

RESPECT FOR CHILDREN POLICY

Within an early childhood community many different relationships are negotiated with and between children, educators and families. The way in which these relationships are established and maintained, and the way in which they remain visible, impacts on how the early childhood community functions as a whole. Relationships directly affect how children form their own identity, whether or not they feel safe and supported, and ultimately, their sense of belonging.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
5.2	Relationships between children	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.
5.2.1	Collaborative learning	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.
5.2.2	Self-Regulation	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S. 162A	Child protection training
S. 166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
S. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
73	Educational program
84	Awareness of child protection law
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
118	Educational leader
126	Centre-based services- general educator qualifications

145	Staff record
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
157	Access for parents
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

RELATED POLICIES

Additional Needs Policy Anti-Bias and Inclusion Policy Celebrations Policy Child Protection Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Children’s Belongings Policy Clothing Policy Dealing with Complaints Policy Educational Program Policy	Family Communication Policy Gender Equity Policy Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy Medical Conditions Policy Nappy Change and Toileting Policy Photograph Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy
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PURPOSE

The 8 Principles that underpin practice within the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) (V2.0). are focussed on assisting children to make progress in relation to Learning Outcomes. One key principle is Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships. Our Service Philosophy guides our interactions and relationships with children. We aim to ensure all educators develop positive relationships with children based on respect and fostering children’s self-esteem, self-reliance, self-expression and development.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

All children have a right to feel accepted and respected. This is a principle set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC). The Convention emphasises the

importance of children developing connections to culture and community as a means of fostering a strong sense of personal identity and belonging. Our Service is committed to ensuring all educators and staff are aware of the UNCROC and to educate children on their rights while encouraging children to participate in decisions which affect them within our Service.

Our Service is dedicated to protecting children from abuse and neglect and promotes a child safe environment, maintaining children's safety and wellbeing by implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations [or Child Safe Standards applicable in your state/territory] and adopts and aligns with the National Model Code and guidelines for taking images and videos of children. [See *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy*].

We promote [cultural safety](#) for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability. We aim for children to feel safe and secure, and we believe in forming strong attachments and connections with educators, children, and families at the Service.

Educators employed at the Service will implement teaching techniques and strategies to establish secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships with children and their families. Educators and staff are respectful of diversity and are culturally responsive, respecting multiple cultural ways of *knowing, doing and being* and celebrate the benefits of diversity. (EYLF, V2.0.)

By respecting diversity, educators value and reflect the practices, values and beliefs of families within the curriculum. Educators value children's unique and diverse capacities and capabilities and respect families' home lives. EYLF. (V2.0 2022). p. 16

THE APPROVED PROVIDER, MANAGEMENT AND NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE:

- ensure obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations are met
- ensure new employees, students and volunteers are provided with a copy of this policy and other child safe policies including *Child Protection, Child Safe Environment and Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments* as part of their induction and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed
- ensure educators provide a child safe environment at all times
- ensure minimum staff requirements are met including educator to child ratios and staff qualifications
- ensure all staff, educators and volunteers have completed child protection training including mandatory reporting requirements (best practice)

- ensure no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or inappropriate discipline

EDUCATORS WILL:

- provide a welcoming, child safe, inclusive and happy environment where children's concerns are always responded to
- ensure they promote and support a child safe environment, including adherence to the *Child Safe Environment* and *Child Protection* policies and mandatory reporting obligations
- embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all aspects of the curriculum
- create an environment that is flexible and responsive to the strengths, culture, languages, interests and capabilities of each child
- promote children's bodily integrity (respecting their physical space and only using touch when necessary and appropriate)
- not use, or have access to, any personal electronic devices, including mobile phones or smart watches used to take images or video of children at the Service, access social media (Facebook, Instagram or other) while working directly with children
- support children's consent by acknowledging and respecting a child's right to refuse, or say no
- respect each child's uniqueness, displaying appreciation and respect for children as individuals
- use a positive and non-threatening tone when interacting with children in all situations
- ensure mealtimes are relaxed and unhurried
- sit with children during mealtimes, engaging in respectful conversations
- never force a child to do something against their requests: this includes rest, eat, participation in group experiences and activities.
- role model respect to children in everyday dealings with both adults and children
- endeavour to be aware of each individual child's values, culture and feelings, and respond appropriately
- respect and value diversity and not tolerate any discriminatory practices
- encourage children to initiate conversations about their experiences at home encouraging them to express their ideas and feelings
- encourage children to request assistance when taking on new challenges, inspiring children's independence and confidence
- regularly reflect on their relationships and interactions with children and how these can be improved to benefit each child
- inspire, encourage and accept each child and encourage them to do the same with their peers by actively:

- fostering each child’s construction of a knowledgeable, confident self-identity
- fostering each child’s comfortable, empathetic interactions with a diverse range of people
- fostering each child’s critical thinking about bias, and to question and enquire
- fostering each child’s ability to stand up for herself/himself and others in the face of bias
- respond respectfully and appropriately to children’s attempts as they participate and converse in sustained conversation about their interests
- implement a predictable routine for children with interest-based activities and experiences
- provide a range of planned and spontaneous experiences for children to challenge and maximise learning opportunities
- use a variety of communication strategies inclusive of verbal and non-verbal cues to support the development of relationships with children
- empower children to speak up and raise any concerns
- support children’s home language when communicating and interacting to build trust and positive relationships
- respect children and families’ diversity within the Service and the development of cultural responsiveness including LGBTIQ+ and gender diverse young people
- support children and build secure attachments through a collaborative partnership with families
- encourage children to develop confidence in their ability to express themselves
- encourage children to work through differences appropriately and with guidance where necessary
- respect each child’s uniqueness and communicate that respect to the child
- ensure children are aware of how to raise concerns or provide feedback (*See Dealing with Complaints Policy*)
- respond or report to children about how their feedback has been acted upon.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Respect for Children Policy* will be updated and reviewed annually or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management and notification of any change to policies will be made to families within 14 days.

SOURCES

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). [Policy and Procedure Guidelines- Interactions with Children](#)

Australian Human Rights Commission. Child Safe Organisations. <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/childrens-rights/projects/child-safe-organisations>

Australian Government Department of Education. [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. V2.0, 2022](#)

Dau, E. (Ed.) (2016). *The multi-bias approach in early childhood* (2nd Ed.). Frenchs Forest, Australia: Pearson

Education.

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023)

NSW Department of Education. (2021). [Implementing the Child Safe Standards: A guide for early childhood education and outside school hours care services](#).

UN General Assembly. (1989). Convention on the Rights of the Child. Simplified version available at <https://www.unicef.org.au/Upload/UNICEF/Media/Our%20work/childfriendlycrc.pdf>

Victoria State Government. [The Child Safe Standards. Early Childhood Services](#).

[Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Law \(WA\) Act 2012 \(for WA Services only\)](#)

[Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Regulations \(WA\) Act 2012 \(for WA Services only\)](#)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	SEPTEMBER 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	SEPTEMBER 2026
VERSION NUMBER	V11.09.25		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual policy review • related National Law added • added reference to new mandatory policy- <i>Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy</i> • minor edits within policy • sources checked for currency and updated as required 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
SEPTEMBER 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual policy maintenance - no major changes to policy • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required • minor formatting edits within text 	SEPTEMBER 2025	