

C-13 Interactions with children

National Quality Standards (NQS)

1.1	The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.
1.1.1	Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.
1.1.2	Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.
1.1.3	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.
1.2.1	Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.
1.2.2	Educators respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback.
1.3.1	Each child's learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection.
1.3.2	Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.
5.1	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
5.2	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships
5.2.1	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.
5.2.2	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.
6.1	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.2	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.1.3	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
7.1.2	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision making and operation of the service.
7.2	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.
7.2.1	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.
7.2.2	The educational leader is supported and leads the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle.

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Reg. 73	Educational program
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Reg. 74	Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program
Reg. 75	Information about educational program to be given to parents
Reg. 155	Interactions with children
Reg. 156	Relationships in groups
Reg. 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures

My Time, Our Place

1	Children have a strong sense of identity
1.1	Children feel safe, secure, and supported
1.2	Children develop their autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency
1.3	Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities
1.4	Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect
2.1	Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation
2.2	Children respond to diversity with respect
2.3	Children become aware of fairness
3.	Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
3.1	Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing
3.2	Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing
4	Children are confident and involved learners
5	Children are effective communicators
5.1	Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes

Policy Statement

We aim to build positive relationships with children through collaboration and interactions. Quality interactions increase children's knowledge and understanding of themselves and each other as unique individuals and develops the skills and understanding they need to interact positively with others. We aim to promote a safe, secure and nurturing environment, based on fairness and respect for the culture and rights of the individual, while being responsive to children's needs.

Related Policies

- Arrival and Departure Policy
- Child Management / Behaviour Guidance Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Communication Policy
- Complaints and Feedback Policy
- Cultural Relevance, Anti Bias & Diversity Policy
- Daily Routines Policy
- Exclusion for Unacceptable Behaviour Policy
- Family Participation and Communication Policy

- Gender Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Professional Development Policy
- Programming Policy
- Staff Orientation and Induction
- Staff Professionalism and Code of Conduct Policy

Procedure

Children need positive relationships with Educators that are trusting and responsive to their needs. The Nominated Supervisor will guide professional development and practice to promote interactions with children which are positive and respectful and establish practice guidelines that ensure interactions with children are given priority and those interactions are authentic, just and respectful. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure all staff are aware of the service's expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and reactions when working with children and families.

Management and Educators will:

- Create a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere in which children experience equitable, friendly and genuine interactions
- Greet children as they arrive to the service
- Role model appropriate language and behaviour. Educators model positive interactions when they show care, empathy and respect for children, staff and families and use effective communication strategies.
- Support children to be aware of their own feelings as well as the feelings of others
- Encourage children to treat others with respect
- Provide children with the opportunity to explore their dispositions for learning by expressing themselves and their opinions
- Assist the children to build resilience and self-assurance through positive interactions
- Guide children's behaviour positively
- Respect the rights of children
- Always speak to children in a positive manner, promoting respect, tolerance and empathy; this includes using non-verbal cues
- Engage in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning of children
- Respect each child's uniqueness and respond sensitively and appropriately to children's efforts to communicate
- Listen to children and take them seriously
- Ensure children are never singled out or made to feel inadequate at any time
- Support and encourage children to use appropriate language in their interactions with adults and peers
- Extend upon children's interests and ideas through questions and discussions, supported in observations, reflections and programming

- Communicate with children by getting down to their level, showing respect to the child whilst promoting effective communication and eye contact
- Show empathy to children
- Ensure that the values, beliefs and cultural practices of the child and family are considered and respected
- Ensure that no child is ever isolated for any reason other than illness, accident or pre-arranged appointment with parental consent. During this time, they will be under adult supervision
- Challenge children's individual development
- Respond to children's communication in a just and consistent manner
- Respond sensitively to children's attempts to initiate interactions and conversations
- Initiate one-to-one interactions with children during daily routines and conversations with each child
- Support children's secure attachment through consistent and warm nurturing relationships
- Support children's expression of their thoughts and feelings
- Encourage the children to make choices and decisions
- Acknowledge children's complex relationships and sensitively intervene in ways that promote consideration and alternative perspectives and social inclusion – guidance strategies should be reflective of this approach

Involving Children in Decision Making

Educators will genuinely seek children's input, respect their ideas and take their suggestions on board. Children will be encouraged to make decisions about:

- The experiences or activities they want to do
- What experiences will be included in the learning program
- The materials and resources they want to use and how they will use them
- Where they would like to play, i.e. indoors or outdoors
- Who they want to play with or if they would like to play alone
- The adults with whom they feel most comfortable
- The food included in the daily breakfast and afternoon menu

Children's Rights, Family and Cultural Values

Interactions within the setting are greatly enhanced when children's rights and family and cultural values are given due consideration and respect. 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. A culture of respectful interactions is promoted when children's attempts to communicate are valued. Turn taking and regulating children's conversations promotes active engagement. Respectful communication with families generates greater confidence in interacting.

Listening

Educators must use listening as a foundation for interactions. Listening is based on observations and in leaving spaces in conversations and communication, suspending judgment and giving full

attention to children as they communicate. Truly attending to children's communication promotes a strong culture of listening.

Principles for Behavioural Management

Educators respect individual children's needs and differences in age, ability and experience regarding issues surrounding behaviour management and they are happy to discuss individual family expectations with parents. There may be times when Educators will need to negotiate management strategies with parents to suit the needs of individual children.

- Wherever possible, children and Educators will negotiate and determine boundaries and rules.
- Rules will be reasonable considering the age, development and individual characteristics of the children.
- Rules will be consistently enforced.
- Children will be encouraged for desirable behaviour.
- It is the behaviour that is praised or criticised, not the child.
- Educators present a good example through positive role modelling.
- Children are encouraged to make appropriate choices.

In response to unacceptable behaviour, Educators will:

- Redirect the child or remove the child from the situation if necessary.
- Advise children of the consequences of continuing with the behaviour.
- Remind children of desirable behaviour.
- Explain to children how behaviour results in consequences.
- Actively listen to children's feelings and discuss the rules.
- Help children to return to play.

In the case of continuous unacceptable behaviour, steps will be followed as per the Exclusion for Unacceptable Behaviour Policy.

Reflection and Consideration

Time is dedicated to reflecting upon interactions within children. Reflections should consider how to spend extended periods engaged with children that comprise of communication and listening.

Sources

- Childcare Desktop Policies – Interactions with Children, Families and Staff Policy
- Community Early Learning Australia – Interactions with children, Sample Policy
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Framework for School-Age Care in Australia – My Time, Our Place
- National Quality Standard – Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority
- PSC National Alliance, Policies in Practice – Interactions with children
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – www.unicef.org.au

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Version Control			
Version	Changes Made	Initiated By	Director Sign-off
v.2.202208	- Updated NQS and National Regulations - Updated MTOP - Updated Related Policies	Staff	
v.1.202005	- No changes made		
v.1.201905	- Separate Policy Created	Regulation Requirement	