



Interactions with Children, Families & Staff Policy

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) identifies secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships with children as one of the principles that underpin practice. Within an early childhood community many different relationships are developed with and between children, educators and families. The way in which these relationships are established and maintained, and the way in which they remain visible impacts on how the early childhood community functions as a whole. Relationships directly affect how children form their own identity, whether or not they feel safe and supported, and ultimately, their sense of belonging.

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.
Quality area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.

6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	Parents views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.

Education And Care Services National Law and Regulations	
S.165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
S. 166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
S.169	Offence relating to staffing arrangements
73	Educational program
84	Awareness of child protection law
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
117A	Placing a person in day-to-day charge
118	Educational leader
123	Educator to child ratios-centre-based services
126	Centre-based services- general educator qualifications
145	Staff record
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
157	Access for parents
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed

Related policies:

Behaviour Guidance Policy	Management Committee Policy
Child Protection Policy	Open Door Policy
Code of Conduct Policy	Orientation of Families Policy
Dealing with Complaints (Families) Policy	Confidentiality Policy
Dealing with Complaints (Staff) Policy	Respect for Children Policy
Attendance, Delivery and Collection of Children Policy	Staffing Arrangement Policy
Educational Program Policy	Student and Volunteer Policy
Enrolment Policy	Supervision Policy
	Governance Policy

Purpose:

We aim to build positive relationships with children, families and educators through collaboration and interactions, which is reflective in our philosophy and the EYLF. Educators will encourage positive relationships between children and their peers as well as with educators and families at the Service, ensuring children feel safe and supported.

Scope:

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

Implementation:

Ensuring policies and procedures are in place for interactions with children and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed.

In order to build and maintain positive and respectful relationships with children, families and educators we will adhere to our philosophy and the ACA Code of Ethics. We aim to provide a child safe culture where our values and practices that guide the attitudes and behaviour of all staff are guided by the National Principles for Child Safe Organisation and the implementation of the Child Safe Standards.

Interactions with children:

Children need positive relationships and interactions with educators that are trusting and responsive to their individual needs. Through these experiences and interactions children will develop a positive understanding of themselves and feel a sense of belonging. We promote a respectful, child safe culture where children's concerns are always responded to, and children feel empowered to participate in decisions and provide feedback to educators and staff.

Management and educators will:

- Create a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere in which children experience equitable, friendly and genuine interactions with all educators.
- Ensure all educators and staff have undertaken child protection legislation training including mandatory reporting requirements and obligations.
- Meet educator to child ratios and qualification requirements.
- Role-model appropriate language and behaviour.
- Support children to be aware of their own feelings as well as the feelings of others.
- Encourage children to treat all other children with respect.
- Provide children with the opportunity to explore their dispositions for learning by expressing themselves and their opinions.
- Ensure children are aware of how to raise concerns or provide feedback.
- Assist the children to build resilience and self-assurance through positive interactions.
- Guide children's behaviour positively.
- Respect the rights, dignity and agency of children.
- Provide appropriate supervision so children feel safe in their interactions with other children.
- Speak to children in a positive manner at all times, promoting respect, tolerance and empathy, including the use of non-verbal cues and communication.
- Engage in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning of children.

- Respect each child's uniqueness, be attuned to, and respond sensitively and appropriately to children's efforts to communicate and use the child's own language, communication styles, and culture to enhance interactions.
- Support and encourage children to use appropriate language in their interactions with adults and peers. Educators will extend upon children's interests and ideas through questions and discussions, supported and made visible in observations, reflections, and programming.
- Understand their reporting requirements and respond to any incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse or harm.
- Communicate with children by getting down to their level, using eye contact, and showing respect to the child whilst engaging in and promoting effective communication.
- Show empathy to children.
- Ensure that the values, beliefs, and cultural practices of the child and family are considered and respected.
- Ensure that no child is ever isolated for any reason other than illness, accident or pre-arranged appointment with parental consent. During this time, they will be under adult supervision.
- Regularly reflect on their relationships and interactions with children and how these can be improved to benefit each child.
- Facilitate children's individual development extending upon their strengths, interests and abilities.

Interactions with families:

Effective communication is the key to developing and maintaining positive interactions and relationships with others and helps to build trusting and respectful partnerships with families. Educators use positive and open communication with families and siblings in order to create a responsive and inclusive environment for children, staff and families. Interactions with families help to inform educators' knowledge of each child's distinctive interests, skills cultures and abilities. This helps to build a positive experience and a safe learning environment that encourages children to expand their knowledge and understandings.

Management and educators will ensure:

- All families are treated equitably without bias or judgement, recognising that each family is unique.

- Families are asked to identify a preferred method of regular communication with the Service (this may include utilising a translator service if necessary).
- Families and children are greeted upon arrival in a respectful manner.
- They learn the names of family members and use these names when they greet them.
- Two-way communication is established through leading by example, asking questions and demonstrating a willingness to offer information about ourselves.
- Privacy and confidentiality are respected at all times.
- Information about another child or family information is never discussed with a parent or visitor.
- They remain sensitive to cultural differences amongst families and encourage families to share cultural aspects with the children and educators at the service.
- The advice and opinion from other professional experts are requested, with parental permission, to assist educators in developing and implementing strategies to support the inclusion of children with additional needs.
- Additional resources and professional support for families is sought through a range of organisations.
- Verbal communication is always open, respectful and honest.
- Families are provided with up-to-date service information and notices through daily communications (early works), newsletters, communal notice boards, emails and sign-in sheets.
- That regular reflections on parent input into the program and necessary changes are made that will benefit the service and children.
- Connections between families is promoted and enhanced through inviting families to participate in routines and events.

Interactions with staff and educators:

Birra-Li recognises that the way educators interact with each other has an effect on the interactions they have with children and families. Educators working within our centre are required to demonstrate mutual respect towards each other and value the contributions made by each educator. This enables us to maintain positive relationships and model the type of communication we want children to develop.

To maintain professionalism at all times, educators will:

- Engage in professional communication in order to create an effective work environment and to build a positive relationship with educators, children and families.
- Provide a child safe culture through their attitudes, behaviours and actions.
- Collaborate together as a team sharing room roles and responsibilities through the use of a roster where necessary.
- Be respectful when listening to each other's point of view and ideas.
- Maintain effective communication to ensure that teamwork occurs.
- Use staff meetings and individual room diaries to communicate their professional reflections and ideas for continuous improvement as a team.
- Attend in-service training to update and refresh and add to individual skills and knowledge.
- Keep up to date with current legislation to child protection including mandatory reporting requirements (*Child Protection, Reportable Conduct Scheme*).
- Refer to the *Dealing with Complaints Policy (Staff)* if they feel a situation with another educator is not being handled with professionalism, respect, and fairness.
- Recognise each other's strengths and value the contribution each person makes to different roles.
- Welcome diverse views and perspectives.
- Work together collaboratively as a team and engage in open and honest communication.
- Respect each other's positions and opinions.
- Resolve differences promptly and positively and use the experience to develop more effective methods of working together.

To enhance communication and teamwork, management will:

- Provide new educators with relevant information about the Service and program through a 'Staff Handbook'.
- Treat educators with respect.
- Be sensitive to the feelings and needs of educators.
- Provide constructive feedback to educators.
- Appreciate and utilise educator skills and interests.
- Demonstrate commitment to ongoing collaboration and engagement to support staff wellness.

- Provide opportunities for all educators to have input into the program.
- Provide support, assistance and mentoring to educators.
- Hold regular team meetings to encourage and support professional growth and reflective practice.
- Use appropriate conflict resolution techniques to solve problems.
- Ensure policies and procedures are up to date regarding communication, expected behaviour and grievances.
- Provide opportunities for professional development.

To enhance communication and teamwork, educators will:

- Maintain privacy and confidentiality.
- Be respectful, caring and inclusive of all colleagues.
- Be sensitive to the feelings and needs of other team members.
- Support colleagues during difficult situations.
- Provide constructive feedback to each other.
- Trust each other.
- Value the role and contribution of colleagues.
- Appreciate and utilise colleague's skills, strengths and interests.
- Provide support and assistance to each other.
- Share responsibilities.
- Have a flexible attitude towards team roles and responsibilities.
- Show genuine interest in the other person by using active and reflective listening.
- Communicate ideas and opinions clearly and professionally.
- Use a communication book or daily diary to pass on messages and record relevant information.
- Use appropriate conflict resolution techniques to solve problems.
- Engage in opportunities for professional development.

Continuous improvement:

Our *Interaction with Children, Families and Staff Policy* will be reviewed every 18 months in consultation with children, families, staff, educators and management.

Sources:

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). [Policy and Procedure Guidelines- Interactions with Children](#)

Australian Human Rights Commission. Child Safe Organisations. <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/childrens-rights/projects/child-safe-organisations>

Child Australia *Cultural Connections Booklet*. (2017).

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Australian Government Department of Education (2022). [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia](#). V2.0.

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023)
[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023)

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (Cth).

[Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)

Review:

Policy reviewed	Modifications	Next review date
October 2017 April 2019 February 2021 August 2022 February 2023	Combined Staff & Parent/Guardian Interaction Policy with Interactions with Children Policy. Link to Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations added in sources.	April 2019 October 2020 August 2022 February 2023 August 2024
August 2024	Restructure and formatting of policy.	February 2026