



4.1 Behaviour Guidance & Support

Purpose

To provide a policy to enable staff to provide appropriate guidance to children when presented with challenging and ongoing behaviours.

In this Policy, 'challenging and ongoing behaviours' includes, but is not limited to, any behaviour that places themselves, another child, an educator, volunteer or parent at risk of harm.

Objective

To implement a procedure which:

- Supports staff, families, and volunteers in their engagement of children
- Provides children with support, guidance, and opportunities to demonstrate an increasing capacity for self-regulation
- To assist children to develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience, and sense of agency

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all staff, educators, volunteers, students working on placements and families of John Street.

Policy Statement

John Street is very committed to providing an environment that supports the child as a whole. This means that all children are treated as individuals who are at different stages of development and who have different circumstances influencing their lives and behaviours.

We believe:

- All children need a safe and secure environment, and positive interaction with adults and other children
- Children should be encouraged to develop social skills that help resolve conflicts and negotiate their rights and allow them to be aware and empathetic to the rights of others
- Positive behaviour should be encouraged in all children

- All children should be respected and valued as individuals
- Setting limits for behaviour is important for the safety and protection of children, others, and the environment
- Children should be helped to learn the consequences of their behaviour and thus develop an understanding of how their actions affect others
- Parents/guardians should be engaged in issues relating to the guidance of their child's behaviour
- Behaviour support techniques that are relevant to the individual child should be used to foster positive relationships and the child's positive sense of identity
- Adults interacting with children need to develop attitudes and practices which are based on realistic expectations of children's needs and abilities

Influences on behaviour

The following areas are considered important influences on children's behaviour and cannot be ignored:

- Maturation of each child
- Children are unique individuals
- Children's behaviour reflects their age and level of development
- The experiences children have through their family and culture influence their behaviour
- Organisation of the environment, which includes people, space, time, and materials/equipment.

It must be noted that overlap occurs in these areas, so one cannot be considered without the other.

Procedures

The following are specific strategies for fostering a supportive environment for problem solving and building self-esteem:

- Gain a child's attention in a respectful way
- Recognise each situation is unique and should be guided with objectivity
- Use proximity and touch at times when the child seems to have lost control. Children may prefer proximity rather than a cuddle or an arm around them. This must be respected ensuring the child's safety always
- Acknowledge feelings before reinforcing limits

- Remind children of limits through clarification and repetition
- Distract or divert when appropriate, that is, when the children's attention spans and verbal abilities are limited (this will be especially necessary at family grouping times and for the specific needs of individual children)
- Model problem-solving skills
- Offer appropriate choices that are consistent with limits and the child's needs
- Redirect children to other activities, if circumstances need to be changed when children are unable to solve a situation
- Establish and maintain clear, consistent, and simple limits in consultation with staff, with reference to the changing needs of all children
- State limits in a positive manner by phrasing them in a way that describes to the child 'what to do' and avoiding the negative of 'what not to do'
- Focus on the behaviour rather than on the child e.g. "when you to the other child it hurts them" This avoids the 'you' messages that can be perceived by the child as a personal attack rather than a disapproval of their behaviour
- Make statements of expectations rather than posing questions at times where there is no real choice, for example, in matters of routine, limits and expected behaviours
- Allow children time to respond to expectations, and offer cues and warnings to assist them in anticipating and preparing for change
- Reinforce appropriate behaviour with words or gestures as it is occurring
- Ignore minor incidents while ensuring that these are not infringing on the rights of others
- Encourage children to use staff as a resource by showing children that staff are willing to listen and respond in a supportive and fair way (e.g. saying, "If you're not sure what to do, ask and I'll help you")
- Supervise and monitor the environment and children in their activities
- Seek support within the centre from colleagues and Management
- Take observations of the behaviour

Procedures for dealing with ongoing unacceptable behaviour

When dealing with unacceptable behaviour, the staff should:

- Consult and assess the availability of support within the centre
- Take observations

- Speak with management
- Discuss with the parent or guardian:
 - The unacceptable behaviour shown by the child
 - Possible strategies that could be implemented
 - Assess any training or support required for the staff or parent/guardian
 - Consult with other professionals and agencies as appropriate
- Develop a behaviour guidance plan, which is based on a consensus reached with the parent/guardian
- Develop strategies that are:
 - Clear and easily followed by all staff, parents/guardians and/or students/volunteers working with the child
 - Discussed in detail with other staff
 - Reviewed as required

This mutually acceptable plan may include:

- Obtaining advice from other professionals where appropriate
- Establishing timelines
- Ongoing consultation with parent/guardian
- Evaluation process
- Monitoring and reporting progress to parents/guardians
- Maintaining confidentiality in relation to information gained about the child and their family.
- A behavioural assessment of the child
- A behavioural intervention program or obtaining specialist advice (e.g. ISF/ Preschool Field Officer)
- The parent/guardian remaining with the child for a pre-determined period
- A referral to a Parent Support program to obtain assistance or other support services for the family
- Additional staffing assistance where available

Discipline and Prohibited Actions

At John Street:

- Children are not subjected to any form of corporal punishment including shaking, slapping, or spanking.
- Children are not subjected to any form of emotional abuse, including name-calling, ostracism, shaming, making derogatory remarks about the child or his family, or using any language that threatens, humiliates, or frightens the child
- Toileting habits, or lack thereof, are not a cause for punishment of any form.
- No physical restraints of any kind are used on children.

Responsibility

The staff and volunteers are responsible for the day-to-day implementation of this policy and where possible resolving any behavioural guidance issues directly with the parents/guardians and children.

Legislative Provisions

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Vic) - Section 3 (2)(b); 3(3)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f); & 166

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011:

r.84	<i>Awareness of Child Protection Law</i>
r.155	<i>Interactions with Children</i>
r.156	<i>Relationships with Children</i>
r.168 (j)	<i>Education and Care Service must have policies and procedures</i>

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care & School Age Care

Standard 1.1	<i>The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.</i>
Element 2.2.1	<i>At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.</i>
Element 2.2.3	<i>Management, educators, and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.</i>
Element 3.2.2	<i>Resources, materials, and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.</i>
Standard 4.1	<i>Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development.</i>
Standard 4.2	<i>Management, educators, and staff are collaborative, respectful, and ethical.</i>
Standard 5.1	<i>Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.</i>
Standard 5.2	<i>Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.</i>
Standard 6.2	<i>Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.</i>
Element 6.2.1	<i>Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.</i>

Element 6.2.2	<i>Effective partnerships support children’s access, inclusion, and participation in the program</i>
Element 6.2.3	<i>The service builds relationships and engages with its local community.</i>
Element 6.3.3	<i>Access to inclusion and support assistance is facilitated</i>

Early Years Learning Framework for Australia

Principles	<i>Secure, respectful, and reciprocal relationships; Partnerships; Respect for Diversity</i>
Practices	<i>Holistic approaches; Responsiveness to children; Cultural competence; Continuity of learning and transitions</i>
Outcomes	<i>1, 2, 3, 4 & 5</i>

Sources

Dolby, R. (2011) *Everyday Learning About Promoting Positive Behaviour*. Vol. 9. Number 2. 2011. Early Childhood Australia. Everyday Learning Series.

Bilmes, J. (2004) *Beyond Behavior Management. The six life skills children need to thrive in today’s world*. Redleaf Press: St Paul. Minnesota.

National Professional Support Coordinator Alliance (2012) *Getting started with policies for the NQF: Policies in Practice Template – Guiding Children’s Behaviour*. Accessed February 2012 from www.pscalliance.gov.au

In-service training Staff Development Day 2013, Behavioural Psychologist from Krisalida Family Counselling Services.

Related John Street Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

Policies	<i>Philosophy; Code of Conduct; Child Safe Standards Policy; Code of Professional Conduct; Expectations of Educators; Dealing with Complaints; Enrolment, Orientation & Custody Arrangements; Inclusion of Children with Additional Needs; Managing Poor Work Performance & Gross Misconduct; Personal Safety & Security; Equity, Diversity & the Children’s Program; Multicultural Programming for Social Inclusion; Program Planning; Educational Equipment & Toys; Interactions with Children; Communication with Families; Rest & Sleep; Nutrition, Special Dietary Requirements, Food Safety & Hygiene; Independent Toileting & Nappy Changes; Sexual Development & Play; Superhero Play; Supervision of Children;</i>
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Authorisation

This policy was approved by the John Street Board in July 2018.