

Interactions with Children Procedure

Playtime Policy Reference

Interactions with Children Policy

Policy & Procedure Access and Supporting Documents

- All Playtime Childcare policies and procedures are located:
 - Electronically on OWNA for Staff via → Staff → Policies and Procedures
 - Electronically on OWNA for Families via → Configure → Policies and Resources
 - Management has access electronically via computer documents
 - Hard copies available upon request
- Regulative required policies and procedures will be reviewed annually, all other policies biannually

Playtime Practice

Educators will build respectful relationships by:

- Developing warm, responsive, trusting and secure relationships with children, families and colleagues.
- Treating every child with dignity, fairness, equity and inclusion regardless of culture, language, gender, religion, ability, family background or individual circumstances.
- Recognising children as capable, competent and active participants in their own learning.
- Supporting children's confidence, identity, independence, agency, resilience and sense of belonging.
- Listening to children's voices and providing genuine opportunities for children to express their opinions, ideas, preferences and feelings.
- Involving children in decisions about their learning, routines, environments, relationships and play.
- Greeting children warmly on arrival and acknowledging departures.
- Communicating at children's level through respectful language, appropriate eye contact, positive body language and active listening.
- Responding sensitively to children's verbal and non-verbal communication, cues and individual needs.

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- Allowing children sufficient time to communicate, make decisions and respond without unnecessary interruption.
- Developing relationships that enable children to confidently seek support from educators when they are upset, worried, uncomfortable or feel unsafe.
- Respecting children's right to say "no", express discomfort and seek assistance in developmentally appropriate circumstances.

Educators will support children's wellbeing, learning and development by:

- Providing play-based learning experiences that support children's social, emotional, physical, cognitive and communication development.
- Encouraging communication, resilience, empathy, problem-solving, decision-making and self-regulation.
- Providing children with opportunities to develop self-reliance, independence and confidence through meaningful choices and achievable challenges.
- Using positive guidance strategies that teach and encourage appropriate behaviours rather than relying on punishment.
- Providing reassurance, encouragement, emotional support and recognition of children's efforts and achievements.
- Collaborating with children to establish expectations, routines and respectful ways of interacting with others.
- Planning inclusive experiences that reflect children's cultures, strengths, interests, abilities, family backgrounds and individual circumstances.
- Respecting and incorporating children's and families' cultural values and perspectives into the educational program where appropriate.
- Providing balanced opportunities for indoor and outdoor learning, quiet and active experiences, group and individual learning and uninterrupted play.
- Providing opportunities for children to develop respectful and reciprocal relationships with other children, educators, staff and volunteers.
- Supporting children to develop an understanding of respectful relationships, personal boundaries, empathy and the rights of others.
- Recognising children's individual strengths, interests, developmental needs and abilities when planning and implementing experiences.
- Providing appropriate opportunities for children to take responsibility for their environment, belongings, routines and learning.

Educators will create safe, supportive and inclusive environments by:

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- Maintaining active and effective supervision at all times.
- Ensuring educator-to-child ratios and qualification requirements are maintained.
- Monitoring staffing arrangements, supervision practices and the physical environment to promote children's safety and wellbeing.
- Protecting children from harm, abuse, neglect, discrimination, bullying and injury.
- Providing safe, welcoming, inclusive and responsive environments where children feel secure and a sense of belonging.
- Recognising children's individual regulation needs, triggers, communication styles and support strategies.
- Supporting children through transitions using preparation, consistency, flexibility, predictability and reassurance.
- Providing environments that encourage children to explore, make choices, take appropriate risks and develop independence.
- Encouraging children's connection with nature and respect for the environment.
- Ensuring interactions and environments support children's dignity, privacy and rights.
- Considering the size, composition, developmental needs and individual circumstances of groups when planning experiences and interactions.

Educators will respond positively to children's behaviour by:

- Recognising behaviour as a form of communication and seeking to understand the purpose, meaning and underlying needs associated with children's behaviour.
- Remaining calm, respectful and responsive when children experience strong emotions or challenging situations.
- Supporting children to identify, communicate and regulate their emotions.
- Teaching children appropriate ways to express their needs, resolve conflict and interact respectfully with others.
- Acknowledging and reinforcing positive behaviour, effort, participation and progress.
- Redirecting behaviour in a respectful and developmentally appropriate manner.
- Working collaboratively with children, families and leadership to develop appropriate behaviour support strategies.
- Documenting observations and behaviour support plans where appropriate.

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- Seeking assistance when behaviours impact the safety or wellbeing of any child or when additional support is required.
- Implementing behaviour guidance plans that identify children's strengths, interests, goals, triggers, individual needs and agreed support strategies.
- Reviewing behaviour support strategies regularly to ensure they remain appropriate, effective and respectful.
- Ensuring all behaviour guidance is consistent with the service's Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy and promotes children's safety, agency, inclusion and wellbeing.

Educators will maintain professional boundaries and respect conduct by ensuring they never:

- Use corporal punishment, physical punishment or unnecessary physical force.
- Humiliate, intimidate, threaten, shame or frighten children.
- Yell at children or use degrading, sarcastic, discriminatory or inappropriate language.
- Ignore children's attempts to communicate or dismiss their feelings, concerns or opinions.
- Use isolation or inappropriate "time out" practices.
- Show favouritism or create relationships that are inappropriate, secretive or overly familiar.
- Engage in conduct that compromises a child's dignity, privacy, safety or wellbeing.
- Discuss confidential information within children's hearing.
- Leave children unsupervised or fail to maintain appropriate supervision.
- Ignore disclosures, allegations, indicators of abuse, neglect or other safety concerns.
- Discourage a child from speaking about something that has made them feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Engage in behaviour that could reasonably be perceived as inappropriate, unsafe or inconsistent with professional boundaries.

Educators and staff are expected to model respectful relationships and appropriate communication at all times, including in their interactions with other educators and staff in the presence of children.

Educators will support children to speak up and raise concerns by:

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- Develop trusting relationships that encourage children to speak openly about their experiences and concerns.
- Encourage children to express when they are upset, worried, uncomfortable or feel unsafe.
- Support children to identify trusted adults they can approach for help.
- Teach children about respectful relationships, personal boundaries and body safety in developmentally appropriate ways.
- Listen calmly and respectfully when a child raises a concern or makes a disclosure.
- Take children's concerns seriously and respond in accordance with child protection and reporting requirements.
- Never promise a child secrecy in relation to a safety concern or disclosure.
- Ensure children are supported following a disclosure or concern and are not blamed, dismissed or discouraged from speaking up.

Educators will maintain current knowledge of their child protection responsibilities, including how to:

- Identify signs that a child may be at risk of harm.
- Respond appropriately to a child's disclosure.
- Identify and report concerns about inappropriate discipline or conduct towards children.
- Understand their mandatory reporting obligations, including who must report, what must be reported, when and how reports are made.
- Follow the service's Child Protection Reporting and Providing a Child Safe Environment policies and procedures.
- Immediately report concerns, allegations or observations of inappropriate conduct through the appropriate reporting pathway.
- Take immediate action to ensure a child is safe where a concern arises.
- Accurately document concerns, disclosures, incidents and observations in accordance with service procedures.
- Maintain confidentiality and only share information with people who have a legitimate need to know.

Where an educator observes or becomes aware of inappropriate conduct towards a child, they must not ignore the concern or attempt to manage a child protection matter independently. The concern must be escalated in accordance with the service's child protection reporting procedures and legislative obligations.

Educators will support educators to provide quality interactions by:

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- Comprehensive induction covering interactions with children, child safety, professional boundaries, supervision, behaviour guidance and mandatory reporting.
- Regular professional development and training.
- Team meetings and reflective discussions about interactions with children.
- Opportunities to reflect on the educational program, planning cycle and daily practices.
- Mentoring, guidance and feedback from the Educational Leader, Room Leaders, Responsible Person and management.
- Opportunities for programming, planning and reflection away from the floor where operationally appropriate.
- Discussion of current child safe practice guidance and relevant legislation.
- Opportunities to discuss challenging situations and seek support before concerns escalate.
- Regular review of behaviour guidance strategies and their impact on children's wellbeing and agency.

Where digital devices are used to document children's learning or experiences, educators will ensure that:

- Only service authorised devices, platforms and systems are used in accordance with service procedures.
- Appropriate authorisations are obtained before photographs or videos of children are taken or shared.
- Images and videos are used only for approved educational, documentation or communication purposes.
- Children's dignity, privacy, safety and rights are maintained when taking, storing and sharing images.
- Images are not taken or shared in circumstances that could embarrass, humiliate or compromise a child's dignity or safety.
- Educators follow the service's privacy, safe use of digital technology and online environments along with providing child safe environment procedures.
- Children are supported to speak with a trusted adult if something they experience through digital technologies or online environments makes them feel uncomfortable, worried or unsafe.

Educators will respect and encourage families' views and expectations regarding positive interactions with children by:

- Seeking to understand children's family backgrounds, cultures, values, interests, strengths and individual needs.

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- Encouraging families to contribute to the educational program and planning process.
- Respecting family perspectives about their child's learning, development, communication and wellbeing.
- Maintaining open and respectful communication with families.
- Seeking family input when developing individual support or behaviour guidance strategies where appropriate.
- Providing families with opportunities to provide feedback about the service's practices and interactions.
- Responding respectfully and appropriately to concerns raised by families.

Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

The service will monitor implementation of this procedure through:

- Daily observations of educator practice and interactions.
- Active supervision and mentoring.
- Staff meetings and reflective discussions.
- Reflection on all stages of the educational planning cycle and how these promote quality interactions, children's agency and relationships.
- Professional development and training.
- Educator induction and regular policy updates.
- Children's feedback, participation and contributions to programming.
- Family feedback and consultation.
- Internal audits and compliance monitoring.
- Incident, complaint and behaviour reviews.
- Review of child protection concerns and reported conduct.
- Observation of how educators interact with one another in the presence of children and the behaviours they model.
- Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) processes.
- Regular review of relevant legislation, regulatory requirements and child safe practice guidance.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Approved Provider	• Establish and maintain systems, policies and procedures that promote positive, respectful and child-safe interactions. • Ensure compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law, National Regulations, EYLF V2.0, National Quality Standard and child protection legislation.

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	• Ensure all educators, staff, students, volunteers and contractors understand their responsibilities for maintaining respectful interactions with children. • Provide appropriate induction, supervision, professional learning and ongoing training to support high-quality practice. • Ensure Working with Children Checks and mandatory child protection training remain current. • Provide sufficient resources to support responsive, child-centred educational practices. • Ensure educational programs promote children's identity, belonging, wellbeing, confidence, communication and contribution to their world. • Respond promptly to concerns regarding inappropriate interactions, including investigation, reporting and corrective action where required. • Monitor service compliance through quality assurance processes and continuous improvement. • Ensure policies are regularly reviewed to reflect legislative changes, current research and best practice. • Ensure no child is subjected to corporal punishment, unreasonable discipline, emotional harm, intimidation, humiliation or inappropriate conduct.
Role	Responsibility
Regional Director	• Support Centre Directors to implement this procedure consistently across all services. • Monitor compliance with legislative requirements, organisational policies and child-safe practices. • Provide mentoring, coaching and professional guidance to service leaders. • Support services to identify risks and implement strategies that strengthen respectful relationships. • Promote continuous improvement through reflective practice, monitoring and quality improvement planning. • Ensure leaders have access to appropriate resources, professional learning and support.

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	Assist services to respond appropriately to concerns relating to educator interactions and children's wellbeing.
Role	Responsibility
Nominated Supervisor/ Centre Director	- Implement, monitor and review this procedure within the service. - Ensure educators, staff, students and volunteers understand their responsibilities through induction, supervision and ongoing professional learning. - Foster a culture that promotes children's rights, safety, inclusion, participation and wellbeing. - Ensure respectful, professional and child safe interactions are consistently demonstrated. - Monitor educator practice through observations, mentoring, meetings and reflective practice. - Ensure educator to child ratios and active supervision requirements are maintained. - Support educators to implement positive behaviour guidance strategies that protect children's dignity and rights. - Develop behaviour support plans, in consultation with families and relevant professionals, when additional support is required. - Ensure confidentiality is maintained when managing children's information. - Respond promptly to concerns, complaints, incidents or allegations relating to interactions with children. - Provide ongoing coaching, support and feedback to educators. - Escalate significant concerns to the Approved Provider and relevant authorities where required.
Role	Responsibility
Assistant Director	- Support the Centre Director in implementing this procedure. - Provide day to day guidance and mentoring to educators. - Promote consistent positive interactions across the service. - Support educators to implement positive behaviour guidance strategies. - Monitor practice and provide constructive feedback.

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	- Assist in responding to concerns regarding children's wellbeing or educator practice. - Promote respectful communication between educators, children and families.
Role	Responsibility
Responsible Person	- Ensure the service operates in accordance with this procedure. - Monitor educator interactions to ensure children are treated with respect and dignity. - Support educators to maintain active supervision and positive relationships. - Address concerns immediately and report significant matters to the Nominated Supervisor. - Ensure children's safety and wellbeing remain the highest priority throughout the day
Role	Responsibility
Educational Leader	- Guide educators to implement practices that promote secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships. - Support reflective practice that strengthens educator child interactions. - Promote intentional teaching strategies that support children's agency, wellbeing and learning. - Assist educators to develop inclusive programs reflecting children's strengths, interests, cultures and abilities. - Encourage continuous professional learning aligned with EYLF V2.0 and the National Quality Standard.
Role	Responsibility
Room Leader	- Model respectful, responsive and professional interactions. - Lead educators to create welcoming, inclusive and culturally safe learning environments. - Support consistent behaviour guidance practices across the room. - Ensure children's voices, interests and individual needs are reflected in daily practice. - Support educators to implement behaviour support strategies where required.

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	- Foster respectful partnerships with children, families and colleagues. - Raise concerns regarding children's wellbeing or educator practice with leadership.
Role	Responsibility
Educators	- contribute to the development of, and implement, quality practices that ensure that the requirements of regulations 155 and 156 are met - promote quality practice approaches to interactions with children - must complete required child protection training, including understanding mandatory reporting requirements and obligations - must complete Foundation and Advanced child safety training - monitor and maintain staff to child ratios to ensure adequate supervision of children, including when using digital technologies and online environments - support children in line with the strategies in the ACECQA Relationships with children information sheet, UN Rights of the child and ECA code of ethics - ensure that the Safe use of digital technologies and online environments policy and procedures is followed when interactions with children include digital technologies and online environments, including that relevant authorisations are in place when taking images of children - must not use personal digital devices while working directly with children, unless there is an exemption or written authorisation in place - must not use a personal device to capture, store or transmit images of children - must not subject children to any form of corporal punishment or any discipline that is unreasonable - must not subject children to inappropriate conduct.
Role	Responsibility
	Share information about their child's strengths, interests, culture, health, routines and individual needs.

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Families/ Carers/ Guardians	• Work collaboratively with educators to support children's learning, development and wellbeing. • Participate in respectful and open communication with the service. • Provide feedback that contributes to continuous improvement. • Respect the rights, dignity and privacy of all children, families and educators. • Not take images or videos of children within the centre
Role	Responsibility
Students and Volunteers	• Follow all service policies, procedures and the Code of Conduct. • Participate in induction, supervision and required training. • Work under the direction of educators and never be left unsupervised with children. • Maintain professional boundaries and respectful interactions. • Respect children's rights, dignity, culture and wellbeing. • Maintain confidentiality regarding children, families and service operations. • Model calm, respectful and supportive behaviour. • Immediately report concerns relating to child safety, wellbeing, suspected abuse or inappropriate conduct to the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person.

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