

Interactions with Children

Policy introduction

A positive atmosphere and the wellbeing of children within an education and care setting is promoted through attentive care and quality interactions with children. Emotional development and social relationships are enhanced through thoughtful and sophisticated approaches to conversation, discussion and promotion of children's language and communication. Children who experience relationships that are built on respect, fairness, cooperation and empathy are given the opportunity to develop these qualities themselves. When children have positive experiences of interactions they develop an understanding of themselves as significant and respected, and feel a sense of belonging

Our policies in action

Our interactions with children will:

- Promote a safe, secure and nurturing environment
- Be authentic and responsive
- Be based in fairness, acceptance and empathy with respect for culture, rights, community and the individual

Statutory legislation and considerations

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- The National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care

Strategies for policy implementation

Our nominated supervisor and educational leader will:

- Guide professional development and practice to promote interactions with children that are positive and respectful
- Establish practice guidelines that ensure interactions with children are given priority and that those interactions are authentic, just and respect difference

Our educators and staff will:

- Respond to children's communication in a just and consistent manner
- Respond sensitively to children's attempts to initiate interactions and conversations
- Initiate one to one interactions with children, particularly babies and toddlers during daily routines and conversations with each child
- Support children's secure attachment through consistent and ward nurturing relationships
- Support children's expression of their thoughts and feelings
- Encourage children to express themselves and show an interest and participate in what the child is doing
- Encourage children to make choices and decisions
- Acknowledge children's complex relationships and sensitively intervene in ways that promote consideration and alternative perspectives and social inclusion. Our guidance strategies are reflective of this approach.

Children's rights, family and cultural values

Interactions within the program are greatly enhanced when children's rights and cultural values are given due consideration and respect. Administrative procedures, initial conversations, documentation and ongoing communication with children and families are a reference point for the interactions and a foundation for authentic and respectful communication

Listening

Educators and staff must learn to use listening as a foundation for interactions. Listening is based on observation and in leaving spaces in conversations and communication, suspending judgement and in giving full attention to children as they communicate. Truly attending to children's communication promotes a strong culture of listening.

Children and families

A culture of respectful interaction is promoted when children's attempts to communicate are valued. Turn taking and regulating children's conversations promote active engagement. Respectful communication with families generates confidence in interacting.

Reflection and consideration

Time is dedicated to reflecting upon interactions with children. Reflections should consider how to spend extended periods engaged in interactions with children that comprise communication and listening.

Role Modelling

- Educators model positive interactions when they:
 - Show care, empathy and respect for children, educators and staff and families
 - Learn and use effective communication strategies

Quality interactions increase children's knowledge and understanding of themselves, each other as unique individuals and develop skills and understandings that they need to interact positively with others.

Evaluation

- Interactions between educators and children are genuine, positive and responsive and based on respect, fairness, acceptance, cooperation and empathy. This is evident in conversations, communication, pedagogy and planning for children and families.

Procedures

Links to other policies

- Diversity and Inclusion
- Educational Programs
- Guiding and Supporting Behaviour
- Partnerships and Communication with Families

Quality Area Five: Relationships with Children Interactions with Children

National Quality Framework

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011:155, 156, 168 (2) (j)

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

QA 5-Standards: 5.1 and 5.2

Early Years Learning Framework for Australia

Framework for School Age Care my Time Our Place

Sources

- PSC National Alliance – IPSP Online Library - policies
- Community Child Care NSW NQF in a Box – policies
- Mia Mia Child and Family Centre, Macquarie University
- The Early Years Learning Framework
- School Age Learning Framework - My Time Our Place