

Educators ensuring Children's Behaviour (via Positive Guidance) Policy

Aim

Educators and children have the responsibility to provide a safe, secure, caring and stimulating environment to all children and educators at the Centre.

Implementation

Educators will encourage positive interactions between educators and children by using a positive approach in guidance and behaviour management strategies will recognise why a child behaves in a certain way and encourage more acceptable forms of behaviour by working in consultation with parents/caregivers as well as the child's school teacher to develop a behaviour management plan if the child's behaviour proves to be putting educators and children's safety and wellbeing at risk.

At our Centre we encourage positive, co-operative behaviour through:

- Establishing trust and confidence between adults and children.
- Considering the stage of development of each child.
- Considering the interests, concerns and abilities of the individual child.
- Showing sensitivity to the child's background and current home situations.
- Examining the reason behind the behaviour that suggested a need for disciplinary action.
- Getting down to the child's level to establish and maintain eye contact.
- Using language that is positive, clear and developmentally appropriate for the child in question.
- Being consistent with behaviour expectations.
- Setting limits and reminding children of them of such limits regularly or whenever necessary.
- Involving the children in the setting of limits and explaining as to why a certain type of behaviour is unacceptable. E.g.: other children and educators' safety.
- Encouraging the children to show sympathy for children experiencing difficulties.
- Guidance and discipline to encourage individuality and confidence of children so as to enhance their self-esteem.
- Offering the children clear alternatives to help them develop their ability to make decisions and direct themselves.
- Positive modelling by adults. E.g.: **"sand stays in the sand pit"** rather than "don't throw sand", and by showing the child how to dig in the sand.
- Discussing with parents the behaviour management policy and seek their assistance for solutions should the need arise.
- When concerns of a child's behaviour arises, educators must ensure they document the behaviour as well as the strategies they have used and all conversations that have been had in a timely and descriptive manner.

THE USE OF PHYSICAL FORCE, EMBARRASSMENT, SARCASM, PROLONGED PUNISHMENT, IS NEVER PRACTISED.

When Prevention Doesn't Work:

- Try to distract/diffuse a situation, giving the child an out.
- Use "do" instead of "don't", giving a simple explanation. (If the child persists, use the word "stop" reinforced with the stop hand signal and explain positively what they should be doing).
- Always talk about the behaviour being inappropriate, not the child personally (e.g. avoid saying, bad, naughty, silly etc.).
- Use a firm, calm manner, indicating what you expect from the child, presenting it to the child as a choice wherever possible - "if you choose to do "X" I will have to" Lowering your voice gains attention. Shouting may scare the child.
- Allow time for the child to comply with the request.
- Be clear about the consequences for the child, e.g., denial of privileges, removal from situations, and help clean up the "mess".
- Follow through with consequences!
- If it becomes necessary, educators will gently remove the disruptive child from a group or activity until such time as the child has settled down and able to return to the group or activity.

If the need arises to restrain a child, the educators will do so at their own discretion so as not to put themselves, the child or other children at risk of harm. Suggested method for restraining a child is to sit on a chair or the floor with the child held firmly in front of them (the child's back towards the educators). Speak calmly and quietly to attempt to diffuse the situation quickly. Restraining a child should be used only as a last resort and in the presence of another educator, parent or school teacher.

When it's all over - it is essential to restore a positive relationship between you and the child, before either of you go home. Keep the Director aware of on-going situations; keep a written record of continuing incidents.

Anti-social: physical behaviours

Educators should explain to children that biting, hitting, pushing and kicking etc., are not acceptable. Eg. If a child wants to hit or punch then they can use the play dough or punching bag to take out aggression. If the child wants to kick they can kick a ball.

With older children, encourage them to use problem-solving skills and to verbalise feelings instead.

If a child becomes aggressive remove them from the activity (suitable distance so as not to hurt other children); stay with them until they quieten down. Comfort when rage subsides. Some good activities if a child is aggressive are play dough, clay, hammering, bowling etc.

Always look for reasons behind belligerent behaviours and address the issues as a part of further planning (e.g. Biting could be a result of teething or not having the communication skills to tell a peer that they are taking their toy. Kicking could be a part of power play etc.) Make sure you focus attention on the child who has been hurt. Children who have hurt another child can often be encouraged to help comfort or assist the hurt child (get a tissue, hold the ice pack etc.)

When behaviour management strategies is not working:

- Discuss problems with educators - where appropriate (confidentiality is observed).
- Written methods are implemented.
- Difficulties are discussed with parents, to discuss appropriate strategies.
- Early Intervention professionals are consulted with parental permission.
- Educators to implement program directives from their local Inclusion Support agency.
- Other professionals and support groups to be consulted where necessary.

Guidelines for director intervention

If a child's behaviour is continually anti-social or aggressive and is putting other children's or educators' health at risk, then the following procedures will be followed:

- The child's parents will be continually informed of the incidents.
- A time and date will be made where it is appropriate for the child's parents to discuss the issues in a formal setting.
- Nominated Supervisor will complete a Students Contract with the child.
- A behaviour management plan will be developed in consultation with the child, educators, parents and school teacher.
- This program will be continually evaluated by educators, Nominated Supervisor and parents.
- If the behaviour does not appear to be improving the Nominated Supervisor may refer the parents to a support network (e.g. parenting support program)
- It may be necessary for the parent/s to collect their child early if other children or educators are put at risk of harm.
- If the parent does not acknowledge the issue or the centre/educators and/or the internal or external assistance to support the child's inclusion then the Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider reserves the right to suspend or terminate the child's enrolment.
- If the child's behaviour continues to put other children and educators at risk, the Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider reserves the right to suspend or terminate the child's enrolment.
- If a child's behaviour is putting children and educators at risk due to physical violence the Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider reserves the right to suspend or terminate the child's enrolment.

Legislative Requirements

- Education and Care services National Law Act 2011
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority
- Children and Young Person (Care and Protection) Act 1998

Who is affected by this policy?

- Children and Families
- Educators and Management

Sources and further reading:

- Education and Care services National Law Act 2011
- National Quality Framework Guide 2011

Review: This policy will be reviewed annually. The review will be conducted by:

- Management and Employees
- Interested Parties (including Families, NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate Department of Education and Communities, ACECQA etc.)