

Behaviour, Interactions & Guidance Code

National Quality Standard Area 5 | Relationships with children

Relationships with children are responsive, respectful and promote children's sense of security and belonging.

Purpose

This code provides documented guidelines regarding behaviour, interactions, and guidance for children to help ensure that children, families and staff have a safe environment, consistency, and clarity around acceptable behaviour and the guidance measures that will be implemented.

It is intended that this code will:

- > Ensure effective, consistent and fair behaviour support for children and young people across education, early childhood and care services in the department
- > Help children and young people to be safely included and participate in learning in a positive way that respects other students and staff
- > Develop the personal and social capability of children and young people to understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities so that they can fully contribute in their learning environments, and to their wider community

Any behaviour support strategies implemented will be purposeful and directed at achieving the 7 core functions of behaviour support listed below. In supporting children's behaviour, our staff will:

- > Promote, model and support productive and positive behaviour
- > Explicitly teach positive behaviour and expectations about behaviour
- > Intervene by using the least exclusionary methods to prevent, reduce or redirect behaviours of concern
- > Work with children, their families, professionals and other key adults to understand the environmental, social and family context of a child or young person's behaviours of concern, and to use the capacity of these parties to support positive behaviour change
- > Provide visible, fair and equitable behavioural responses that foster confidence and trust
- > Repair and restore relationships that have been harmed by behaviours of concern
- > Establish safety and wellbeing for people involved in behavioural incidents, and others

This code applies to all behaviour strategies and responses used by all staff for children at our site.



Detail

A child's behaviour may span a continuum including:

- > positive, inclusive and respectful behaviours
- > low-level, developmentally appropriate transgressions that test the boundaries of established rules, standards, and norms – these behaviours are usually simple to redirect and minimise through universal behaviour support strategies for all children and young people at a classroom and school level
- > challenging behaviours that raise greater concern due to their severity, frequency or duration and require more persistent guidance and support to minimise – behavioural responses include targeted interventions for the individual children and young people involved in addition to universal strategies
- > complex and unsafe behaviours that are severe, of high frequency or extended duration, or are unsafe for a child or young person and those around them – behaviours at this end of the continuum require intensive and individualised interventions in addition to targeted and universal strategies



As a team we believe:

- > all children have the right to feel protected and develop in a psychological and physically safe environment
- > children have the right to express their feelings and emotions, and be supported to manage these feelings, emotions, and behaviours that underpin the development of positive relationships with peers and adults
- > effective communication and learning occurs when families and educators work together to develop common goals for children's wellbeing, learning, and development
- > consideration of children's individual and contextual needs are crucial to successful learning and the development of positive behaviours
- > family partnerships are essential and their individual perspectives are valued and respected
- > children have a right to be supported by educators who model appropriate behaviours and ensure consistent guidance measures are implemented
- > no person has a right to make any child feel rejected, insecure, embarrassed, or ashamed

Supporting children with complex, challenging and unsafe behaviours

Challenging, complex and unsafe behaviours (behaviours of concern) are an indicator that children need support to be included. Research indicates that most children can behave in safe, respectful and inclusive ways, while a small number engage in challenging behaviours. Complex and unsafe behaviours involve a very small proportion of children in education settings. It is important to note that a child's engagement in behaviours of concern can change over time.

The relationship between a child and a caring adult is the fundamental basis of all behaviour support. Children are most likely to behave in a positive, inclusive and respectful manner when they're supported by a caring adult who models this behaviour, and who teaches, guides and supports the child to do the same.

It is important that educators, children and families cultivate a shared understanding of positive behaviour and how this supports effective teaching and learning. We each have a role to play in making sure our care settings are safe, positive, and inclusive environments. This involves addressing behaviours of concern when they occur, and supporting those involved and affected by these behaviours. Additionally, it is important to recognise that supporting positive behaviour requires a partnership between educators, parents and families, and children.

How we support children

Our educators have a key role in creating and maintaining supportive and safe learning environments and will:

- > model and promote behaviour that values diversity, demonstrates respect for and inclusion of all children, and promotes a positive learning environment
- > explicitly teach children people about safe and inclusive behaviours, and the core values of our service
- > support the participation of all children, taking special measures to support the inclusion of children who are at higher risk of exclusionary responses to their behaviours (including Aboriginal children, children in care, and children with disabilities)
- > participate in professional learning to build skills, knowledge, and confidence in developing positive learning environments and recognising, responding to, and managing behaviour incidents
- > work with parents, caregivers, families, service providers and the community to support children affected by behaviours of concern – this may include recovery from harm, restorative practices, and supporting children to develop positive social relationships
- > provide timely intervention in response to behaviours of concern
- > provide visible, consistent, and planned responses to behaviours of concern to foster trust and confidence
- > support children to be physically and psychologically safe

How families can support children

Parents and families are their child/ren's first and ongoing teachers. Parents and families shape and support their child/ren's positive behaviours when they:

- > model and promote safe, respectful, and inclusive relationships with your child/ren, other children and young people, other parents/caregivers, and educators
- > support your child/ren to develop safe behaviours at home, including monitoring and supervising social interactions (including online)
- > talk to your child/ren about behaviour including unsafe behaviours to help them understand what it is, why it is harmful, and how to respond
- > work collaboratively with educators to resolve concerns about behaviour when incidents occur, including discussing issues as soon as possible
- > consider recommendations and engage in specialist support through internal service providers and external organisations
- > support your child/ren's best interests to continue to attend our service while a behaviour issue is being resolved

How children can contribute

All children are able to contribute to their learning and the learning of others when they:

- > treat others in a way that demonstrates respect and inclusiveness
- > ensure their verbal, physical and online interactions are safe, respectful, and inclusive
- > safely intervene or seek help from an adult to intervene when they see behaviours of concern
- > support their friends to behave in safe, respectful, and inclusive ways if their friends are engaging in behaviours of concern, including by seeking help from trusted adults

Our response to behaviours that pose challenges or safety risks

- > working with children to create our 'kindy agreements' by outlining expectations for behaviour reminding children of the reasons for these with the goal of inclusion and acts of kindness at the heart of our discussions
- > supporting children to problem solve, negotiate, find resolutions, and manage their feelings, emotions and behaviours appropriately
- > using Restorative Justice practices that support children to empathise with others and restore relationships, encouraging a children to ask 'how can I help you feel better?' or 'what do you need to feel better' when an injustice has occurred
- > planning intentional teaching on mindfulness techniques and self regulation skills to build the capacity of each child to understand their emotional needs
- > communicating with and involving families at the earliest opportunity to work together positively to assist the child's wellbeing and learning
- > assessing individual children's learning and development and critically reflecting on and reviewing our planned and implemented program and how the active learning environment supports positive behaviours
- > planning, implementing, monitoring, critically reflecting on, and reviewing individual behaviour plans in partnership with families and internal service providers
- > seeking assistance where required from internal service providers within Student Support Services
- > accompanying children to an alternative area when they are not at risk of hurting themselves or others, ensuring an adult supports them to work through the situation aiming for positive outcomes for all involved

Supporting information

Any links required, etc.

Approvals

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Approved by: Catherine Day | Director, McKellar Stewart Kindergarten

Approved by: Katie Cousins | Governing Council Chair, McKellar Stewart Kindergarten

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