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## BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

### QUALITY AREA 5: INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

#### National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety		
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation
2.2.1		At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard

Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children		
5.1	<b>Relationships between educators and children</b>	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child
5.1.1	<b>Positive educator to child interactions</b>	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	<b>Dignity and rights of the child</b>	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained
5.2	<b>Relationships between children</b>	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships
5.2.1	<b>Collaborative learning</b>	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other
5.2.2	<b>Self-Regulation</b>	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: Partnership with Families and Communities		
6.1	<b>Supportive relationships with families</b>	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role

Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership		
7.1	<b>Governance</b>	Governance supports the operation of a quality service
7.1.2	<b>Management System</b>	System are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service

<b>Children (Education and Care Services) National Law Act</b>	
<b>84</b>	Awareness of child protection law
<b>155</b>	Interactions with children
<b>156</b>	Relationships in groups
<b>168</b>	Education and care services 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

## 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 to develop these important life skills.

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)

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.

## Scope

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, volunteers and visitors of the Centre.

## Goals

The behaviour and guidance techniques used by staff and educators at our Centre are designed to give children 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.

We believe in providing boundaries as part of a loving and secure 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 aspects to promoting positive behaviour:

1. a learning environment that is positive and supportive
2. strategies for building skills and strengthening positive behaviour
3. strategies for decreasing undesired behaviours

WECC will:

- focus 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
- be consistent in the approach of behaviour guidance. 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
- get to know the child and family while communicating effectively and respectfully, educators can begin to understand the child and how best they can support the child. 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

- ensure educators also discuss ways to be pro-active not re-active to undesirable behaviours e.g. through the set up of the environment, use of materials and equipment and so on
- commit to professional development and keep up to date with industry information regarding behaviour guidance strategies

## Strategies

Management, Nominated Supervisor, Director or Responsible Person will ensure:

- information is gathered from families about their children's social skills and relationship preferences, which will be recorded in the child's individual file. Our educators will use this information to engage children in experiences that support children to develop and practice their social and shared decisions making skills
- a partnership is developed with local schools and 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
- 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
- children are being acknowledged when they make positive choices in managing their behaviour
- positive strategies are being implemented to enable educators to encourage positive behaviour in children in order to minimise adverse behaviour. In addition, we will implement strategies educating children about developing behaviour limits and the consequences of inappropriate behaviour
- excessive behaviour is managed and communicated with families
- support educators to enhance their skills and knowledge in guiding children's behaviour
- a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) is developed with local support agencies
- the SIP is reviewed on a periodic basis reflecting changes that have been applied through the implementation of the plan

Educators will:

- encourage the individual social development in each child, striving to develop children's self-control and understanding the feelings of others
- 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
- use positive guidance through redirection. In the instance of adverse behaviour being persistently observed, educators will evaluate their program, room set up, supervision, etc. to reflect on inappropriate behaviour, triggers and sources
- 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 sexes
- implement "time with" an adult, which will be used when all other strategies (above) have been exhausted. "time with" allows children time to reflect on their actions, assisting in fostering self-discipline and to acknowledge that there are consequences to actions. "time with" will occur under the supervision of other educators
- take into consideration the child's past experiences as their behaviour could be a result from 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 behaviour plans with the individual child that includes strategies which will assist alternative and positive behaviour
- ensure all strategies being implemented are appropriate to the child's age and developmental capacity
- adapt a positive approach, excluding cruel, harsh, humiliating or demanding action
- consult with industry professionals to support the child within WECC and implement techniques within the program to benefit all
- commit to professional development and keep up to date with industry information regarding behaviour management
- re-direct a child who may be causing or about to cause harm to themselves, 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 themselves in a dangerous situation, for example, climbing a fence or hiding under furniture. 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

observe the child, where a similar incidence occurs in regard to the child's safety or other children's safety has been jeopardised three (3) times the child's parents will meet with the Director and the child's Room Leader to discuss the behaviour of concern as they assist in creating a SIP to support the child in the environment

- exchange information with families about behaviour guidance which is encouraged both on an informal and more formal basis, such as parent meetings and through newsletters
- be sufficiently 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
- support children to explore different identities and points of view and to communicate effectively when resolving disagreements with others
- discuss emotions, feeling and issues of inclusion and fairness, bias and prejudice and the consequences of their actions and the reasons for this as well as the appropriate rules
- encourage children to listen to other people's ideas, consider pro-social behaviour and collaborate 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 complexity 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
- work with individual families and professional agencies to ensure that a consistent approach is used to support children with diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties
- use positive language, gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice when redirecting or discussing children's behaviour with them
- remain calm, tender 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
- 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 other's 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

**Note:** at no time should educators use behaviour or language that conflicts with WECC's *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.

Families will:

- be informed of behaviour concerns that WECC may have with their child, this includes: the positive and negative aspects of the day
- provide consent for the Centre to consult with professional agencies to assist with implementing a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) for the room or group of children
- create consistency in behaviour guidance strategies used at the Centre and at home.
- consult with educators and provide consent when the Centre is applying for Inclusion Support Funding
- collaborate 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.

### *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 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.

WECC will:

- establish positive relationships with children
- empower children to use language and other forms of non-hurtful communication to communicate their emotions
- promote positive, empathetic relationships between children assisting them to develop respectful relationships
- encourage and assist children to make decisions for themselves and provide opportunities for independence and self-regulation
- provide clear and reasonable limits so that children know what is expected of them and follow through to help them abide by the limits
- model appropriate behaviours
- provide positive feedback and focus on children's strengths and achievements and build on their abilities
- be understanding and supportive – acknowledge children's emotions
- help children develop a sense of social responsibility, so that they become aware of the impact of their actions on others
- promote children's initiative and agency
- discuss guidelines, rules, limits and what is fair with children, and use their contribution in setting limits and guidelines
- provide age appropriate and interesting activities, experiences and equipment for children to use and become engaged in as they challenge their development
- providing opportunities for children to explore both the indoor and outdoor environment
- set up environment (indoor and outdoor) for children to engage in activities and experiences in accordance with their abilities and interests
- ensure there is sufficient materials and equipment
- implement a regular routine to support children's positive behaviour. Routines help to provide a sense of security, so children feel settled

### **Senior Practitioner Act 2018**

The Senior Practitioner Act 2018 (the Act), which came into effect on 1 September 2018, provides a formal framework for the reduction and elimination of restrictive practices by service providers in the ACT.

Woden Early Childhood Centre will abide by the Act and ensure educators do not engage in restrictive practices.

What is a restrictive practice? 'Restrictive practice' means a practice that is used to restrict the rights or freedom of movement of a person for the primary purpose of protecting the person or others from harm. Restrictive practice does not include reasonable action taken to monitor and protect a child from harm Examples:

1. holding a child's hand while crossing a road
2. fencing around the Centre

Educators will:

- Be aware of the individual child's stage of development and particular needs and plan the Educational Program accordingly. Unrealistic challenges in a program can create unnecessary stresses for a child possibly resulting in challenging behaviour.
- Keep up to date records on all children. Note relevant conversations with parents that may relate to a child's behaviour change (eg. parents separating, new baby in the family, etc.)
- Children with special needs may need more physical contact and physical guidance than other children.

Work with parents to record appropriate procedures for toilet learning and/or behaviour management principles

In some cases, a Positive Behaviour Support Plan may be created in partnership with families, Educators, and the Director. A plan including restrictive practice as a strategy needs to be approved by a registered Positive Behaviour Support Panel and registered by the Senior Practitioner. For example, it may be necessary to physically restrain a child for their own protection or the protection of others. This may result in their child needing to be isolated from

others for short periods of time.

- Educators are to engage only in practices that are respectful of and provide security for children and in no way degrade, endanger, exploit, intimidate, or harm them psychologically or physically.

- Educators should be aware of their own levels of tolerance and stress factors. Acknowledge that there may be some children that some educators find more difficult to relate to than other children. Discuss this honestly with educators to develop strategies to assist them.

## Evaluation

The right for children to receive positive guidance in a supportive environment is protected in the National Regulations. Children learn to face a variety of challenges throughout their lives. Learning the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour assists children to regulate their own behaviours in different social and emotional environments as well as when interacting with peers and adults.

## Related policies /documents

- *Code of Conduct*
- *Induction of new educators*
- *Interactions with children*

## Sources and references

- 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
- *Inclusion – KU Children's Services*
- *Senior Practitioner Act 2018 (ACT)*
- *Inclusion Support Programme –*  
[https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/overview\\_of\\_the\\_strategic\\_inclusion\\_plan-web\\_0.pdf](https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/overview_of_the_strategic_inclusion_plan-web_0.pdf)

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## Authorisation

Paul Halloran  
 President  
 2021 - 2022 WECC Management Committee





