

Interactions with Children

This policy should not be read in isolation. It complements the Department for Education Behaviour Support Policy.

Rationale

The children who attend Para Vista Preschool come from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds with differing knowledge, language, experiences, behaviours and emotional regulation and maturity. Young children's behaviour is shaped by their physical, emotional, and cultural development as well as any additional needs they may have. They need time, space and learning opportunities to develop their play, sharing and turn taking skills and learn to care for themselves, others and the environment. The early year's development (birth to 5 years) is the optimal time to help children learn to recognise their needs, develop self-regulation skills and learn to make acceptable and safe behaviour choices. Our *Interactions with children: positive behaviour policy* is aligned to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the practices and principles of the EYLF.

As a staff team we believe

- All children have the right to feel protected and have opportunities to learn in a psychologically and physically safe environment
- Families are the first educators of their child with their own perspectives and parenting beliefs
- Effective learning occurs when families and educators work in collaboration to develop common goals for a child's wellbeing, learning and development
- All behaviour has a purpose and is a form of communication and should be acknowledged as such
- Behaviour changes more effectively when it is handled in a positive manner
- Children learn best, experience success and develop positive self-esteem through positive relationships with peers and adults who model appropriate behaviours and set consistent boundaries
- Children's individual needs, learning styles and contexts are crucial to successful learning and development of positive behaviours

To support these beliefs, preschool and school staff work with the underlying fundamentals of the Berry Street Education Model to support children and provide consistent expectations and responses to student needs and behaviours.

Positive Behaviour and Interactions

We acknowledge that children experience and feel big emotions such as anger and frustration and may need help to express their feelings safely and appropriately.

As a staff team we promote positive behaviour and interactions through:

- Acknowledging children as individuals with their own family and cultural context
- Providing a rich and engaging program to allow children opportunities to experience success, resilience, risk taking, conflict resolution, independence, leadership, respect for peers and utilise entry and exit skills during play
- Intentional teaching and model respectful behaviour, positive language and appropriate play skills
- Supporting children to recognise their emotions
- Teaching children how to express their feelings in a safe, appropriate way
- Explicitly teaching regulation skills and mindfulness
- Supporting children to be responsible for managing their behaviour
- Encouraging children to take responsibility for their actions
- Providing consistent and clear expectations when supporting children in their behaviour choices
- Making learning relevant and accessible for all children
- Creating a safe and secure environment for everyone
- Providing opportunities and experiences for children to take risks and experience success
- Involving children in developing group norms and behaviour expectations and consequences
- Providing time for discussion and problem solving
- Involving children in goal setting, developing group norms and the development of behavioural expectations and consequences

Maximising Positive Behaviours

As a staff team we will respond to behaviours that pose challenges or safety risks through:

- Focussing on the behaviour not the child
- Demonstrating empathy and sensitivity for the factors that influence behaviour
- Implementing consistent routines and expectations
- Supporting children to understand the positive and negative consequences of their behaviour
- Providing children with the language to describe their feelings and the strategies to manage their emotions
- Using restorative practices:
 - Can you tell me what happened?
 - Is anyone hurt?
 - How can we fix it? What do we need to do now?
- Support children to manage conflict through negotiation and problem solving
- Provide quiet spaces at preschool for children to regulate then re-enter play
- Accompany children to an alternative area when they are at risk of hurting themselves or others, ensuring an adult is with them
- Communicate with families at the earliest opportunity to work together to assist children's wellbeing and learning
- Seek support when required from Student Support Services

As a Department for Education site, we do not use any forms of physical punishment with children at preschool. Children with special rights may have greater difficulty in self-regulating and understanding group norms. Educators will communicate with families at the earliest opportunity when children are demonstrating unsafe or escalating behaviours to work together and develop strategies to support the child's learning and wellbeing.

Partnerships with Families

We believe the most effective outcomes for children occur when educators and families work together to guide and support children's behaviour. We support family involvement by:

- Communicating with families at the earliest opportunity to work together to assist children's wellbeing and learning
- Working collaboratively with families to develop and agree on consistent strategies for the child
- Planning, implementing, monitoring, reflecting and reviewing individual plans in partnership with families
- Contacting Student Support Services for further follow up, advice and support (with agreement from families).

References

Department for Education Behaviour Support Toolkit

<https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/early-years/engagement-and-wellbeing/behaviour-support-toolkit/behaviour-strategies-in-early-years-setting.pdf>

Berry Street Education Model framework

National Quality Standard 5.1 (2011)

[Quality Area 5 – Relationships with children | ACECQA](#)

National Quality Standard 5.2 (2011)

[Quality Area 5 – Relationships with children | ACECQA](#)

Education and Care Services National Regulations – National Regulation 155

[Education and Care Services National Regulations \(2011 SI 653\) - NSW Legislation](#)

Education and Care Services National Regulations - National Regulation 156

[Education and Care Services National Regulations \(2011 SI 653\) - NSW Legislation](#)

Protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people (2nd Edition)

[Protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people guidelines for staff working or volunteering \(education.sa.gov.au\)](#)

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