

RELATIONSHIP WITH CHILDREN POLICY

Quality Areas: NQS 5 - Relationship with Children

Policy Owner: Quality and Curriculum

A light teal speech bubble with a white outline, containing the text 'Why this is important' in a dark teal, cursive font.

Why this is important

1.0 Introduction and Purpose:

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each individual, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, wealth, birth status or ability. Developing responsive, warm, trusting, and respectful relationships with children promotes their wellbeing, self-esteem, and sense of security. Positive interactions between adults and children can empower children to feel valued, competent, and capable.

Guardian is a Child Safe Organisation, so the safety of our children is our highest priority. We understand that to protect children we need to work in partnership with their families and build great relationships with the children in our care. Our interactions are built on the foundation of children's rights and our philosophy that they are strong, capable learners.

We have **zero tolerance** for any forms of abuse and neglect.

Relationships are important because:

- Our Guiding Principles of the National Quality Framework believes children are successful, capable, and competent learners and as team members our interactions are founded on these principles.
- The Approved Learning Framework highlights team member relationships with children as being crucial to supporting their learning. The framework guides interactions with children and families and provides the basis for team members' pedagogical decision-making, including the experiences that are planned for children and the teaching and learning that occurs.
- The Guardian Curriculum states 'all children have an active role in constructing their understanding of what it means to contribute to a fair and just world view. They also have a role in shaping the understanding of others, such as their peers and families. Actively engaging in children's learning and decision-making during play, daily routines and ongoing activities can stimulate children's thinking, enrich their learning and encourage them to explore and manage their feelings and behaviour.

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 during interactions, they develop an understanding of themselves as significant and respected and feel a sense of belonging.

2.0 Who does this policy apply to:

Team Members, Families, Children, Board members, Visitors, Students, Contractors, and Volunteers

3.0 What is our Policy:

3.1 Children's Rights, Family and Cultural Values



Interactions within the centre are greatly enhanced when children's rights and family and cultural values are given due consideration and respect. Administrative procedures, initial conversations, documentation and ongoing communication with children and families are a reference point for interactions and a foundation for authentic and respectful communication.

3.2 Listening

All team members must use listening and observing as the foundation for interactions. Listening is based on giving full attention to children as they communicate.

A culture of respectful interaction is promoted when children's attempts to communicate are valued. Turn taking and regulating children's conversations promotes active engagement. Respectful communication supports trust and strong, ongoing relationships with families.

3.3 Critical Reflection

Time is dedicated to critically reflecting upon interactions within children. Reflections should consider how to spend extended periods engaged in interactions with children that comprise communication and listening.

3.4 Role-Modelling

Team members model positive interactions when they:

- Show care, empathy and respect for children, families, team members and community members.
- Learn and use effective communication strategies.

3.5 Guiding Children's Behaviour

- All team members respect individual children regarding age, ability and experience regarding guiding children's behaviour and are proactive in communicating with families about their individual expectations. There may be times when team members will need to negotiate behaviour support strategies with parents to suit the needs of individual children.
- Team members will not implement any behaviour strategies that have been identified as not acceptable on our Zero Tolerance of Any Abuse or Neglect poster and the Child Harm Classification Table, even if these have been requested by a family or more experienced team member. Teams will work in partnership with families to create and implement Child Support Plans and include support strategies as part of the educational program and daily practice.
- Expectations will be reasonable, and consideration will be given in relation to the age, development, and individual characteristics of the children.
- Expectations and strategies to guide behaviour will be consistent across all team members and reflect the strategies in our Guiding Children's Behaviour Toolkit.
- The focus is on guiding the behaviour of the child – not personally criticising the child. Team members present expectations through positive role modelling
- Children are encouraged and supported to make appropriate choices.

4.0 Responsibilities:

4.1 Approved Provider will:

1. Ensure all team members have access to a range of professional standards to guide their interactions with children. This includes the Guiding Children's Behaviour Toolkit and Child Support Plan
2. 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.
3. Ensure that all team members are aware of the zero tolerance of child harm and neglect and that systems and processes are developed to ensure that children are protected.

4.2 Centre Manager / Nominated Supervisor will:

1. Role model alongside team members practice to promote interactions with children that are positive and respectful.
2. Ensure their philosophy depicts the value and importance of positive, strong, and respectful relationships which support a child's sense of belonging.
3. Establish practice expectations that ensure interactions with children are given priority and those interactions are authentic, just, and respect difference.
4. Ensure their team has child support plans in place for all children who need them, and all team members know about and have access to the Guiding Children's Behaviour Toolkit and Child Support Plan package on the Guardian Way
5. Ensure where a child is identified as having a specific diagnosis or specific behaviours that increases risks in the environment they will communicate with the family about the child's specific need and work in partnership with the family to create and implement a Child Support plan to identify and embed specific and individualised strategies.
6. Ensure that enrolment forms are reviewed to identify those children with specific learning needs, diagnosis and medical conditions and ensure that a Child Support Plan is developed and implemented to support the child at the centre.
7. Ensure the team roster supports continuity for children and families.
8. Share the team roster and any changes to the roster with families.
9. Ensure all team members are aware of the centre's expectations regarding positive, respectful, and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and reactions when working with children and families.
10. 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 centre.
11. Develop and implement educational programs, in accordance with an approved learning framework, that are based on each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests and experiences, and consider the individual differences of each child.
12. Ensure that team members provide an educational program that encourages children to express themselves and their opinions and supports children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem.
13. Ensure the educational program and daily rhythms are organised to maximise opportunities for meaningful conversations between children and team members and ensure that all children have equal and equitable opportunity to engage in one to one and small group conversations with team members.

4.3 Team Members will:

1. Act in accordance with the obligations outlined in this policy.
2. Know, understand and meet the requirements of the Code of Conduct.
3. Be knowledgeable in the communication strategies and nonverbal cues of children,
4. Work in partnership with all team members across the centre to ensure children and families can have their needs met.
5. Participate in children's play using children's cues to guide their level and type of involvement while always maintaining a positive approach when responding and helping children. Use techniques such as Auslan (Talking with Our Hands – Auslan Signs for Babies) and other resources and tools identified to support children with additional needs.
6. Use their interactions with children to support the maintenance of home languages where possible.
7. Know children well and understand how they learn and communicate their ideas.
8. Use information from observations, conversations and interactions with children and families to inform the weekly indoor and outdoor planning tools.
9. Support children's agency by encouraging them to express themselves and their opinions. For example, supporting children to access their own food and drink, asking children questions, encouraging children to select resources and experiences to play with and ensure the environment is set up for children to move independently when they are ready.
10. Respect children's agency and encourage them to express themselves and their opinions.
11. Always maintain the dignity and the rights of each child.

12. Ensure that the program reflects and embeds the cultural and family values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child.
13. Support each child to develop the skills and understandings they need to interact positively with others, learn about their responsibilities to others, to value collaboration and teamwork and build healthy relationships.
14. Work in partnership with families. Where a parent communicates that their child has a specific learning need, the Lead Educator/Teacher will gather information and work with the family and Centre Leadership Team to develop a Child Support Plan to support the child's inclusion.
15. Respond to children's cues and offer appropriate opportunities for each child to express themselves, their views and opinions in ways that are meaningful for them •
16. Offer positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour by referring to our Guiding Children's Behaviour Toolkit resources and developing and implementing a Child's Support Plan.
17. Ensure that routines such as toileting, nappy change and rest times are used for positive one to one interaction with children and a time that they can get to know more about the child.
18. Genuinely seek children's input, respect their ideas, and empower children as decision-makers, including babies (through observations and partnerships with their families).
19. Support babies to build trusting attachments with at least one or two team members to develop a secure base for their exploration and learning.
20. Critically reflect on their interactions with children and determine how to continually improve these interactions.
21. Listen to children and use positive language, gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice when redirecting or discussing children's behaviour with them.
22. Remain calm, gentle, patient and reassuring even when children strongly express distress, frustration, or anger in accordance with the 5 Rs to Supporting Children's Behaviour.
23. Respond positively to children's exploratory behaviour.
24. In response to behaviour that is unsafe or not meeting our expectations, team members will:
25. Redirect the child or remove the child from the situation, if necessary, through communication and guidance (with respect and dignity).
26. Discuss with children the consequences of continuing with the behaviour.
27. Remind children of boundaries and expectations.
28. Maintain positive mutually respectful relationships to influence behaviour in constructive ways.
29. Actively listen to children's feelings.
30. Support children to find acceptable ways of resolving problems.
31. Model positive attitudes, behaviour and appropriate use of language to help children to learn socially acceptable ways of behaving and interacting with others.
32. Support children to return to play.
33. Not use any form of corporal (physical) punishment or any discipline which is unreasonable in the circumstances to change children's behaviour as outlined in the Zero Tolerance of
34. Support children and collaborate with families and other professionals where additional support is identified.
35. Be responsive to children's strengths, knowledge, interests, idea, culture, and abilities.
36. Provide opportunities for children to become self-reliant and develop self-esteem.
37. Promote a safe, secure, and nurturing environment.

4.4 Families and Communities will:

1. Read and comply with this policy.
2. Engage in open communication with team members about their child.
3. Not request team members implement behaviour strategies for their child that are contained within our Zero Tolerance of Abuse and Neglect poster or Child Harm Classification Table.
4. Share their own beliefs about the histories, cultures, languages, traditions, child rearing practices and lifestyle choices.
5. Inform Centre Manager or Responsible Person of events or incidents that may impact on their child's behaviour at the centre (e.g. moving to a new house, a new sibling)
6. Inform team of any concerns regarding their child's behaviour or the impact of other children's behaviour

7. Work collaboratively with team members and other professionals to develop or review a Child Support Plan or an Inclusion Support Plan for their child, where appropriate network and be involved with cross cultural matters wherever possible.
8. Understand the team members are mandatory reporters and obligated under the child protection legislation to notify of any circumstances that place children in significant harm in accordance with the Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy.

5.0 Tools and Resources

<p>The most important documents I need are:</p> <p>Child Safe Standards Child Support Plan Guiding Children's Behaviour Toolkit Guide to the National Quality Standard Early Years Learning Framework 2.0</p>	<p>Other supporting documents will include:</p> <p>Image of the Child Guidelines The Guardian Curriculum</p>
--	--

6.0 Links to the National Law and Regulations

- Section 166 Offence to use inappropriate discipline.
- Regulation 155 Interactions with children.
- Regulation 156 Relationships in groups.
- Regulation 168 Education and care services must have policies and procedures.

7.0 References

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Framework 2018

Policy owner	Chief Quality and Curriculum Officer		Content author	National Compliance Manager	
Date published	01/04/2024	Document version	V1.0	Revision due date	01/04/2026
Copyright © 2024 Guardian Early Learning Group Pty Ltd ABN 094 805 820					
Ensure you are using the latest version of this procedure.					
Warning – uncontrolled when printed. This document is current at the time of printing and may be subject to change without notice.					