

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.

## Purpose

We aim to create positive relationships with children making them feel safe, secure and supported within our Centre. We will ensure children are treated with respect, consistency, fairly and equitably as they are supported to develop the skills and knowledge required to behave in a socially and culturally acceptable manner.

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

## Definitions

*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.

*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 (Beyou, 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 our 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 boundaries 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 quality learning environment that is positive and supportive and provides developmentally appropriate experiences and resources
2. Implementing guidance strategies for building skills and strengthening positive behaviour based on age-appropriate behaviour expectations
3. Employing strategies for guiding children's behaviour resulting in decreasing undesired behaviours.

## Positive Behaviour 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 in children's services, 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 our 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 centre 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 when there is no risk of physical or emotional harm to the child or anyone else. They are acknowledged when they make positive choices in managing their behaviour.

Strategies may include using visual cues, prompting, redirection, re-teaching strategies, 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 inappropriate or challenging 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 centre.

*Management/Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will ensure:*

- No child being educated and cared for by the centre 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
- Connections are built between our centre and local primary schools to support positive learning environments
- 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 and newsletters
- A partnership is developed with other professionals or support agencies that work with children who have diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties to develop plans for the inclusion of these specific children. This information will be kept confidential and in the individual child's file.
- Excessive or challenging behaviour is managed and communicated with families
- Strategies are implemented to 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, throwing furniture or toys, punching or hitting, or being disruptive. 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.

- Families are notified and the incident/behaviour is addressed sensitively.
- 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. The child's parents and educator will meet to discuss the behaviour or concern as they assist in creating a Mental health and Wellbeing Plan to support the child in the environment
- Families and professional agencies are consulted to ensure that a consistent approach is used to support the child with diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties
- Application for additional support for educators to build their capacity and capabilities to include children with additional needs will be made through the Inclusion Support Program.
  - A Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) is developed and guided by local support agencies as required for individual 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 child
- 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 centre.

*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
- Teach behavioural expectations
- Support appropriate behaviour- visual cues, prompting, positive verbal feedback and quality learning environments
- 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
- Guide children's behaviour, teaching them how to be considerate of others – to think about the effects of their actions on others. It is important that children understand what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is and how to manage their emotions.
- Talk calmly with children about the consequence of their actions, and the reason for rules
- Use corrective consequences- prompt, redirect, re-teach, provide choice, logical consequence, conference with child and educator
- 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
- Be responsive to these former experiences, designing and implementing Mental health and Wellbeing Plan 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 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
- Guide children's behaviour with a focus on preserving and promoting children's self-esteem as they learn to self-regulate their behaviour
- Implement "time with" an adult, which will be used when all other strategies (above) have been exhausted. "Time with" 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. "Time with" will always occur under the supervision of other Educators.

#### *Families will:*

- Provide consent for the centre to consult with professional agencies to assist with implementing an Strategic Inclusion Plan (ISP)
- 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
- Create consistency in behaviour guidance strategies used at the centre and at home

#### *Children will:*

- Know they are valued, respected and that they can have their opinions heard by a supportive adult
- Be supported by providing acceptable alternative behaviours when challenging behaviour occurs
- Learn to respect the rights and needs of others by anticipating the result and consequences of their behaviour appropriate to their age and to their developmental stage.
- be given positive guidance towards understanding the difference between acceptable behaviour and unacceptable behaviour looks, feels and sounds like in the early learning setting
- Gradually develop an understanding of their actions and how their behaviour impacts on others
- Be encouraged to use their words rather than actions to resolve conflicts
- Build on strengthening their communication skills through:
  - Greeting others when they arrive and depart from the Centre



- Sharing resources
- Assisting when it is time to pack away the indoor and outdoor environment
- Using manners such as *'please'* and *'thank-you'*
- Learn to wait for their turn for an appropriate period of time- this will depend on age and development level
- Learn about the feelings of others throughout the program in order to assist children to understand the consequences of their actions.
- Be encouraged to engage in cooperative and pro-social behaviour and express their feelings and responses to others' behaviour confidently and constructively, including challenging the behaviour of other children when it is disrespectful or unfair.

## Responses to Particular Behaviours

### Biting

All individuals involved in the care of a child need to recognise that at times, some children, for a variety of reasons, attempt to bite other children.

Some reasons a child may bite are:

- Infants – Experimental, Sensory Pleasure, Teething
- Toddlers – Frustration, fatigue, attention seeking, confined spaces.
- Older Children – Aggression, deliberate.

In the event of a biting incident, educators will abide by the following procedure:

- Check for broken skin.
- Clean all bites, regardless of whether the skin is broken or not.
- Apply a cold compress to the bitten area
- Our educators will contact the families of the child who has bitten and the child that has been bitten as soon as possible. Families are then responsible for any follow up medical treatment.
- If the biter is a known infectious disease carrier, or can be seen to have facial herpes and the victim's skin is broken, the Nominated Supervisor or Authorised Supervisor will convey this information to the family.
- Should the behaviour continue, our educators will work in conjunction with families and, if necessary, external agencies, to develop a Behaviour Guidance plan for the child who is biting.
- Our educators will complete an incident report for any occasion where a child bites and submit to the Nominated Supervisor.
- Monitor the behaviour of the child who has bitten and use distraction techniques to prevent the child reaching the point where the child feels the need to bite.

### Toddlers: Biting

Biting other children is an infrequent but normal behaviour for children under three years. The educator will consider a number of factors when an incident of biting occurs:

- Is the child teething? Does the child need more attractive biting objects to play with?
- Did the biting develop from playful, exploratory behaviour?
- Is it likely that the child has learned to get attention of educator or other adults by biting?
- Was the child over-excited before the biting has happened? Can this be prevented in the future?
- Is the child frustrated by the social situation? – for example, the presence of too many older children, access to a preferred toy refused, unable yet to use language to express her/his needs. In these situations some re-arrangement of the biting child's social environment is important.

The bitten child will be comforted immediately and the child who did the biting can be given an opportunity to offer comfort as well. (This does not mean forcing the child to apologize).

### Tantrums



When a child has a tantrum the educator first ensures that the child is in a safe area where they will not hurt others or themselves. The educator leaves the child alone and returns as soon as the child is calmer. The child may choose to re-join the group when calm enough.

## Swearing

This is an issue that requires discussion between educator and parents as well as the children. Educator takes into account that experiments with toilet humour and swearing re common and normal among pre-schoolers. Some responses the educator can use include: Ignore occasional swearing

- Say to the child “we don’t use those words at crèche
- Suggest a more socially positive way of expressing their emotions or needs and reinforce any positive language with praise
- Remain calm and matter-of-fact no matter what the child might say.

**Source:** Association of Children’s Welfare Agencies: [www.acwa.asn.au](http://www.acwa.asn.au) Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014). \_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://docs.education.gov.au/node/53374> 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> 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* BeYou Early Childhood. \_Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016). \_Family & Community Services: [www.community.nsw.gov.au](http://www.community.nsw.gov.au) Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017). \_Guide to the National Quality Standard. (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. \_Raising Children Network. (2019) *What is self-regulation?* <https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/behaviour/understanding-behaviour/self-regulation> Revised National Quality Standard. (2018). \_State Government of Victoria. *Strategies to guide children’s behaviour* (reviewed 2015)

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National Quality Standard – NQS		
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.
Early Years Learning Framework		
Learning Outcome 1 - Children have a strong sense of identity		
1.1	Children feel safe, secure, and supported	
1.2	Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency	
1.3	Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities	



<b>Learning Outcome 2 - Children are connected with and contribute to their world</b>	
<b>2.1</b>	Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation
<b>2.2</b>	Children respond to diversity with respect
<b>2.3</b>	Children become aware of fairness
<b>Education and Care Services National Regulations</b>	
<b>155</b>	Interactions with children
<b>156</b>	Relationships in groups
<b>168</b>	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
<b>174</b>	Time to notify certain circumstances to Regulatory Authority
<b>175</b>	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority

