

# INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN POLICY



## Policy Statement

Children who experience relationships that are built on respect, fairness, cooperation and empathy are given the opportunity to develop these qualities themselves. When children have positive interactions and relationships with others, they develop an understanding of themselves as significant and respected and feel a sense of belonging. This Policy sets out the Service's expectations and statutory duty for every staff member's relationship and interaction with children ensuring that the safety, dignity and rights of all children are the paramount consideration in all their decisions and actions

## Strategies and Practices

- The *Interactions with Children Policy* is available to families upon enrolment and staff upon induction.
- Administrative procedures, initial conversations, documentation and ongoing communication with children and families are a reference point for interactions and a foundation for authentic and respectful communication.
- The Service's wide variety of resources, materials and equipment meets the needs (e.g. age, development, culture) and interests of the children, and supports children's learning and harmonious play.
- The educational program is based on the knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests of each child as communicated to educators by their families, observed by educators; and, contributed to by the children. In addition, each child's development and abilities are assessed as part of the programming cycle of planning, documentation and evaluation in relation to the Early Years Learning Framework.
- Educators extend upon children's interests and ideas through questions and discussions, supported and made visible in observations, reflections, and programming.
- The Service's expectation that educators build collaborative and responsive relationships with children, in accordance with this Policy, is emphasised during their induction.
- The Service's rosters, the flexibility of the program and the way that the environment is structured ensures that children always have access to educators who are familiar to them. Further, the educators promote the children's wellbeing, self-esteem and sense of security by being responsive, warm, trusting and respectful.
- Educators consistently model positive social skills in their everyday interactions with other adults and children.
- Educators ensure that routines such as toileting, nappy change and rest times are respectful and used as an opportunity for positive one to one interaction with children.
- Educators communicate with children by getting down to their level, using eye contact, and showing respect to the child whilst engaging in and promoting effective communication.
- Educators speak to children in a positive manner at all times, promoting respect and empathy, including the use of non-verbal cues and communication.
- Educators encourage and support children to express themselves and their opinions and will provide experiences that foster children's agency and self-esteem.
- The Service is committed to working in partnerships with families to best meet the education and care needs of their children.
- Educators collaborate with the children to construct simple and positive agreements/rules to ensure the safety of themselves and others.
- Educators support children in how to play appropriately with others, to work collaboratively to complete projects together, and to resolve social conflicts that arise from time to time. Educators offer experiences that promote collaboration and positive relationships amongst their peers
- When organising group sizes, the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor take into consideration the needs of individual children in order to promote a positive learning environment. Where necessary, a higher adult to child ratio will be implemented to support the individual needs of the children.

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- The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and educators must ensure children are not subject to inappropriate conduct while they are being educated and cared for. Penalties will apply under the National Law for any such offence.
- Educators guide children’s behaviour in a positive manner and support children to develop the necessary skills to resolve conflicts independently.
- Educators use strategies such as redirection, gentle reminders, offering choices and encouraging children to think about how others might feel (empathy).
- When guiding children’s behaviour, educators follow the services *Guiding Children’s Behaviour Policy* and educators uphold the dignity and rights of children at all times.
- Educators are guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics, the services Code of Conduct, the Philosophy, the National Quality Framework and policies and the procedures of the service.
- Educators consistently participate in reflective practice in relation to the environment, the program, the routine and all aspects of the curriculum to ensure that the needs and interests of each child are being met.
- Educators aim to promote a strong sense of belonging through the provision of a program that allows children to ‘be’ themselves. Children are supported as individuals to grow and learn in ways that are meaningful to them.

## References

- *Education and Care Services National Law*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
- Australian Child Care Alliance NSW - <https://nsw.childcarealliance.org.au/members/policies-required-under-regulation-168>
- *Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics*
- Dr Brenda Abbey (Childcare by Design)

## Breach of Policy

Employees are reminded that failure to comply with their responsibilities and obligations as outlined in this policy or abuse of any privilege or benefit provided under this policy may result in disciplinary action, where warranted. This disciplinary action may involve a verbal or written warning or, in serious cases, termination of employment with LAEL.

Employees who believe that a breach of this policy may have occurred should report the matter to the Resource & Development Manager. Complaints made about breaches of this policy will be treated seriously and managed in accordance with LAEL’s Employee Grievance Policy.

## Policy Review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service’s commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities, where necessary, as part of the review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.