

Early Learning

Interactions with Children Policy

Policy Statement

Uniting Early Learning is committed to:

- maintaining the dignity and rights of each child at the service;
- enabling children to express themselves and their opinion;
- encouraging children to develop self-reliance and self-esteem;
- ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of each child,
- providing environments that support children’s developing social skills;
- considering the diversity of individual children at the service,
- building collaborative relationships with families to improve learning and development outcomes for children;
- encouraging positive, respectful and warm relationships between children and educators/staff at the service.

Executive Summary

Stable and secure relationships, form the foundation for children to explore and learn. Through positive relationships, children learn that they are valued as competent and capable individuals. A sense of belonging and agency is essential for all children to enable them to test boundaries and consequences of behaviour to learn socially acceptable skills. Managing feelings, learning about appropriate behaviours, rights and responsibilities is a lifelong journey, with skill development on a learning continuum. Educators are in a valuable position to guide and support children as they develop the self-confidence and skills to learn acceptable behaviours and learn strategies to control their own behaviour.

Promoting a culture of respect, equity and fairness is of prime importance. Corporal punishment or unreasonable or excessive discipline *will not* be tolerated. Positive language and guidance is the key technique to encourage children’s cooperation. Educators are to use pedagogical decision-making and intentional teaching strategies to provide additional support for children that are challenged, when learning pro-social skills. Families will be involved when developing behavioural support plans for individual children, and consulted, if referral to allied health services is appropriate.

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Current Environmental Context

The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* is founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each individual, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, wealth, birth status or ability and forms the basis of any interactions with children. Developing responsive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships with children promotes their wellbeing, self-esteem and sense of security.

Educators are responsible for;

- appropriate behavioural expectations based upon each child's ability and capacity level,
- providing learning environments that support children's developing social skills and
- using teaching strategies that strengthen children's positive behaviour and decrease undesired behaviours.

Educators are to model positive, socially acceptable behaviour and language, develop rules and limits in consultation with children where appropriate, and support children to negotiate their rights in relation to the rights of others. When disagreement and or conflict occurs between children, and intervention by an educator is necessary, a respectful approach will be taken, that provides the children with the encouragement to learn about the effect of their behaviour on others and relevant conflict resolution skills. To support children who have specifically diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties, documentation must be maintained (*Attachment 32b*).

Attachment 32a – Responsibility relating to the Interactions with Children Policy

Attachment 32b - Procedures recommended for the development of a behaviour guidance plan

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Reference/Sources

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

Keeping Children Safe Policy of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, Approved May 2017

- *Code of Conduct Policy-L1*
- *Complaints and Grievances Policy-L3*
- *Educational Program and Practice Policy*
- *Inclusion and Diversity Policy-L1*
- *Access and Equity Policy-L2*
- *Workplace Health and Safety Policy-L2*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy-L2*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*
- *Children's Services Act 1996: Sections 26, 27*
- Department of Education and Training (DET) *Behaviour Guidance Practice Note 6* Reviewed June 2017: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/regulation/pracnotesbehavpol-12-05-2015.pdf>
- Early Childhood Australia (ECA) *Code of Ethics* (2006): <http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/>
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 166, 167*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 73, 74, 155, 156, 157, 168(2)(j)*
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children*
- *Relationships with Children. Information Sheet. Quality Area 5 National Quality Standard. Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (Oct 2016)*
- *Supporting Children to Manage Their Own Behaviour. Information Sheet. Quality Area 5 National Quality Standard. Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (Oct 2016)*
- *Tasmanian Licensing Standards for Centre Based Child Care Class 4 (October 2014)*
- [UNICEF - Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework:* <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/learning/Pages/veyldf.aspx>

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by Uniting Early Learning: 12/03/2019

Review

This policy is to be reviewed by: 17/12/2020

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