

Guiding Children's Behaviour

Policy Statement

The right for children to receive positive guidance in a supportive and respectful environment is promoted within the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*. Children learn to face a variety of challenges throughout their lives. Learning the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour assists children to regulate their own behaviours in different social and emotional environments as well as 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 LAW AND REGULATIONS		
S. 162A	Child protection training- each nominated supervisor and each person in day-to-day charge and each family day care co-ordinator to have completed the child protection	

	training required or under law for this jurisdiction
S. 166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
S. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
S. 174	Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
12	Meaning of serious incident
84	Awareness of child protection law
147	Staff members [records]
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority

Related Policies

Bullying Policy Inclusion Policy Educational Program Procedure Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Interaction with Children, Family and Staff Policy Learning and Development Policy	Medical Conditions Policy Confidentiality Agreement Record Keeping and Retention Policy Enrolment and Orientation Policy Supervision Policy
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Implementation

The behaviour and guidance strategies used by educators at our service are designed to provide children 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

Children in our care will be encouraged to become self-disciplined by providing consistent clear guidelines in regard to appropriate behaviour 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

Be Respectful

Be Hygienic

Be Safe

Be Healthy

Enjoy learning

- 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.

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.

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 providing a 'cooling down' period 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. Physically restraining a child will only be used in emergency situations if a child is:

- In a clearly unsafe situation – e.g., attempting to scale a fence or run onto a road

- Physically threatening other children or adults
- Behaving in ways that are destructive to themselves, other people or the environment. [ACECQA, 2020]

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.

Inappropriate discipline

Any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or inappropriate is not permitted at any time when children are being educated and cared for by an education and care service. Staff are made aware of practices that are interactions with children Inappropriate discipline

The approved provider/management/nominated supervisor will ensure:

- obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* are met
- educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and procedure
- all new employees, students and volunteers are provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction process
- families are issued a copy of this *Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy, Code of Conduct and OOSH Responsibilities on enrolment*
- 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 (Sec. 166 National Law)
- every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury
- each nominated supervisor and person in day-to-day charge of the service has completed child protection training (Section 162A of the National Law)
- staff records include evidence of the approved training completed by staff members (Reg.147)
- connections are built between our service and Samuel Gilbert Public School 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 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
- 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 such through parent meetings, newsletters, Facebook
- 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, the child's behaviour is observed and carefully documented. Additional information is collated related to the context and behaviour guidance strategies implemented.
- a meeting with the child's parents/carers and educator may be arranged to discuss any behaviours or concerns that have been observed. A *Behaviour Guidance Plan* may be developed in consultation with families and other health professionals as required

- *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
- families, the child's primary school and professional agencies are consulted to ensure that a consistent approach is used to support the child with diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties
- application for additional support for educators to build their capacity and capabilities to include children with additional needs may be made through the Inclusion Support Program.
- a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) is developed and guided by local support agencies as required for individual groups of children
- the SIP 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 SIP created, ensuring that information is composed and recorded for reflection on its effectiveness for the individual child
- 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 to the regulatory authority and to the children's commissioner, child protection agencies or the police of any incident of inappropriate discipline.

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
- ensure 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 families
- discuss guidelines, rules, limits, and what is fair with children, and use their contributions in setting limits and guidelines
- 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
- 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.
- 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, 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
- in service training will occur to assist educators with up to date strategies and or provide support for individual children
- 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*' or '*cool down time*' with an educator, which will be used when all other strategies (above) have been exhausted. '*Time with*' or '*cool down time*' 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*' or '*cool down time*' will always occur under the supervision of other educators
- contribute to and ensure Individual Support Plans are followed in consultation with the Services' SIP.

Families will:

- 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 or Individual Support 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

Time Away

- Every effort will be pursued to ensure that when discussing behaviours with individual children confidentiality is maintained.
- 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.

Behaviour Management Plans/ Further planning

- Develop a plan of action involving discussion with all educators, parents/guardians, 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, kicking, pushing, scratching, spitting, pulling hair or other.
- Verbal Bullying, e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, insults, threats.
- 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 directions from educators 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, an 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 attached to the front of the behaviour management report when handed to the parent/guardian. A copy must also be placed in the behaviour management folder in the child's file with a card sequence chart.
- The parent /guardian will be provided with a copy of the Guiding Children's Behavior Policy and Centre Manager/Responsible Person 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/guardian is to sign the form and can choose to request a meeting with 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/guardian. 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/guardian is to sign the form. An appointment must be arranged within 48 hours for a meeting to occur between the parents/guardians, the child and the Centre 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/guardian.
- 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/Responsible Person will hand the form to the parent/guardian 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/guardian and agreed on by the 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 Centre 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 Management Committee and only considered after:

- The monitoring of behaviour and record of incidents.
- Adequate support and counseling where possible for the educators, 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.

Note - notification 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.

Source

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Australian Government Department of Education. Inclusion Support Program

<https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-package/inclusion-support-program>

Department of Education NSW Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) Early Childhood

<https://pbl.schools.nsw.gov.au/resources/early-childhood.html>

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