



# Woden Early Childhood Centre

"Creating the Future"

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## BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

### QUALITY AREA 5: INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

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- Links to Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Section 166, Regulations 155, 156
- Links to National Quality Standards / Elements: 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3

### Introduction

Woden Early Childhood Centre (WECC) promotes a positive approach to guiding children's behaviour within an environment that is consistent, supportive and safe for all children. Behaviour is guided by being sensitive and supportive in helping children develop self-control and to learn and practice desirable behaviour. This is critical for children developing these important life skills.

The purpose of this policy is to provide documentation of the expectations for all educators in guiding children's behaviour. It also provides information to families on how educators will guide their child's behaviour whilst in care.

### Goals – What are we going to do?

- By focusing on each child's strengths and taking a broad view of acceptable behaviour, educators can support each child to develop appropriate personal behaviour and social skills. At all times and in all situations the rights and dignity of the child are respected. Learning to manage feelings and behaviour is an important process for all children.
- Consistency in the approach of behaviour guidance among families and educators is important to ensure the children's sense of security and understanding of these complex processes. Therefore, on enrolment, discussions will take place on guidance strategies, both from the family's perspective and WECC's procedures. Educators value the family's input and try to establish a partnership with them.
- By getting to know the child and family and communicating effectively and respectfully, educators can begin to understand the child and how best they can support the child.

*Acknowledgement to Community Child Care Co-operative (NSW).*

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Consideration needs to be given to varying parenting styles, to the family's cultural or social values, and to the age, abilities and temperament of the individual child.

- Educators also discuss ways to be pro-active not re-active and prevent undesirable behaviours e.g. through the set up of the environment, use of materials and equipment and so on.

## **Strategies – How will it be done?**

### **1) Consider the context**

When considering positive behaviour guidance strategies and techniques, it is important that educators consider the context of the situation, as well as the behaviour itself, in their response to the behaviour. For example:

- Has a particular situation or the play environment created the undesirable behaviour?
- Is the behaviour just 'annoying' or is it really hurting someone?
- What do you think were the child's intentions of the behaviour?
- Is my response to the same behaviour consistent with all children and generally across most situations?
- Am I expecting children to behave in ways that suit my values and beliefs, which may be different to those of families and/or other educators?

### **2) Supporting children**

Educators will guide children's behaviour in positive ways by:

- treating all children with respect and dignity
- focusing on each child's strengths
- ensuring that expectations of children's behaviour are individually, culturally and developmentally appropriate to each child
- using positive words and directions when guiding children towards desired behaviour
- assisting children to recognise their feelings and find ways to express them that are appropriate/acceptable
- using simple words and explanations for younger children and help older children find words and reasoning to behaviours
- supporting protective behaviours by helping children use assertive phrases such as "Stop, I don't like that" in appropriate contexts
- assuring children that at times suggested strategies eg for them to try to resolve conflict, may not always 'work' and that if it doesn't work they can come back to an educator for further assistance
- talking with children about how their actions affect others and themselves
- trusting children and helping them understand and develop simple rules
- ensuring that expectations and limits are consistent and clear to children
- supporting children positively when they are meeting expectations
- ensuring that behaviour which is not acceptable is responded to immediately
- helping children to show empathy and begin to resolve conflicts

- providing an environment and daily/weekly plans that are child focused and safe to minimise confrontation and conflict
- keeping up-to-date with current trends in positive guidance by participating in professional development and training opportunities.

Educators can be effective role models for children by:

- interacting with children and other adults in positive ways
- listening to children so that the appropriate cause of behaviour can be determined and alternatives to undesirable behaviour are encouraged
- modelling desirable behaviours that display trust, respect and empathy
- responding calmly and sensitively to children's challenging behaviour
- seeking assistance from other educators when they need help so children can also feel confident about asking for help from other children or adults
- labelling the desired behaviour, rather than labelling the child or focusing heavily on undesirable behaviours.

### **3) Working with families**

Educators will work in partnership with families by:

- encouraging on-going open communication between them and the child's family
- sharing and discussing relevant information about the child to ensure positive guidance is consistent at WECC and at home
- being sensitive when discussing concerning behaviours with families
- working with families in positive ways and not being critical or judgmental of family practices
- clarifying any family approaches that may be inconsistent with WECC's procedures and how mutually agreeable goals and strategies can be reached
- ensuring families have access to WECC's behaviour guidance procedures and other resources
- providing information to families about external support services and other resources in the community.

### **4) Supporting each other**

Educators can support each other to positively guide children's behaviour by:

- discussing their own values and beliefs about desirable behaviours in young children and how these can be promoted
- helping each other be consistent by monitoring each others responses to situations
- stepping in when educators may show signs of frustration or not coping with a child's difficult behaviour
- sharing information and perspectives on how to best support children to be self-regulated
- working together to develop consistent strategies to be implemented within the room.

Educators with Supervisor Certificates will ensure all educators within the room (including relief educators) are aware of expectations in relation to positive behaviour guidance.

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## 5) Managing very difficult behaviours

When a child's difficult behaviour becomes extreme and/or continues to be a cause of concern to educators, in consultation with the family and whilst ensuring confidentiality, educators may:

- discuss the situation at an all-of- staff meeting and develop a specific plan of action
- monitor the plan and evaluate the outcomes
- consider seeking external intervention support, if appropriate.

**Time out:** Is not appropriate as the child should never be removed from the group.

**Note:** At no time should educators use behaviour or language that conflicts with WECC's *Staff code of conduct* policy when guiding children's behaviour. It is unacceptable for educators to use any techniques that may humiliate, frighten or threaten the child. Educators should not use food or rest time as a punishment and should never isolate the child or use any form of verbal, physical or emotional punishment.

## Related policies / documents

- *Induction of new educators*
- *Interactions with children*
- *Staff code of conduct*

## Statutory legislation and considerations

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

## Sources and references

- *ACT Centre Based Children's Services Conditions for Approvals in Principle and Licences 2000 part 5; 5.5, 5.6*
- Slee, J (2003) *Managing Difficult Behaviour in Young Children. Research in Practice Series (Vol 1 No3)* ECA.CCCNSW, Marrickville
- *Guiding Children's Behaviour in Positive Ways* (Stonehouse, NCAC, 2006)
- Porter, L (Ed) 2003. *Young Children's Behaviour: Practical Approaches for Caregivers and Teachers* 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. McLennan and Petty, NSW.

## Authorisation

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