

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND STAFF POLICY

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) identifies secure, respectful, and reciprocal relationships with children as one of the principles that underpin practice. Within an early childhood community many different relationships are negotiated with and between children, educators, and families. The way in which these relationships are established and maintained, and the way in which they remain visible impacts on how the early childhood community functions as a whole. Relationships directly affect how children form their own identity, whether or not they feel safe and supported, and ultimately, their sense of belonging.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for interactions with children (Reg. 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed.

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Children need positive relationships with educators that are trusting and responsive to their individual needs. Through these experiences and interactions children will develop a positive understanding of themselves and feel a sense of belonging. We promote a respectful, child safe culture where children concerns are always responded to, and children feel empowered to participate in decisions and provide feedback to educators and staff. All educators play a vital role in protecting children from harm by responding to and reporting any incidents, disclosures or suspicions of abuse, harm, neglect or ill-treatment. Our Service upholds a strong reporting culture to safeguard children in our care.

RELATIONSHIPS IN GROUPS

The approved provider and/or nominated supervisor will take reasonable steps to ensure that our Service provides children with opportunities to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other and with educators.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER, NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/ COORDINATOR WILL:

- ensure welcoming and relaxed atmospheres in which children experience equitable, friendly and genuine interactions with educators
- ensure environments are created to ensure children feel safe, valued, understood and supported to learn
- ensure educator to child ratios are adhered to
- ensure qualification requirements are met
- ensure educators have undertaken current child protection legislation training including mandatory reporting requirements and obligations
- ensure all educators and staff are aware of the procedure of reporting allegations of abuse, neglect, harm or ill-treatment
- ensure that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or any discipline that is unreasonable or inappropriate in the circumstances (S.166 National Law)
- support educators to use trauma-informed practices to recognise and respond to the emotional needs of children (see *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*).

EDUCATORS WILL:

- create a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere in which children experience equitable, friendly and genuine interactions with educators in each FDC residence or approved venue
- they adhere to educator to child ratios and qualification requirements
- role-model appropriate language and behaviour
- support and encourage children to be aware of their own feelings as well as the feelings of others
- encourage children to treat all children with respect
- provide children with the opportunity to explore their dispositions for learning by expressing themselves and their opinions
- ensure children are aware of how to raise concerns or provide feedback – (child focused complaint handling system- *Dealing with Complaints Policy*)
- respond or report to children about how their feedback has been acted upon
- assist the children to build resilience and self-assurance through positive interactions
- guide children's behaviour positively and with encouragement
- respect the rights, dignity and agency of children (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)
- support children in the early childhood environment
- provide appropriate supervision so children feel safe in their interactions with other children
- speak to children in a positive manner at all times, promoting respect, tolerance and empathy, including the use of non-verbal cues and communication
- engage in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning of children
- respect each child's uniqueness, be attuned to, and respond sensitively and appropriately to children's efforts to communicate and use the child's own language, communication styles, and culture to enhance interactions
- have regard to the family and cultural values, age and physical and intellectual development and abilities of children cared for
- listen to children and take them seriously; support and encourage children to use appropriate language in their interactions with adults and peers. FDC educators will extend upon children's interests and ideas through questions and discussions, supported and made visible in observations, reflections, and programming.
- understand their mandatory reporting requirements and respond to any incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse, harm, neglect or ill-treatment they witness or suspect immediately
- 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
- show empathy to children
- ensure that the values, beliefs, and cultural practices of the child and family are considered and respected (Reg.155)
- 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.
- regularly reflect on their relationships and interactions with children and how these can be improved to benefit each child
- facilitate children's individual development extending upon their strengths, interests and abilities.

INTERACTIONS WITH FAMILIES

Effective communication is the key to developing and maintaining positive interactions and relationships with others and helps to build trusting and respectful partnerships with families. Educators use positive and open communication with families and siblings in order to create a responsive and inclusive environment for children and families. Interactions with families help to inform educators' knowledge of each child's distinctive interests, skills cultures and abilities. This helps to build a positive experience and a safe learning environment that encourages children to expand their knowledge and understandings.



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EDUCATORS WILL ENSURE:

- all families are treated equitably without bias or judgement, recognising that each family is unique
- families are provided with information and resources in their first language
- families are asked to identify a preferred method of regular communication with the FDC Service (this may include utilising a translator service)
- families and children are greeted upon arrival in a respectful manner
- they learn the names of family members and use these names when they greet them
- two-way communication is established through leading by example and asking questions and a willingness to offer information about ourselves
- privacy and confidentiality are respected at all times
- information about another child or family information is never discussed with a parent or visitor
- they remain sensitive to cultural differences amongst families and encourage families to share cultural aspects with the children and FDC educators
- the advice and opinion from other professional experts are requested, with parental permission, to assist educators develop and implement strategies to support the inclusion of children with additional needs
- families are provided with up-to-date service information and notices through Daily Reports, newsletters, communal notice boards, emails and sign-in sheets.
- they regularly reflect on parent input into the program and make changes where necessary that will best benefit the service and children
- connections between families are promoted and enhanced through inviting families to participate in routines and events
- families are aware of our complaint handling process
- any bribe or gift received by a family that may influence or appear to influence a decision or action is to be declined and reported to management.

TO MAINTAIN PROFESSIONALISM AT ALL TIMES, EDUCATORS WILL:

- engage in professional communication in order to create an effective work environment and to build a positive relationship children and families. Communication amongst colleagues creates a positive atmosphere and a professional image for families. Communication between educators and families ensures that important information is being passed on consistently.
- champion a child safe culture through their attitudes, behaviours and actions
- be respectful when listening to each other's point of view and ideas
- maintain effective communication to ensure that teamwork occurs
- communicate their professional reflections and ideas for continuous improvement
- attend in-service training to update and refresh and add to individual skills and knowledge
- keep up to date with current legislation to child protection including mandatory reporting requirements
- refer to the *Dealing with Complaints Policy (Staff) /Procedure* if they feel a situation with another educator or staff member is not being handled with professionalism, respect, and fairness
- recognise the strengths and value the contribution each person makes to different work roles
- work collaboratively to reach decisions which will enhance the quality of the education and care offered
- welcome diverse views and perspectives
- work together and engage in open and honest communication at all times
- respect each other's positions and opinions
- develop and share networks and links with other agencies
- resolve differences promptly and positively and use the experience to develop more effective methods of working together.



TO MAINTAIN PROFESSIONALISM AT ALL TIMES, MANAGEMENT WILL:

- provide new educators with relevant information about the Service and program through a Staff Handbook, induction, and daily communication
- treat educators with respect
- be sensitive to the feelings and needs of educators
- provide constructive feedback to educators as part of their professional learning plan support
- appreciate and utilise educator skills and interests
- provide support, assistance and mentoring to educators
- hold regular educator meetings to encourage and support professional growth and reflective practice
- use appropriate conflict resolution techniques to solve problems
- ensure policies and procedures are up to date regarding communication, expected behaviour and grievances and providing a child safe environment
- provide opportunities for professional development.

TO ENHANCE COMMUNICATION AND TEAMWORK WHEN TOGETHER, EDUCATORS WILL:

- maintain privacy and confidentiality
- be respectful, caring and inclusive of colleagues
- be sensitive to the feelings and needs of others
- support colleagues during difficult situations
- provide constructive feedback to each other
- trust each other
- value the role and contribution of colleagues
- appreciate and utilise colleague skills, strengths and interests regardless of qualification and experience
- provide support and assistance to each other
- share responsibilities
- have a flexible attitude towards roles and responsibilities
- greet each other by name
- show genuine interest in the other person by using active and reflective listening
- communicate ideas and opinions clearly and professionally
- use a communication book or daily diary to pass on messages and record relevant information
- use appropriate conflict resolution techniques to solve problems
- engage in opportunities for professional development.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Interaction with Children, Families and Staff Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators and management.

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). [Policy and Procedure Guidelines- Interactions with Children](#)

Australian Human Rights Commission. Child Safe Organisations. <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/childrens-rights/projects/child-safe-organisations>

Child Australia *Cultural Connections Booklet*. (2017).

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Australian Government Department of Education (2022). [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia](#). V2.0.



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Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023)

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023)

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (Cth).

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (2011) Melbourne Graduate School of Education *Evidence Paper Practice Principle 5: Respectful relationships and responsive engagement*

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/edcare/respectrelns.pdf>

[Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Regulations \(WA\) Act 2012](#)

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.
QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE 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.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	Parents views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S. 166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
73	Educational program
84	Awareness of child protection law



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115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
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170	Policies and procedures to be followed

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Jason Sheehy	Principal	01/12/2025
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