through positive example and direction.
- Develop an understanding that behaviour results from choices and with rights becomes responsibilities.

Educators:

- 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 model positive ways to interact with others.
- 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 communication with children, educators and families.
- Guide children’s behaviour, teaching them how to be considerate of others – and to reflect on 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 in their responses.
- Talk calmly with children in regards to the consequence of their actions, and the reason for rules.
- Use positive guidance through redirection. In the instance of adverse behaviour being persistently observed, educators will evaluate their program, the environment, supervision etc. to reflect on inappropriate behaviour, triggers and sources.
- 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.
- Implement “Time away” with an adult, which will be used when all other strategies (above) have been exhausted. “Time away,” allows children time to reflect on their actions, assisting in fostering self-discipline and to acknowledge that there are consequences to actions. “Time away” will occur under the supervision of other educators.
- Take into consideration the child’s past experiences as their behaviour could be a result from change in routine, changes or losses within the family, 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.
- Ensure all strategies being implemented are appropriate to the child's age and developmental capacity.

- Adapt a positive approach, excluding cruel, harsh, humiliating or demeaning actions.
- Consult with industry professionals to support the child within the service and implement techniques within the program to benefit all.
- Commit to professional development and keep up to date with industry information regarding behaviour management.
- Re-direct a child who may be causing or about to cause harm to themselves, 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 itself in a dangerous situation, for example, climbing a fence or hiding under furniture. 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
- Complete a 'Behaviour Incident Report' with each incident that occurs. Families are to be notified when they will be required to read and sign in an instance where a child or children's safety has been jeopardised.
- Continue observing the child, where a similar incidence occurs three times the child's parents/guardians and educators will meet to discuss the behaviour of concern as they assist in creating a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) to support the child in the environment.
- Exchange information with families about behaviour guidance which is encouraged both on an informal and more formal basis, such as parent/guardian interviews and through newsletters.
- Be sufficiently informed, trained and supervised to implement the Strategic Inclusion Plan (STP) created, ensuring that information is composed and recorded for reflection on its effectiveness for the individual child.
- 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 and the reasons for this as well as the appropriate 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.
- Work with individual families and professional agencies to ensure that a consistent approach is used to support children with diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties.
- Use positive language, gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice when redirecting or discussing children's behaviour with them.
- Guide children's behaviour with a focus on preserving and promoting children's self-esteem as they learn to self-regulate their behaviour.

Behaviour Management Plans/ Further planning

- Develop a plan of action involving discussion with all educators, parents, school, and other professionals as required. Ensure permission is obtained and confidentiality is maintained.
- When developing a plan ensure it is specific, simple, practical, positive, and realistic with considerations to cultural practices and reflect policies and the service philosophy.
- All educators should be aware of changes or individual children's specific plans

Card Procedure

Children will be issued with 'Behaviour Cards' for behaviours as defined below. If a child receives a yellow card three times, the next card they will receive is an orange card. Once a child has an orange card and receives three more yellow cards, they will receive a red card.

Particular more extreme behaviours (defined below as Critical Incident Behaviours) will result in an immediate orange card.

The card system will reset at the beginning of each calendar year – depending on severity of the behavior.

Card Behaviours

Children will be issued with yellow cards when engaging in behaviours as listed below:

- Physical Bullying, e.g. hitting, biting, kicking, pushing, pinching, scratching, spitting, pulling hair or other.
- Verbal Bullying, e.g. intolerable name calling (hurtful discriminatory, threatening, putdowns or teasing).
- Unsafe Play e.g. Continual out of bounds or inappropriate use of equipment after staff guidance, deliberate use of equipment to endanger self or others, actions potentially harmful to others (e.g. tackle instead of tipping).
- Excessive disruptive behaviour or deliberate disruption.
- Refusal to comply with staff directions, e.g. disobedience, refusal to listen (e.g. after clarification of expectations, the child continues to disobey instructions) disrespectful gestures, repeated answering back.
- Inappropriate Language, e.g. comments that are racial, swearing, malice and inappropriate sexual references or gestures.
- Deliberate damage of SGOOSH equipment.
- Other

Note: If a child engages continually in these behaviours during one session, this will be considered a critical incident, which will result in moving to the procedure for an orange card.

Critical Incident Behaviours

- Continual physical bullying in a session, e.g. hitting, biting, kicking, pushing, pinching, scratching, spitting, pulling hair or other.
- Continual verbal bullying in a session, e.g. intolerable name calling (hurtful discriminatory, threatening, putdowns or teasing).
- Leaving premises
- Stealing
- Physical or verbal attack against staff e.g. swearing, continual disrespect
- Deliberate breakage or vandalism of equipment (e.g. equipment damaged or broken in anger).

Yellow cards

- Child to write a description of what happened on the card, or if unable to write due to age, the staff will discuss the incident and write on the card using the child's words. The card format includes "What happened?" and "What could I have done differently?" as well as requiring the child to identify which rule has been broken and how their behaviour broke that rule.
- When a card is issued, the staff member must complete a behaviour management report, and discuss the report with the Centre Manager or person in charge.
- The card will be photocopied and attached to the front of the behaviour management report when handed to the parent. A copy must also be placed in the behaviour management folder in the child's file with a card sequence chart.
- The parent will be provided with a copy of the behaviour management policy, and the staff member will highlight the potential for exclusion in the case of an orange card which will be issued after three yellow cards.
- A copy of the report and a copy of the card are to be placed on the child's file.
- The staff member is to present the report to the parent (or if staff member has left for the day, the person in charge)
- The parent is to sign the form and can choose to request a time to speak to the Centre Manager.

Orange cards

- Child to write a description of what happened on the card, or if unable to write due to age, educators will discuss the incident and write on the card using the child's words. The card format includes "What happened?" and "What could I have done differently?" as well as requiring the child to identify which rule has been broken and how their behaviour broke that rule.
- When a card is issued, the educator must complete a behaviour management report, and discuss the report with the Centre Manager or person in charge.
- The card will be photocopied and attached to the front of the behaviour management report when handed to the parent. A copy must also be placed in the behaviour management folder in the child's file with a card sequence chart.
- A copy of the report and a copy of the card are to be placed on the child's file and are to be discussed at the next management committee meeting and/or discussed immediately with a member of the management committee.
- The Centre Manager or person in charge will hand the form to the parent and inform them that their child is temporarily excluded for their next booked day.
- The parent is to sign the form and an appointment must be arranged within 48 hours for a meeting to occur between the parents/guardians, the child and the manager and/or second educator or committee member before the child is allowed to resume care.
- At the meeting, a plan of action for behavioural changes (see attached) will be developed, and the potential for long term suspension will be discussed as a consequence of further inappropriate behaviour (three additional yellow cards) resulting in a red card.

Red cards

- Child to write a description of what happened on the card, or if unable to write due to age, the educator will discuss the incident and write on the card using the child's words. The card format includes "What happened?" and "What could I have done differently?" as well as requiring the child to identify which rule has been broken and how their behaviour broke that rule.
- When a card is issued, the educator must complete a behaviour management report, and discuss the report with the Centre Manager or person in charge.

- The card will be photocopied and the original attached to the front of the behaviour management report when handed to the parent.
- A copy of the report and a copy of the card are to be placed on the child's file.
- The Centre Manager is to contact an executive member of the committee and advise them that a child has been issued with a red card and will therefore be suspended.
- The Centre Manager or person in charge will hand the form to the parent and inform them that their child is excluded until appropriate external support is sought in relation to their child's behaviour. This external support could be in the form of the School Counselor, Network, Inclusion Support, a psychologist, behaviouralist, or as suggested by the parent and agreed on by the centre management and/or management committee.
- The parent/guardian is to sign the form and an appointment must be arranged within 48 hours for a meeting to occur between the parents/guardians, the child and the manager and/or second staff member or committee member to discuss a behaviour plan.
- At the meeting, a contract for engaging external support will be developed. The child will be suspended from care until external support has been sought and a plan of action developed (see attached). The child's re-entry to care will be on a trial basis of one month only, with a review meeting between all parties at the end of this period.
- Any further incidents will result in permanent suspension or suspension until professional support is in place and consultation has occurred between professional support, parents and management.

In the case of a critical incident, the same procedure as an orange card will be implemented, and any further incident will result in a red card.

Suspension and Exclusion for Unacceptable Behaviour

Should unacceptable behaviour continue and the above strategies are not working, the Centre Manager will inform the Management Committee.

Where, in the interest of the child and other children at the service, exclusion is seen as the only step to be taken this will be decided by the service management and only considered after:

- The monitoring of behaviour and record of incidents.
- Adequate support and counseling where possible for the staff, child and family.
- Parents/Guardians have been notified and given the opportunity to discuss their child's behaviour and assist with the implementation of strategies.
- Parents/Guardians have been referred to other assistance if appropriate.
- Discussion and careful consideration have been given to the situation by educators and the Management Committee.
- Procedures that are in place are clear for accepting the child back to the service.

Source

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Guide to the National Quality Standard
- www.kidsmatter.edu.au
- Revised National Quality Standards
- Inclusion – KU Children's Services
- Department of Education and Training
- Child Care Desktop policies