

# Interactions with Children Policy and Procedure Preschool



<b>Introduction</b>	<p>A positive atmosphere and the wellbeing of children within an education and care setting are 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 in their interactions, they develop an understanding of themselves as significant and respected and feel a sense of belonging.</p>
<b>Outcome Area</b>	<p>Quality Area 5: Relationships with children – Standards 5.1, 5.2 Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership – Related Standards 7.1.2</p>
<b>Eligibility</b>	<p>This policy applies to all staff employed by Learning Links. The term staff also applies to students, interns, and volunteers.</p>
<b>Policy</b>	<p>Learning Links’ Preschool staff are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be responsive to children’s strengths, interests and abilities;</li> <li>• provide opportunities for children to become self-reliant and develop self-esteem;</li> <li>• uphold children’s dignity, rights, and agency;</li> <li>• provide guidance and support for positive interactions;</li> <li>• promote a safe, secure and nurturing environment;</li> <li>• be authentic and responsive;</li> <li>• base interactions on fairness, acceptance and empathy with respect for cultural and linguistic rights.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategies</b>	<p><b><u>Children’s rights, family and cultural values</u></b></p> <p>Interactions within the service are greatly enhanced when children’s rights and family and cultural values are given due consideration and respect.</p> <p>Ongoing communication with children and families is the basis for authentic and respectful communication. Respectful communication with families generates greater confidence in interactions.</p> <p><b><u>Listening</u></b></p> <p>Educators and staff use active listening as a basis for interactions. Listening requires staff to be in the present and give full attention to children. This can be through observation, verbal and non-verbal communication.</p> <p><b><u>Reflection and consideration</u></b></p> <p>Staff engage in reflective practices throughout their day in relation to interactions with children and families.</p> <p>Reflections occur in staff meetings, one on one meetings and during professional training. During these times staff reflect on how interactions with children can be extended and more meaningful.</p> <p><b><u>Role modelling</u></b></p> <p>Staff respect and are responsive to children’s individual needs. Staff are transparent in their communication with children and families and supportive of goals and expectations.</p> <p>Educators model positive interactions when they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn and use effective communication strategies.</li> <li>• Show care, empathy and respect for children, families and staff</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Principles for behaviour support</u></b></p> <p>Staff respect and support differences in children’s needs. Any barriers or concerns relating to children’s behaviour are responded to in a positive and supportive</p>

	<p>approach. Families are involved throughout the process of creating and implementing a behaviour management plan if required.</p> <p><b>The role of staff</b> In response to behavioural concerns, staff are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will recognise the situation as an opportunity to help the child develop skills, including their language and communication, attention and working memory, emotion and self-regulation, cognitive flexibility and social thinking skills,</li> <li>• Recognise some behaviours as developmentally appropriate and a reflection of communication and social development,</li> <li>• Redirect the child or remove the child from the situation if the child, another child or staff are at risk of harm,</li> <li>• Provide positive reinforcement and use various communication styles as required based on child’s developmental age and communication style,</li> <li>• Explain to children how behaviour results in consequences,</li> <li>• Actively listen to children’s feelings and discuss the skills to use in future,</li> <li>• Help children to return to play.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Roles and Responsibilities</b></p>	<p><b>Approved Provider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all staff have access to relevant professional development.</li> <li>• Ensure the educational program contributes to the development of children who have a strong sense of wellbeing and identity, and are connected, confident, involved and effective learners and communicators (Regulation 73).</li> <li>• Ensure that the Nominated Supervisor 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).</li> <li>• Inform the Regulatory Authority in writing, within 24 hours of receiving a notifiable complaint (Section 174(2), Regulation 176(2)(b)).</li> <li>• Inform the Regulatory Authority in writing within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring at the service (Section 174, Regulation 176).</li> </ul> <p><b>Nominated Supervisor</b> Guide professional development and practice to promote interactions with children that are positive and respectful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish practice guidelines that ensure interactions with children are given priority and those interactions are authentic, just and respect difference.</li> <li>• Ensure 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.</li> <li>• Consider the size and composition of groups to ensure all children are provided with the best opportunities for quality interactions and relationships with each other and with adults at the service.</li> <li>• Develop and implement educational programs that are based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and take into account their individual differences.</li> <li>• Ensure that staff provide education and care to children in a way that encourages children to express themselves and their opinions and allows children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem.</li> <li>• Ensure that they adhere to Section 166 of the Education and Care National Law, whereby a staff member, nominated Supervisor and Approved Provider may receive a penalty for up to \$10,000 (up to \$50,000 in the case of Approved Provider) for subjecting a child to any form of corporal punishment or any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances.</li> </ul> <p><b>Early Childhood Educators and staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act in accordance with the obligations outlined in this policy.</li> <li>• Acknowledge children’s complex relationships and sensitively intervene in ways that promote consideration and alternative perspectives and social inclusion.</li> <li>• Respect children’s agency and encourage them to express themselves and their opinions.</li> <li>• Maintain the dignity and rights of each child at all times.</li> <li>• Have regard to the cultural and family values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour.</li> <li>• Ensure that routines such as toileting, nappy change and rest times enable positive one to one interaction with children</li> <li>• Seek children’s input, respect their ideas and take their suggestions on board.</li> <li>• Form warm relationships with each child.</li> <li>• Support each child’s ability to communicate through a Total Communication approach inclusive of Key Word Sign, gesture, symbols and visuals/pictures.</li> <li>• Implement experiences and learning spaces that support children agency and promote inclusive practices</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Families</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading and complying with this policy.</li> <li>• Engage in open communication with staff about their child.</li> <li>• Inform staff of events or incidents that may impact on their child’s behaviour at the service (e.g. moving house, a new sibling).</li> <li>• Inform staff of any concerns regarding their child’s behaviour or the impact of other children’s behaviour.</li> <li>• Work collaboratively with staff and others to develop or review an individual behaviour guidance plan for their child, where appropriate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Related Legislation, Standards, Documents</b></p>	<p><b><u>Legislation</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and Care National Law Act: Sections 166, 167</li> <li>• Education and Care National Regulations: 73, 74, 155, 156, 157, 168(2)(j)</li> <li>• Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act</li> <li>• Commission for Children and Young People Act</li> <li>• Disability Discrimination Act</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Sources</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) – <a href="http://www.acecqa.gov.au">www.acecqa.gov.au</a></li> <li>• United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – <a href="http://www.unicef.org.au">www.unicef.org.au</a></li> <li>• The Supporting young children’s rights: Statement of intent (2015-2018) – <a href="http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au">www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au</a></li> <li>• Australian Human Rights Commission – <a href="http://www.humanrights.gov.au">www.humanrights.gov.au</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Review</b></p>	<p>This policy and guidelines will be reviewed every two years and will incorporate current information, legislation and feedback as required.</p> <p>The service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service.</p> <p>This policy is owned by: Preschool</p> <p>Policy updated on: 14 June 2023  Policy updated by: Preschool Director and GM Service Quality and Risk and Compliance  Version number: 1.2  This version approved by: GM, Service Quality, Risk and Compliance  This document can be viewed on: SharePoint, Learning Links Preschool Website</p> <p>Policy due for review: 14 June 2025</p>