

Best Practice – Quality Area 1 and 5

PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines to:

- Ensure all children are treated equitably and with respect
- Promote inclusive practices and ensure the successful participation of all the children
- establish clear guidelines in relation to behaviour guidance for the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisors, educators, families, volunteers, visitors and all staff that reflects the philosophy, beliefs, objectives and values of the service.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

- Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc is committed to:
- considering the wellbeing and safety of each child at the service as paramount
- respecting the rights of the child
- respectful and reciprocal relationships
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information shared between families and educators regarding behaviour guidance and management

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisors, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians and all adults involved in the programs and activities of Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc.

3. PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- developing procedures that clearly guide educators in their approach to behaviour guidance
- ensuring that all educators have access to a copy of this policy on employment
- ensuring the Nominated Supervisors, educators and all staff are aware of the service's expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and interactions when working with children and families (refer to *Code of Conduct Policy*)
- ensuring that the Nominated Supervisors, educators and all staff members at the service who work with children are aware that it is an offence to subject a child to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive in the circumstances (National Law: Section 166)
- ensuring that all children being educated and cared for are protected from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury (National Law: Section 167)
- complying with the *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- complying with the *Interactions with Children Policy*
- complying with the *Code of Conduct Policy*

- complying with the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics
- determining further action in extreme circumstances where behaviour guidance strategies have been unsuccessful and where a child's behaviour may be considered a danger to other children or staff
- advising parents/guardians if their child is to be excluded for any reason

All Early Childhood Staff are responsible for:

- implementing the behaviour guidance policy
- having a sound understanding and complying with the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics
- ensuring that educators, staff, volunteers, students, parents/guardians and visitors have access to a copy of this policy on employment, enrolment or arrival at the service
- ensuring all staff are aware of the service's expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and reactions when working with children and families (refer to *Code of Conduct Policy*)
- complying with the *Interactions with Children Policy*
- complying with the *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- ensuring that the children educated and cared for are protected from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury (National Law: Section 167)
- ensuring that all children are adequately supervised at all times (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy* and *Interactions with Children Policy*)
- respecting individual abilities, needs, cultural practices and beliefs in all interactions, both verbal and non-verbal
- providing guidance to parents/guardians and volunteers through positive role modelling and, when appropriate, clear and respectful directions
- adhering to the behaviour guidance policy at all times
- taking a positive approach to behaviour guidance by praising positive behaviour on a consistent basis
- take evasive actions to maintain safety for both staff and children, e.g. where possible, intervening before a child is injured by another child
- ensuring that children will be supported to understand what is appropriate and acceptable during play through staff guidance and direction
- establishing limits for the children according to the age and developmental stage of the children
- ensuring that when setting limits, the child's attention is gained, instructions are given in a calm and clear manner, staff are consistent in their approach, and praise co-operation
- understanding that inappropriate or undesirable behaviour will not be rewarded, and that staff are encouraged to ignore minor inappropriate behaviour and redirect child to another activity as appropriate
- demonstrating approval for appropriate behaviour displayed by child
- implementing natural consequences following inappropriate behaviour, e.g. continually throwing sand, therefore child will have to play elsewhere
- recognising when a child's behaviour is socially unacceptable, such as hitting, kicking, spitting, punching, biting, etc, and the above positive behaviour guidance has been unsuccessful in modifying behaviour, a child can be removed from the activity for time away with a staff member nearby to monitor safety of all the children
- ensuring that any continuing problems with a child's behaviour are discussed with the family and any agreed upon approaches or plans are documented (refer to *Interactions with*

Children Policy – Attachment 1 – Procedures recommended for the development of a behaviour guidance plan)

- seeking external professional help with parental permission should the disruptive behaviour continue
- ensuring that behaviour problems, consultations and referrals will be treated within the guidelines of the Confidentiality Policy
- understanding and accepting that serious breaches of this policy will be deemed misconduct and may lead to disciplinary or legal action, or a review of their engagement.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- reading the *Behaviour Guidance Policy*
- complying with all policies of the service.

Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Procedures recommended for the development of a behaviour guidance plan

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider/Licensee on 15th May 2016

Reviewed and approved: 8th April 2019

Reviewed and approved: August 2021

REVIEW DATE: AUGUST 2024

ATTACHMENT 1

Procedures recommended for the development of a behaviour guidance plan

These procedures recommend steps that services can follow to develop a behaviour guidance plan for a child exhibiting challenging behaviour. These procedures should be adapted to suit individual services.

A caring relationship with an adult, who can provide the learning and emotional support required, is pivotal to dealing with a child's challenging behaviour (refer to *Definitions*). Challenging behaviour is best managed through a collaborative strategy developed between service staff and parents/guardians.

Excluding a child from the service should only be as a last resort. This decision should be made as part of the collaborative management of a child's behaviour and based on a joint decision by the parents/guardians and family, and the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisors, educators and other professionals involved in the education and care of the child (refer to *Inclusion and Equity Policy*).

Procedures

Step 1 – Observe

- Observe children exhibiting challenging behaviour, including in the broader context of their environment, the culture of the service, and the interactions of the whole group and other educators working with the child.
- Identify, based on observations, whether there is a need to develop an individual behaviour guidance plan for the child.

Step 2 – Discuss

Invite parents/guardians to a meeting to discuss:

- the ongoing behaviour displayed by the child, including highlighting improvements and celebrating successes
- their aspirations, as well as the service's aspirations, for the child
- the child's individual characteristics, including interests, temperament, age and cultural background
- recommended strategies to support the child's development, and how these strategies will be reviewed and evaluated
- resources or changes to the environment/program that may be required for a behaviour guidance plan to be implemented e.g. changes to routines and transitions
- the support already accessed by the family to assist with managing the child's behaviour
- other support available, such as a Preschool Field Officer (refer to *Definitions*), referral for specialist assessment and additional adult support (written consent is required from parents/guardians before any intervention/assessment is undertaken)
- any other matter that will assist with the development of a behaviour guidance plan.

Step 3 – Consult

- If appropriate, and with the permission of parents/guardians, consult with other support agencies or service providers who are already working with the child, to assist with the development of a behaviour guidance plan.

Step 4 – Develop

Develop an individual behaviour guidance plan, based on consultation with the child's parents/guardians and other support agencies, that is:

- appropriate to the needs of the child and accepted/agreed to by parents/guardians and other professionals involved in the education and care of that child
- clear and easy to follow for all educators, staff, parents/guardians and/or volunteers/students working with the child.

Step 5 – Monitor and review

- Continually review, reflect, evaluate and revise the strategies that have been implemented.
- Communicate with the parents/guardians regarding the child's progress and involve them in evaluating and revising the strategies.

Roles and responsibilities

The following are the roles and responsibilities of the various individuals working with the child at the service.

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- ensuring that there is a behaviour guidance plan developed for a child if educators are concerned that the child's behaviour may put the child themselves, other children, educators/staff and/or others at risk
- ensuring that parents/guardians and other professionals (as appropriate) are consulted if an individual behaviour guidance plan has not resolved the challenging behaviour
- consulting with, and seeking advice from, DET if a suitable and mutually agreeable behaviour guidance plan cannot be developed
- ensuring that they are notified if a complaint is received about a child's interactions or behaviour e.g. when the safety of other children is in question
- ensuring that, if a complaint is received, every attempt is made to resolve the issue by consultation and investigation as soon as possible
- ensuring that additional resources are sourced, if required, to implement a behaviour guidance plan
- ensuring that educators/staff at the service are provided with appropriate training to guide the actions and responses of a child/children with challenging behaviour.

All Early Childhood Staff are responsible for:

- observing children's challenging behaviour and identifying the need to develop a behaviour guidance plan to support a child in self-managing their own behaviour
- assisting the Nominated Supervisors to develop a behaviour guidance plan in consultation with parents/guardian and other professionals as appropriate
- consulting educators for their professional evaluation of the situation, and drawing on their expertise in relation to developing strategies and identifying resources required
- meeting with the parents/guardians of the child concerned to develop and implement a behaviour guidance plan
- implementing a behaviour guidance plan and incorporating identified strategies and resources into the service program
- consulting the *Complaints and Grievances Policy* to ensure compliance with service procedures, and regulatory and legislative requirements

- investigating the availability of extra assistance, financial support or training, by contacting the regional Preschool Field Officer (refer to *Definitions*), specialist children's services officers from DET or other agencies working with the child
- undertaking relevant training that will enable them to guide children who exhibit challenging behaviour
- maintaining ongoing communication and consultation with parents/guardians
- setting clear timelines for review and evaluation of the behaviour guidance plan.
- providing regular progress reports to the Approved Provider on the implementation and effectiveness of the agreed strategies contained in an individual behaviour guidance plan
- maintaining the confidentiality of information provided by parents/guardians unless written consent is provided to disclose information to relevant parties
- providing their observations, professional evaluation and expertise in reviewing individual behaviour guidance plans
- providing other information, as relevant, to the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisors to assist with the resolution of any issues.