



# **POLICY**

## **BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE CODE: INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN**

**National Quality Standard: 5  
Regulation: 155; 156 168  
DECD: Behaviour Guidance Code**

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## **1. TITLE**

### **BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE CODE**

## **2. SCOPE**

The policy applies to all those working in the site including:

- Employees of DECD
- Governing Council members
- All service providers
- All agency staff
- Children
- Parents, carers and guardians of children
- Volunteers at the centre
- Tertiary and school students on placement
- All others involved at the centre

While the majority of the code of behaviour relates to children's behaviour, the code also covers adult behaviour on site.

## **3. DEFINITIONS**

- Positive behaviour is any behaviour that is helpful, respectful, and cooperative, and helps to generate further learning.
- Inappropriate behaviour is any behaviour that is unsafe (i.e. any behaviour that may potentially or does result in physical harm to oneself or others), and / or unacceptable (i.e. any behaviour that is unfair or disrespectful towards others or material objects/the environment).
- Redirection is supporting the child to another activity or place away from the current situation.

## **4. PURPOSE**

- To provide a safe, secure, supportive and respectful environment in which children are successful learners and adults are safe and respected.
- All those on site are valued as individuals
- To support respectful and positive interactions between children and those they interact with and between adults.
- To protect the environment
- To recognise the importance of family in children's lives and the need to work with families to support children with social development.

## **5. POLICY DETAIL**

### **5.1 BELIEFS AND VALUES**

- At Elizabeth Grove Children's Centre we believe children learn best when:
- They have the opportunity to build positive relationships with adults and children
- They have the opportunity to experience positive feelings of self and a sense of belongings
- They are supported to express their feelings in appropriate ways
- There is a positive approach to managing behaviours
- The learning environment is safe, challenging and caters for group and individual needs and interests
- Adults are responsive to children and supportive of their efforts and achievements
- Adults build positive relationships with parents and carers and respect family beliefs and values
- Staff work positively with parents and carers to support children's learning and wellbeing
- Adults work as part of a team and collaborate together
- Staff are respectful to children and adults they interact with
- Parents, visitors and volunteers demonstrate respect for others
- Adult behaviour is appropriate and professional

### **5.2 APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOURS**

The behaviours that we encourage and promote at the centre are:

- Respect for others
- Respect for equipment, materials, the building and the environment
- Cooperation with and helping others
- Care and empathy for others
- Being kind to one another
- Being inclusive with others
- Taking responsibility for one's actions
- Positive risk taking-'having a go'
- Using respectful positive communication with others
- Connecting and interacting with others- children making friends
- Children participating in the whole curriculum

### **5.3 PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

Staff promote positive behaviours by:

- Ensuring a challenging and responsive curriculum
- Modelling and encouraging respect, positive language, teamwork, problem solving, negotiation and conflict resolution

- Being consistent with the expected behaviours and language used, for example 'at this centre we.....'
- Involving children in developing behaviour expectations and consequences
- Working together as a staff team to support positive behaviour
- Using assessment tools and seeking other professional supports to ensure a preventative approach to managing behaviours
- Working positively with parents/carers to support children
- Ensuring children are appropriately supervised at all times
- Building positive relationships with each child
- Ensuring children are treated with dignity and respect
- Building on each child's strengths
- Having high expectations for each child

## **5.4 RESPONDING TO CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS**

### **5.4.1 MODELLING AND VERBALISING EXPECTATIONS FOR CHILDREN**

At this centre staff:

- Ensure responses are developmentally appropriate for children
- Provide reminders of expectations and reasons-with visuals when appropriate
- Use consistent messages 'At this centre we...'
- Support the child through problem solving, negotiation and resolution
- Support the child to manage emotions and self-regulate
- Demonstrate care, empathy, respect and discussion about expectations
- Include children and parents in developing expectations

### **5.4.2 USING A RANGE OF STRATEGIES FOR CHILDREN (such as)**

- Connection with the child and building relationships
- Asking what happened – getting the child's perspective
- Redirection
- Having the child think about natural consequences
- Using choice cards for alternative play
- Acknowledging the child's feelings- 'I can see you are feeling...'
- Supporting children to regulate emotions
- For younger children redirect and manage the environment
- Assess causal environmental factors and adapt as necessary
- Finding the positive alternative 'Remember we walk inside'
- Sharing strategies that work with the team

### **5.4.3 RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN**

- Getting to know children and find out about their lives from before they start at the centre
- Spending time with children and connecting with their lives and world
- Being encouraging, supportive and positive in communication
- Communicating and involving parents/carers at the earliest opportunity to work together in a collaborative way to assist the child's wellbeing and learning
- Planning, implementing and monitoring behaviour plans with parents/carers
- Involving DECD support staff at the earliest opportunity if necessary to support interactions with children
- Involving other agency staff as needed to support building relationships with children

### **5.4.4 SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

- Having high expectations for all children
- Talking and listening to children
- Assessing each child's learning and development during the day
- Reflecting daily on the learning environment and children's involvement and relationships
- Monitoring involvement and Inviting children to engage in activities.
- Supporting children to withdraw from a situation when they are at risk of hurting themselves or others, ensuring adequate supervision and sensitivity
- Intensive consistent intervention by the staff team
- Employment of support staff and 1-1 support for children at times
- Involvement of DECD and other support services when appropriate

### **5.5 PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

- Seek information about the child prior to/post enrolment.
- Develop boundaries with children
- State limits and boundaries in a clear way with a positive tone of voice with reminders
- Provide explanations for limits and boundaries and encouraging children to think about why boundaries are in place.
- Use observation, recording and assessment tools to assess children's behaviour and needs.
- Consider how other factors are impacting on the child
- Identify the possible triggers of challenging behaviours for each child
- Use the 5-point plan model for individual children when necessary
- Plan, implement and review individual plans.
- Use a range of specific strategies to support positive behaviour such as focussing on a positive action of the child (or another child), stopping a group time using no words and waiting, choosing the 'battles' at times, ignoring

some behaviours, redirection or changing the learning environment or group time activity.

- Have a planned 'whole staff approach' from the time the child arrives if there are identified issues and ensure relief staff aware of any relevant behaviour issues
- Work together as a staff team to solve problems in a timely manner
- Regular meetings
- Ensuring the language used is appropriate to the child's understanding
- Provide staff with professional development to improve relationships and practice.

## **5.6 INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN**

### **Interactions with children must:**

- Encourage children to express themselves and their opinions
- Allow the child to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and a positive self esteem
- Maintain the dignity and rights of the child at all times
- Give each child positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour
- /have regard for the family and cultural values age and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for
- Support the development of respectful and positive relationships with each other and with staff members, volunteers, students and other adults at the centre
- Support opportunities for individual and small group interactions with others for each child

## **5.7 EXAMPLES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS** (Adults and children)

- All forms of bullying (physical, verbal, emotional, social or cyber-bullying) including comments and non-verbal behaviour such as deliberate exclusion of a child
- Actions or visual displays that are intentional, hurtful or repetitive
- Harassment, including behaviour that degrades, demeans, humiliates or embarrasses someone that a reasonable person would know is unwelcome
- All forms of abuse (sexual, physical or psychological)
- Discrimination against any person or group because of their race, colour, ancestry, nationality or place of origin, ethnicity, background, religion, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital or family status, source of income, political belief and physical or mental disability. 'Actions that put another person at risk of harm including violent physical acts and threatening someone

## **5.8 EXAMPLES OF STRIVING TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT SUPPORTS HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF THOSE ON SITE.**

- Having realistic and developmentally appropriate expectations for children's behaviour
- Setting up the learning environment and materials to encourage appropriate behaviour and reduce the potential for inappropriate behaviour
- Planning the learning environment based on children's interests, strengths and developmental needs
- Establishing consistent yet flexible schedules and routines that help children gain trust security and self-control and have a positive sense of wellbeing.
- Following health and safety practices that support the everyone on site

## **5.9 FURTHER STEPS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR**

Depending on the severity and frequency of behaviour further steps may include:

- Using external support staff to focus on behavioural analysis to learn more about what may be contributing to a child's inappropriate behaviour and how to help
- Facilitating a referral pathway for the child and accessing outside resources.
- Having formal/informal meetings to discuss concerns and develop an action plan to encourage appropriate behaviour and positive social skills with relevant stakeholders
- Supporting family issues through on-site and off-site services as needed
- Negotiating a child's enrolment so that the child is at the centre for a time period that will achieve success with appropriate supports in place
- Sometimes this may include a written contract around expectations
- Documenting information about behaviour on IRMS
- Inviting a parent/carer to the centre to support the staff in extreme situations

## **5.10 BEHAVIOUR OF STAFF OR OTHER ADULTS**

In the case of staff members or other adults engaged in inappropriate behaviour steps may include:

- Dealing with complaints in a prompt manner and following DECD procedures
- Having a positive and supportive approach to dealing with issues
- Ensuring all staff have completed the Public Service Code of Ethics on line training and other people working regularly on site are aware of this code
- Reminders for all those working on site about the Code of Ethics and professional practice and expectations
- Meetings and documentation of the issues
- Documenting behaviour on IRMS
- Involvement of DECD leadership support

- Disciplinary procedures
- Cancelling a student or visitor's access to the centre
- Following DECD procedures for managing adult behaviour issues
- Contacting the police if the behaviour is illegal such as ongoing abuse, assault or threatening another person
- Having a plan of action if there is a known risk with a risk assessment in place
- Withdrawing from partnerships with other agencies
- Encouraging staff to use the SA Government counselling services

## **References**

ECA Code of Ethics

SA Public Service Code of Ethics

DECD – information related to managing behaviours and sexual misconduct.

Early Years Learning Framework

National Quality Framework

United National Rights of the Child

SA Equal Opportunity Act

Disability Discrimination Act