



RESPECT FOR CHILDREN POLICY

Within an early childhood community, many different relationships are developed and nurtured between children, educators and families. The way in which these relationships are established, maintained and demonstrated impacts how the early childhood community functions as a whole.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
5.2	Relationships between children	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.
5.2.1	Collaborative learning	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.
5.2.2	Self-Regulation	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S.2A	Paramount consideration – safety, rights and best interests of children
S.3A	Paramount consideration [NSW]
S.162A	Child protection training
S.166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline

S.167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
84	Awareness of child protection law
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

RELATED POLICIES

Additional Needs Policy Anti-Bias & Inclusion Policy Celebrations Policy Child Protection Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Children's Belongings Policy Clothing Policy Dealing with Complaints Policy Educational Program Policy	Family Communication Policy Gender Equity Policy Interactions with Children, Families and Staff Policy Medical Conditions Policy Nappy Change & Toileting Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy
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PURPOSE

The Eight Principles that underpin practice within the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) (V2.0) are focussed on assisting children to make progress in relation to Learning Outcomes. One key principle is secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships. Our Service Philosophy guides our interactions and relationships with children. We aim to ensure all educators develop positive relationships with children based on respect and foster children's self-esteem, self-reliance, self-expression and development.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

All children have a right to feel accepted, respected and valued. This right is recognised in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The Convention emphasises the importance of children developing connections to culture and community to foster a strong sense of personal identity and belonging. Our Service is committed to ensuring all educators and staff are aware of the UNCRC and

support children to understand their rights, and encourage children to participate in decisions which affect them within our Service.

Our Service is dedicated to protecting children from abuse and neglect and promoting a child safe environment, maintaining children's safety and wellbeing by implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the Victorian Child Safe Standards. Our Service adheres to and aligns with legislative and regulatory requirements related to taking images or videos of children.

We promote [cultural safety](#) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, cultural safety for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and a safe environment for children with a disability. We also recognise and respond to the diverse strengths, identities, experiences and needs of every child. We aim for children to feel safe, secure, respected and included. We believe in forming and maintaining strong attachments and connections between educators, children and families at the Service.

Educators employed at the Service will implement teaching techniques and strategies to establish secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships with children and their families. Educators and staff are respectful of diversity and are culturally responsive, respecting multiple cultural ways of *knowing, doing and being* and celebrate the benefits of diversity (EYLF, V2.0.)

By embracing cultural responsiveness and respecting diversity, educators value and reflect the practices, values and beliefs of families within the curriculum. Educators value children's unique and diverse capacities and capabilities and respect families' home lives.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER, MANAGEMENT AND NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE:

- obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations are met
- new employees, students and volunteers are provided with a copy of this policy and other child safe policies including *Child Protection, Child Safe Environment and Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments* as part of their induction and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed
- educators provide a child safe environment at all times
- minimum staff requirements are met including educator to child ratios and staff qualifications
- all staff, educators and volunteers have completed child protection training including mandatory reporting requirements
- no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or inappropriate discipline

EDUCATORS WILL:

- ensure they promote and support a child safe environment, including adherence to the *Child Safe Environment* and *Child Protection* policies and mandatory reporting obligations
- prioritise children's safety, wellbeing and best interests in all decisions, interactions and practices
- remain alert to signs that a child may require support, protection or assistance, and respond appropriately in line with Service policies

Respect Children for Who They Are

- respect each child's uniqueness and communicate that respect to the child, displaying appreciation and respect for children as individuals
- create an environment that is flexible and responsive to the strengths, culture, languages, interests and capabilities of each child
- respect and value diversity and not tolerate any discriminatory practices
- respect children's and families' diversity within the Service and the development of cultural responsiveness, including LGBTQIA+ and gender diverse young people
- embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all aspects of the curriculum
- support children's home language when communicating and interacting to build trust and positive relationships
- endeavour to be aware of each individual child's values, culture and feelings, and respond appropriately

Respect Children's Rights and Choices

- encourage children to initiate conversations about their experiences, including at home, and support them to express their ideas and feelings
- encourage children to develop confidence in their ability to express themselves
- support children to contribute to the planning of experiences, routines and environments, recognising children as active participants in their own learning
- involve children in discussions and decisions about their images and support them to understand privacy, consent and respectful use of digital technologies
- promote children's bodily integrity (respecting their physical space and only using touch when necessary and appropriate)
- support children's consent by acknowledging and respecting a child's right to refuse or say no
- never force a child to do something against their requests. This includes rest, eating, participation in group experiences and activities

- empower children to speak up and raise any concerns
- ensure children are aware of how to raise concerns or provide feedback (see *Dealing with Complaints Policy*)
- respond or report to children about how their feedback has been acted upon.

Respect Children Through Relationships

- provide a welcoming, child safe, inclusive and happy environment where children's concerns are always responded to
- support children and build secure attachments through a collaborative partnership with families
- respect and consider families' views, values and expectations regarding children's care, learning and interactions
- use a positive and non-threatening tone when interacting with children in all situations
- use a variety of communication strategies, inclusive of verbal and non-verbal cues, and multimodal approaches to support meaningful interactions and build positive relationships with children
- respond respectfully and appropriately to children's attempts as they participate in sustained conversation about their interests
- recognise children's individual emotional needs and provide reassurance, comfort and support when required
- role model respect to children in everyday dealings with both adults and children
- regularly reflect on their relationships and interactions with children and how these can be improved to benefit each child

Respect Children's Learning and Participation

- encourage children to ask for assistance when taking on new challenges, inspiring children's independence and confidence
- encourage children to work through differences appropriately and with guidance where necessary
- support children to develop self-regulation skills and use positive guidance strategies to support children's behaviour and emotional wellbeing
- inspire, encourage and accept each child and support them to do the same with their peers by actively:
 - fostering each child's construction of a knowledgeable, confident self-identity
 - fostering each child's comfortable, empathetic interactions with a diverse range of people
 - fostering each child's critical thinking about bias, and to question and enquire
 - fostering each child's ability to stand up for themselves and others in the face of bias

- provide a range of planned and spontaneous experiences for children to challenge and maximise learning opportunities
- implement a predictable routine for children with interest-based activities and experiences
- ensure transitions and routines, such as mealtimes, are relaxed and unhurried
- sit with children during mealtimes, engaging in respectful conversations

Respect Children's Privacy and Dignity

- respect children's personal space, choices and preferences, and communicate with children in a respectful and sensitive manner
- respect children's privacy and dignity during personal care routines, including toileting, nappy changes, dressing and other care experiences, while supporting children to participate in their own care routines and develop independence
- not use or have access to any personal electronic devices, including mobile phones or smart watches used to take images or video of children at the Service, or access social media (Facebook, Instagram or other) while working directly with children

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Respect for Children Policy* will be updated and reviewed annually or earlier if there are changes to legislation or ACECQA guidance, or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management. All families will be notified 14 days before any policy change that may have a significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the Service or the family's ability to utilise the Service.

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. [Approved learning frameworks](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). [Interactions with children: Policy and procedure guidelines](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). [Safe use of devices in education and care services](#)

Australian Human Rights Commission. [Information and resources for child safe organisations](#)

Dau, E. (Ed.) (2016). *The multi-bias approach in early childhood* (2nd ed.). Frenchs Forest, Australia: Pearson Education.

[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#)

[Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011](#)

NSW Department of Education. (2021). [Implementing the Child Safe Standards: A guide for early childhood education and outside school hours care services.](#)

UN General Assembly. (1989). [Convention on the Rights of the Child.](#)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	SEPTEMBER 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	SEPTEMBER 2027
VERSION NUMBER	V12.09.26		
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy review • reorganised content under clear respect-focused headings • enhanced content to strengthen respectful, responsive and inclusive practices • added expectations around adaptations and equitable participation • checked and updated sources as required		
PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS			
SEPTEMBER 2025	• annual policy review • related National Law added • added reference to new mandatory policy- <i>Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy</i> • minor edits within policy • sources checked for currency and updated as required		
SEPTEMBER 2024	• annual policy maintenance - no major changes to policy • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required • minor formatting edits within text		