

Ballina River Street Children's Centre Interactions with Children Policy

POLICY CREATED DATE:POLICY REVIEW DATE:

Policy Statement

Ballina River Street Children's Centre aims to develop responsive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships with each enrolled child through taking time to genuinely listen and talk with children and their families.

Educators/ staff relate to the children, their families, and each other, in a friendly, caring and sensitive manner, valuing each individual and the unique contribution they make. The Centre aims to create an environment in which children feel they are valued members of their community, and in which their sense of belonging and wellbeing is supported. Educators will achieve this through providing consistent emotional support that will nurture the development of children's self-esteem and assist them to acquire the skills and understandings they need to interact positively with others.

A positive atmosphere and wellbeing of children within our Centre is 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 of interactions they develop an understanding of them-selves as significant and respected, and feel a sense of belonging.

Strategies for Policy Implementation

Educators and staff will:

- As each child arrives at the service they will be greeted by an educator/staff member.
- Use children's names and get down to the child's eye level when communicating with them, and ensure that their interactions are both meaningful and personal.
- Will be supportive and encourage and engage in one to one and small group communications with children in a friendly, positive and respectful manner.
- Respond to children's communication in a just and consistent manner;
- Respond sensitively to children's attempts to initiate interactions and conversations;
- Create a relaxed and happy atmosphere in which children experience equitable, friendly and genuine interactions with all educators, the nominated supervisor and other staff members at the service.
- Support children's efforts, assisting and encouraging as appropriate;

QUALITY AREA 4: Relationships with Children
Link to National Quality Standard: 5.1, 5.2

- Support children's secure attachment through consistent and warm nurturing relationships;
- Support children's expression of their thoughts and feelings;
- Encourage children to express themselves and show interest and participate in what the child is doing;
- Encourage children to make choices and decisions;
- Acknowledge children's complex relationships and sensitively intervene in ways that promote consideration and alternative perspectives and social inclusion. Guidance strategies should be reflective of this approach (refer to Guiding Social Competence Policy);
- Respect each child's uniqueness, are attuned to and respond sensitively and appropriately to children's efforts to communicate and will use the child's own language, communication style and culture to enhance their interactions.
- Educators interact with children during meal times in a relaxed, unhurried manner, in which the enjoyment of foods and social aspects of meal times is promoted.
- Involve children in decision making by genuinely seeking children's input, respect their ideas and take their suggestions on board.

Children's Rights, Family and Cultural Values

Interactions within the setting 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.

Encouraging families to share information about their child through:

- Initiating regular on-going communication with families in a manner that promotes the development of strong relationships that are based on mutual respect, trust and understanding;
- Encouraging families to share their thoughts, ideas, questions and concerns, and promoting supportive partnerships between families, educators and the Centre;
- Treating all families equitably without bias or judgment;
- Recognizing that each family is unique and valuing this uniqueness.

Educators will use information gained from families to enhance their interactions with children and continue to build children's sense of wellbeing and belonging.

Listening

Educators and staff must use listening as a foundation for interactions. Listening is based on observation and in leaving spaces in conversations and communication, suspending judgment and in giving full attention to children as they communicate. Truly attending to give children's communication promotes a strong culture of listening.

Children and Families

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 with families generates greater confidence in interacting.

Reflection and Consideration

Time is dedicated to reflecting upon interactions with children.

Reflections should consider how to spend extended periods engaged in interactions with children that comprise communication and listening.

Role Modelling

Educators model positive interactions when they;

- Show care, empathy and respect for children, educators, staff and families;
- Learn and use effective communication strategies;

Remember – quality interactions increase children’s knowledge and understanding of themselves, each other as unique individuals and develop the skills and understandings they need to interact positively with others.

Evaluation

Interactions between educators and children are genuine, positive and responsive and based on respect, fairness, acceptance, co-operation and empathy. This is evident in conversations, communication, pedagogy, and planning for children and families.

Statutory Legislation & Considerations

- Children(Education and care services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 155, 168
Links to Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children; 5.2.1; 5.2.3
Quality Area 7.Leadership and Service Management; 7.3.5

Sources

- Children’s (education and Care services National Law Application) act 2010
- Education and care Services National Regulations
- Community Childcare Co-Operative ltd (NSW)
- PSCA National alliance www.pscalliance.org.au
- DEEWR (2009). Belonging Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. www.deewr.gov.au