



Interactions with Children Policy

Aim:

Educators and staff at Maryland Care & Early Education Centre are intentional, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions. They engage in reflective practice as a form of ongoing learning that involves engaging with questions of philosophy, ethics and practice. Educators and staff aim to ensure that all interactions with children are positive and respectful to their wellbeing, which convey mutual respect, equity and recognition of each child’s strength and skills.

Positive peer interactions are encouraged and observed.

The mixing of age groups allows children of all ages to interact and supports their social and emotional development. It allows opportunities for peer teaching and learning, patience, promotes sharing, turn taking, problem solving, leadership, friendship and role modeling.

Legislative requirements / Sources:
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Education and Care Services National Regulation (2011):

73	Educational Program
74	Documenting of child assessment or evaluations for delivery of educational program
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
157	Access for parents
168(2)(j)	Education and care services must have policies and procedures – interactions with children, including the matters set out in regulations 155 and 156

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010:

166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
167	Offence relating to the protection of children from harm and hazards

National Quality Standards (NQS):

QA 5: Relationships with children

5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Relationships with children
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 is 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
5.2.1	Self-regulation	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts

QA7: 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

Sources:

- Early Years Learning Framework V2
- Aussie Childcare Network link: <https://aussiechildcarenetwork.com.au/articles/childcare-articles/working-with-mixed-age-groups-in-an-early-childhood-setting>
- ECA Code of Ethics
- Statement of Play

Implementation:

The Approved Provider will:

- Ensure the Nominated Supervisor and all staff members at the service who work with children are aware that it is an offence to subject a child to any form of corporal punishment, and or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive circumstances (National Law Section 166)

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Establish guidelines that ensure interactions with children are given priority and that these interactions are authentic, just and respect difference
- Ensure all staff are aware of the services expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviours, acceptable responses and reactions when engaging with children and families
- Work in conjunction with the Educational Leader, educators and staff to implement programs in accordance with an approved learning framework that is based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and take into account each child's individual differences
- On behalf of the Approved Provider inform the Regulatory Authority in writing, within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring at the service (Regulation 176)
- On behalf of the Approved Provider inform the Regulatory Authority in writing, within 24 hours of a serious notifiable complaint
- On behalf of the Approved Provider inform the Regulatory Authority in writing, within 7 days of any incident or allegation of sexual or physical abuse of a child when in attendance at the service (Regulation 175)

Educators will:

- Ensure that relationships are responsive, respectful and promote children's sense of security and belonging, enabling them to explore the environment and engage in learning.
- Get down to children's level and role model appropriate language, conversations/interactions, body language, tone and volume.
- Communicate closely with parents/guardians to determine how individual children indicate their needs, such as: hunger, toileting, tiredness, and emotions (happiness, sadness, frustration).
- Ensure routines such as toileting, nappy change and rest times are used for positive one on one interactions with children and a time they can know more about the child
- Be aware that tantrums can occur as a way of releasing frustration. Educators must allow a child to calm down and then reassure the child. The Educator can simply discuss what has happened with the child and then give an alternative response. Educators provide positive behaviour support to allow children's ability to self-regulate.
- Ensure each child's needs for emerging independence should be encouraged by educators supporting their autonomy in every part of the daily routine and program.
- Build a rapport with children and families. This can be achieved with the children by asking them what they did on the weekend etc. In return share some of their stories of what the the Educator did as well.
- Be aware of each family and cultural values, age and physical and intellectual development abilities of each child being educated and cared for
- Use positive guidance, telling children what you want them to do – "We walk inside" rather than "No running".
- Give the children something to look forward to: "Today we..." This enables children to feel proud of their learning.
- Use visuals as a tool to engage and interact with children

- Educators should be honest in showing their feelings. If Educators are feeling frustrated, ill or getting impatient, they should be able to discuss these feelings with the children in a non-threatening way. Use “I” messages to explain your concerns and enlist the children’s help.
- Call children by their first name. Educators/staff will check with parents/families and children if they have a preferred name for their child and respect this decision.
- Uphold children’s rights and dignity at all times
- Ensure interactions are based in fairness, acceptance, empathy with respect for cultural and linguistic rights as well as the rights of people with different needs and capabilities

Families will:

- Engage in open communication with Educators about their child
- Inform Educators about events or incidents that may impact their child’s behaviour at the service
- Inform Educators of any concerns regarding their child’s behaviour or impact of other children’s behaviour
- Work collaboratively with Educators and others to develop or review individual plans for their child where appropriate

Children to Children interaction:

Educators will support and encourage children to:

- Build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults.
- Verbalise feelings and ideas.
- Listen to other children and living things.
- Show respect for others.
- Develop good social skills.
- Accept others of different culture, abilities and religion.
- Be co-operative.
- Have good relationships with each other.
- Share experiences.
- Show acceptance of routines.
- Seek help when frustrated.
- Interact with other children.
- Contribute and participate in activities.
- Respond to positive behavior management techniques
- Respect other children’s space and privacy.

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that this policy is maintained and implemented at all times

Review:

This policy is the intellectual property of Maryland Care & Early Education Centre and is created with consultation of staff and families attending the service. This policy will be reviewed annually. This policy is available in other languages upon request.

Last review: April 2024

Next Review: April 2025