



## Interactions with Children Policy

### Policy Statement

Nurturing, respectful and reciprocal relationships are central to supporting children's learning and well-being. We value our partnership with families to create a positive and nurturing learning environment which promotes children's well-being and development through attentive care and quality interactions. Social and emotional development is supported by authentic relationships, thoughtful and relevant conversation, discussion and promotion of children's language and communication. Children who experience relationships that are built on respect, fairness, cooperation and empathy are given the opportunity to develop these qualities themselves. When children have positive experiences of interactions they develop an understanding of themselves as significant and respected and feel a sense of belonging.

### Policy Goals

Interactions at Tathra Preschool will:

- Be responsive to children's strengths, interests, abilities.
- Promote agency and support the development of confident self-identities.
- Uphold children's dignity, rights, and agency.
- Provide positive behaviour support.
- Ensure a safe, secure and nurturing environment.
- Be authentic and responsive.
- Be based in fairness, acceptance and empathy with respect for cultural and linguistic rights.
- Actively challenge bias and racism.
- Reflect Child Safe Standards

## Strategies: How will it be done?

### Children's Rights

Interactions with children will reflect the ECA Code of Ethics in action. Interactions will:

- Act in the best interests of all children.
- Create and maintain safe, healthy, inclusive environments that support children's agency and enhance their learning.
- Inform a meaningful curriculum to enrich children's learning, balancing child and educator-initiated experiences.
- Ensure childhood is a time for being in the here and now and not solely about preparation for the future.
- Collaborate with children as global citizens in learning about our shared responsibilities to the environment and humanity
- Value the relationship between children and their families and enhance these relationships through our practice.
- Ensure that children are not discriminated against on the basis of gender, sexuality, age, ability, economic status, family structure, lifestyle, ethnicity, religion, language, culture, or national origin.
- Negotiate children's participation in research, by taking into account their safety, privacy, levels of fatigue and interest.
- Respect children as capable learners by including their perspectives in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Safeguard the security of information and documentation about children, particularly when shared on digital platforms.

## **Family and Cultural Values**

We recognise families as children's first and most important teacher and respect their right to make decisions about their children.

- Listen to and learn with families.
- Engage in shared decision making, planning and assessment practices in relation to children's learning, development and wellbeing
- Develop respectful relationships based on open communication which empower families, promote engagement and build a strong sense of belonging.
- Respect and respond to the uniqueness of each family, their circumstances, culture, family structure, customs, language, beliefs and kinship systems.
- Respect families' right to privacy and maintain confidentiality.

## **Role Modelling**

Educators model positive interactions when they:

- Show care, empathy and respect for children, educators and staff and families
- Learn and use effective communication strategies.

## **Principles for Behavioural Management**

"A positive approach to guiding children's behaviour builds children's confidence and self-esteem and is based on the development of caring, equitable and responsive relationships between educators and children" (Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011, p125). This policy reflects our "Guiding Children's Behaviour" Policy.

- Staff respect individual children's needs and differences in age, ability and experience regarding issues surrounding behaviour. Working in partnership with each family is key when negotiating strategies with parents to suit the needs of individual children.
- As needed children and staff will negotiate and determine boundaries and rules.

- As needed children and educators will negotiate and determine boundaries and form agreements in relation to expectations for how we treat each other and our preschool.
- As needed teachers will develop Individual Learning Plans in collaboration with families for referral, funding and or behavioural management purposes.
- Children are never shamed.
- Support and teach skills that build children's self-control and regulation through positive role modelling, compassion and understanding.

### **The Role of Staff**

In response to challenging behaviour, staff:

- Will recognise the situation as an opportunity to help the child develop skills, including their language and communication, attention and working memory, emotion and self-regulation, cognitive flexibility and social thinking skills.
- Use intentional teaching to promote prosocial skills, role model and practice how to use them.
- Redirect the child or remove the child from the situation if necessary.
- Advise children of the consequences of continuing with the behaviour.
- Explain to children how their behaviour made others feel.
- Actively listen to children's feelings and discuss the skills to use in future.
- Help children to return to play.

## **Role and Responsibilities**

### **Approved Provider**

- Ensure all staff have access to relevant professional development.

- Ensure the educational program contributes to the development of children who have a strong sense of wellbeing and identity, and are connected, confident, involved and effective learners and communicators (Regulation 73).
- Ensure that 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, or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive in the circumstances (National Law: Section 166).
- Inform the Regulatory Authority in writing, within 24 hours of receiving a notifiable complaint (Section 174(2), Regulation 176(2)(b)).
- Inform the Regulatory Authority in writing within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring at the service (Section 174, Regulation 176).

### **Nominated Supervisor**

- Guide professional development and practice to promote interactions with children that are positive and respectful.
- Establish practice guidelines that ensure interactions with children are given priority and those interactions are authentic, just and respect difference.
- Ensure all staff are aware of Tathra Preschool expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and reactions when working with children and families.
- Consider the size and composition of groups to ensure all children are provided with the best opportunities for quality interactions and relationships with each other and with adults at the service.
- Develop and implement educational programs, in accordance with an approved learning framework, that are based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and take into account the individual differences of each child.

- Ensure that staff provide education and care to children in a way that encourages children to express themselves and their opinions and allows children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance, agency and self-esteem.
- Under section 166 of the Education and Care National Law, a staff member, nominated Supervisor and Approved Provider may receive a penalty for up to \$10,000 (up to \$50,000 in the case of Approved Provider) for subjecting a child to any form of corporal punishment or any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances.

### **Early Childhood Educators**

- Offer positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour.
- Ensure that routines such as toileting, nappy change and rest times are used for positive one to one interaction with children.
- Actively engage in routines such as mealtimes and rest times to engage with children and provide a positive role model.
- Genuinely seek children's input, respect their ideas and take their suggestions on board.
- Form warm relationships with each child and build trusting attachments which provide a secure base for their exploration and learning.

### **Families will**

- Become familiar with this policy via enrolment orientation and have access to the policy via Preschool Handbook and website.
- Comply with this policy
- Engage in open communication with staff about their child
- Inform staff of events or incidents that may impact on their child's behaviour at the preschool (e.g. moving house, a new sibling).

- Inform staff of any concerns regarding their child's behaviour or the impact of other children's behaviour.
- Work collaboratively with staff and other to develop or review a individual behaviour guidance plan for their child, where appropriate

## Monitor, Evaluation and Review

Interactions between educators and children are genuine, positive and responsive and based on respect, fairness, acceptance, co-operation and empathy. This is evident in conversations, communication, pedagogy, and planning for children and families

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every two years.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the Preschool; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected

### Relevant Legislation

- Education and Care National Law Act 2010: Sections 166, 167
- Education and Care National Regulations: 73, 74, 155, 156, 157, 168(2)(j)
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

## Guidelines, Standards and Frameworks

- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 5: Relationships with children - Standards 5.1, 5.2
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership – Standard 7.1.2
- Office Of the Children’s Guardian <https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/resources>
- Download the [Guide to the Child Safe Standards for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services \(PDF, 7.5MB\)](#)

## Sources and References

- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) – [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – [www.unicef.org.au](http://www.unicef.org.au)
- The Supporting young children’s rights: Statement of intent (2015-2018) – [www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au)
- Australian Human Rights Commission – [www.humanrights.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.gov.au)

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April 2022

Review Date

2024 or when procedure, practice or legislation changes.