



# CHILD BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children

## INTRODUCTION

From birth, children begin to explore how the social world works. Exploring and learning to manage feelings, behaviour, rights and responsibilities is a complex process. Educators play an important role in supporting children to regulate their own behaviour.

The right for children to receive positive guidance and encouragement in a supportive and respectful environment is promoted within Education and Care Services National Regulations. Children learn to face a variety of challenges throughout their lives and through this develop not only self-regulation, but positive dispositions such as resilience and perseverance. Learning the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour assists children to regulate their own behaviours in different social and emotional environments when interacting with peers and adults.

## GOALS/ WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?

An important aspect of children's 'belonging, being and becoming' involves them learning how their behaviour and actions affect themselves and others and developing the skills to regulate these independently. Educators can support children to develop these skills by guiding children's behaviour as a mediator and helping children to negotiate their rights in relation to the rights of others.

At Orchard Early Learning Centre The Circle of Security is an intervention initiative widely used by educators in our under 3's age group. This process is based on research that secure children exhibit increased empathy, greater self-esteem, better relationships with parents and peers, smoother transition to school, and an increased capacity to handle emotions more effectively when compared with children who are not secure. This model highlights the importance of adults being at children's level and available for children as a support, and to provide a secure base for children as needed.

## EMPOWERING CHILDREN

An important part of supporting children to manage their behaviour is giving them some responsibility. This begins with having appropriate expectations appropriate to the child's age and developmental capacity. Children will be 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.

Our team of educators actively work to create caring and respectful environments that assists everyone to feel part of the group and to take responsibility for the wellbeing of others.





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## STRATEGIES / HOW WILL IT BE DONE?

Supporting children to develop socially acceptable behaviour and self-regulation is a primary goal for educators and families. This is embedded in fundamental documents including the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), Education and Care Services National Regulations, and the National Quality Standard (NQS).

### Behaviour guidance

This term is used to reflect current thinking about the most positive and effective ways to help children gain understanding and learn skills that will help them to manage their own behaviour. Using appropriate behaviour guidance, educators aim to support each child regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

### Self-regulation

The ability to manage energy states, emotions, behaviour and attention: the ability to return to a balanced, calm and constant state of being. Self-regulation is a key factor for mental health, wellbeing and learning (KidsMatter, Early Childhood, 2014).

### Inclusion

Taking into account all children's social, cultural and linguistic diversity (including learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstance and geographic location) in curriculum decision-making processes. (EYLF)

## IMPLEMENTATION

The behaviour and guidance strategies used by staff and educators at Orchard Early Learning Centre are designed to provide children with 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 learning environments that are positive and supportive and provides developmentally appropriate experiences for children





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2. Implementing guidance strategies for building skills and strengthening positive behaviour based on age-appropriate behaviour expectations
3. Implementing strategies for guiding children's behaviour resulting in decreasing undesired behaviours.

## 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. Corporal punishment and unreasonable discipline are not permitted at any time, not only because the child may be physically harmed, but also because it nearly always has detrimental effects on the child's self-esteem and feelings of security. All educators and staff at Orchard Early Learning Centre 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 where there is no risk of physical or emotional harm to the child or anyone else. Children are acknowledged when they make positive choices in managing their behaviour.

Strategies may include using visual cues, prompting, redirection, re-teaching strategies, curriculum adjustments, developing logical consequences 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 dangerous, inappropriate or challenging behaviour. Parent will be consulted and informed of any regular inappropriate behaviour.

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.

## The Nominated Supervisor will:

- 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
- Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury
- "Time Out" or physical re direction is not used as a behaviour guidance strategy.
- Connections are built between our service and local primary schools to support positive learning environments





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- 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 and practice 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
- The dignity and rights of each child are maintained at all times
- 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 through parent interviews newsletters and parent workshops.
- A partnership is developed with other professionals or support agencies that work with children who have diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties to jointly develop plans for the inclusion of these specific children. This information will be kept confidential and in the individual child's file
- Challenging behaviours are documented and communicated with families in respectful conversations with families. This information will be kept confidential and in the individual child's file
- Strategies are implemented to verbally 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, pulling hair, sweating, throwing furniture or toys, punching or hitting, or being overly disruptive to the educational curriculum. 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 Incident Report. If the behaviour is aggressive or violent a request will be made to the parents to collect the child early if educators cannot stop or redirect the behaviour and safety is compromised to our staff or children within our care.
- 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. An Individual Support Plan may be developed in consultation with families and other health professionals as required





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- Families and professional agencies are consulted to ensure that a consistent approach is used to support children with behavioural or social difficulties
- Individual support 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
- Application to external agencies such as IFDM funding for additional support for educators will be approved by and in collaboration with parents. *Parent will be informed that the funding for additional educator is to support the overall classroom management and is not funding to provide a 1:1 educator for their child.*
- A Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) is developed and guided by local support agencies as required for individual rooms or 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 room or group of children
- 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.
- Parents/guardians unwilling to cooperate with the Service regarding their child adverse behaviour support strategies may jeopardise their child's enrolment.
- Orchard Early Learning Service has a duty of care to protect the children enrolled and staff in their employment from any foreseeable risk of harm. Therefore if we determine that the potential enrolment poses any risk to its employee or children in our care we reserve the right to immediately reduce hours of attendance, limit days of attendance, reject or cancel the enrolment of a child.

## 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.
- In the event of an incident both children's families will be contacted by the Director or Responsible Person and be made aware of the incident by filling in Incident, Accident and Illness reporting document. It is important that this document is signed with 24 hours of distribution to the family.
- Educators must collect data and written observations of children when they observe consistent patterns in behaviour which may be observed as disrupting others or to the child themselves. This is known as the collection of anecdotal data through ABC charts or behaviour charts.
- Role model and support children to understand behavioural expectations





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- Support challenging behaviour through use of visual cues, prompting, positive verbal feedback and quality learning environments.
- Reasonable adjustments will be considered to our program or environment that supports all children to have access and participate.
- Educators will consult with families to identify any appropriate reasonable adjustments required.
  - Examples could include:
    - adjusting the layout of equipment and learning areas so that there is enough space
    - using visual supports so that children can make choices and understand and follow the daily routine
    - educator(s) and children learning Auslan, so that they can communicate with children or families who use Auslan (for example children with a hearing impairment)
    - developing strategies to support the sensory needs of children with Autism
    - accessing additional support or resources so that the needs of all children can be met
    - making adjustments to the daily routine such as allowing extra time for transitions
    - tailoring each child's assessment of learning to meet their individual needs
- 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 staff, 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 consequence strategies such as: prompting, redirecting, examples, provide choice, logical consequence
- Conference with child and educator to articulate and communicate the undesired behaviour and a solution that 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.
- 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, placement in care, or more serious circumstances involving abuse, neglect, or family violence







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- Develop and implement behaviour support 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
- 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 and support 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
- Protect other children from harm if there is a child displaying adverse behaviour

### Families will:

- Provide consent for the service to consult with professional agencies to assist with implementing a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) for the room or group of children
- 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





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- 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 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
- Read in conjunction with Enrolment and Orientation Policy and Termination of Enrolment Policy.
- Acknowledge Orchard Early Learning Centre has a Duty of Care for other children, staff and families.
- Understand that in extreme circumstances a child's days or hours of care may be shortened or the enrolment terminated by the service. In these circumstance there will be multiple safety concerns or a number of serious incidents of other children or staff being injured or more than one parent complaint relating to a child's adverse behaviour.

### Additional support services

After evaluating a child's behaviour, discussing the situation with parents and the child where appropriate, and trying a range of strategies, the service may advise families to consider consulting with and/or engaging professional support such as: G.P, Paediatrician, Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech Pathologist, dietitian.

Please see the Inclusive Practices Policy or Additional Needs Policy or further information.

## EVALUATION

Interactions with children are respectful and meaningful and challenge each child's skills and awareness of the world. Risks are assessed and managed so that the environment can be safe, educative and stimulating. Children's activity, interactions and play are planned for and monitored by educators with consistent strategies to minimise potential dangers to children.

## RELATED LEGISLATION, GUIDELINES, STANDARDS, FRAMEWORKS

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.







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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 REGULATIONS		
84	Awareness of child protection law	
155	Interactions with children	





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156	Relationships in groups
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
174	Time to notify certain circumstances to Regulatory Authority
175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority

## RELATED POLICIES

<p>Inclusion Policy          Educational Program Policy          Family Communication Policy          Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy          Interaction with Children, Family and Staff Policy</p>	<p>Medical Condition Policy          Privacy and Confidentiality Policy          Respect for Children Policy          Enrolment Policy          Supervision Policy          Parent Code of Conduct</p>
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## SOURCES / USEFUL LINKS

- Association of Children’s Welfare Agencies: [www.acwa.asn.au](http://www.acwa.asn.au)
- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. *Inappropriate discipline*. (2020). [www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-06/inappropriate-discipline.pdf](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-06/inappropriate-discipline.pdf)
- Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. *Belonging, Being and Becoming- The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. (2009).
- Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. Inclusion Support Program Guidelines. <https://www.education.gov.au/inclusion-support-program-isp>
- Department of Education NSW Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) Early Childhood <https://pbl.schools.nsw.gov.au/resources/early-childhood.html>
- Communities and Justice. (2022). <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/families>
- Department of Education State Government of Victoria. *Strategies to guide children’s behaviour* (reviewed 2015)
- Early Childhood Australia’s Blog (2018). *What every child needs for learning self-regulation* KidsMatter Early Childhood.
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011).
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).





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- Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (amended 2020).
- NAPCAN: [www.napcan.org.au](http://www.napcan.org.au)
- Porter, L. (2016). *Young children's behaviour: Guidance approaches for early childhood educators*. Australia: Allen & Unwin.

## POLICY REVIEW

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual 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 as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

**Date(s) reviewed: June 2021 / February 2022/ January 2023**

