

## Guiding Children's Behaviour

### Purpose of this requirement

When guiding children's behaviour centre staff must adhere to the following laws and regulations.

Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010)	Section 166	An approved provider, a nominated supervisor, a staff member or volunteer must ensure that no child being educated and cared for by the service is subjected to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any form of corporal punishment; or</li> <li>Any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances.</li> </ul>
	Section 167	An approved provider and a nominated supervisor of an education and care service must ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children being educated and cared for by the service from harm and from any hazard likely to cause harm.
Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011)	Regulation 155	An approved provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the education and care service provides education and care to children in a way that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>encourages children to express themselves and their opinions; and</li> <li>allows children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem; and</li> <li>maintains the dignity and rights of each child at all times; and</li> <li>gives each child positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour; and</li> <li>has regard to the family and cultural values, age, and physical and intellectual development; and abilities of each child being educated and cared for by the service.</li> </ul>
	Regulation 156	The approved provider of an education and care service must take reasonable steps to ensure that the service provides children being educated and cared for by the service with opportunities to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other and with staff members of, and volunteers at, the service. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For the purposes of sub regulation (1), the approved provider must have regard to the size and the composition of the groups in which children are being educated and cared for by the service.</li> </ul>
	Regulation 168	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>policies and procedures are required in relation to interactions with children, including the matters set out in regulations 155 and 156.</li> </ul>

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To meet this requirement the following expectations will be adhered to in Goodstart centres.

**Centre Director and Leadership Team: leads a positive approach to guiding children’s behaviour. They;**

- Create the expectation and provide the support to Educators to work collaboratively with families to meet the needs of children.
- Act as a support and guide to families and educators when accessing and referring children to internal and external specialist support services.

**Family’s Role: At the centre, families are well informed about how centre staff will guide children’s behaviour. They;**

- Are acknowledged as being the most important people in a child’s life.
- Are supported to work collaboratively with their child’s centre team to develop positive (pro-social) behaviour models for successful social interactions.
- Are informed about Goodstart’s Guiding Children’s Behaviour requirement.

**Centre Team: To consider and apply each of these strategies to promote a positive approach to guiding children behaviour.**

**Enabling environments**

**1. Social environment**

A high-quality enabling environment is a child's right. With respect to children’s behaviour and personal, social and emotional development, Educators' model openness, willingness to listen, warmth, respect and care to teach them to act thoughtfully towards others and to accept adult guidance about their behaviour. Adults' relationships with children are based on the assumption that children are receptive to learn; they are empathic, cooperative, rational and motivated to grow and learn.

The centre team will;

- Create warm, trusting and secure relationships with children and their families, as these are fundamental to children's emerging self-regulation, learning, development and well-being.
- Acknowledge children’s considerate and engaged behaviours.
- Plan for children’s social and emotional development and well-being. This plan should detail and affirm the role and responsibilities of all educators including children’s key educator.
- Discuss and develop with children clear, age-appropriate and reasonable expectations about how to behave in ways that consider others, support engagement and promote safety in group settings. Centre Teams will revisit and affirm these regularly with children.
- When a problem occurs, use problem-solving steps to resolve it.
- Understand that each child is unique and demonstrate differing needs which require an individualised approach to support regulation.
- Engage frequently in professional conversation with families sharing strengths, goals and strategies.
- Celebrate children’s positive, engaged and regulated behaviours sharing strategies that can be adopted at home or the centre that support consistency of approaches.
- Respect the expertise, culture, values, beliefs and diverse parenting practices of families,, whilst ensuring children are safeguarded.

**2. Physical environment**

A child’s environment has a significant impact on their learning and behaviour. An enabling environment ensures that children feel safe, connected and interested in their learning through play. The spaces are vibrant

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and flexible and are responsive to the interests and abilities of each child, reflective of the service philosophy and are well maintained.

**The centre team will;**

- Ensure that the physical environment is set up to allow line of sight between learning areas to ensure supervision of all children and allow for responsive and proactive intervention when necessary.
- Ensure that the physical environment is set up with appropriate, safe resources that are sufficient in number, in good repair and suitable for the children’s age and developmental stage.
- Plan learning opportunities that meet group and individual needs for skill mastery, knowledge and understanding.
- Design safe indoor and outdoor learning environments with a balance to engage all children in experiences that meet their needs.

**Educational program and routines**

There is a high-quality educational program in place that meets children's learning needs. This program will be child-centred, learning intention led with developmental and cultural appropriateness to ensure children are engaged in productive and playful learning experiences.

The centre team will;

- Ensure that the curriculum is play-based, child centred and intentionally focused on the individual needs, interests, culture and experiences of all children. To do this Educators will follow the Early Years Learning Framework or an approved State-based learning framework to ensure that the educational program provides the very best learning environments and outcomes for children.
- Plan to support children’s self-awareness, social awareness, relationships skills, regulation skills and planning, organising and decision-making skills.
- Ensure that the program supports the participation of all children empowering children to remain engaged in their learning, display dispositions that support learning such as curiosity, focus, persistence, employ flexibility in thinking and problem solving, cope better with change and challenge, display considerate behaviours, and empower children to reap the social, emotional, and cognitive benefits of their play
- Include children in program planning so that learning experiences reflect their individual learning goals.
- Ensure routines and transitions are clear, known to children and follow children's natural rhythms, rather than being dictated by the clock or by rigid schedules. Provide children anticipatory talk and scaffolds to support children through transition moments

**Behaviour guidance strategies and practices**

All centre staff will adopt a positive, strengths-based approach to guiding children's behaviour to promote social and emotional learning, development and well-being. They will recognise that learning to regulate feelings and impulses is a developmental skill like any other and that, therefore, children need to learn – and, inevitably, will make mistakes along the way. Guiding children to behave thoughtfully is not an interruption to teaching, but is its prime purpose.

Compassionate strategies and practices will be age and developmentally appropriate and could include:

- Acknowledge, appreciate and celebrate children's effort, achievements, and considerate actions, without judging (praising) these (Deci & Ryan, 1987).
- Collaborate with children to set and affirm clear expectation for positive, engaged and considerate behaviours.
- Listen to children, on the understanding that behaviours that challenge us are nevertheless the children's way of communicating that their needs are not being met. Attempt to identify their need and to meet it.

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- When children are calm and regulated and in a non-judgmental manner, give children information about the positive – or detrimental – effects of their behaviour on others.
- Teach children strategies for meeting their needs in ways that do not interfere with others' capacity to meet theirs.
- When children's dysregulation takes the form of harming others, first console the target child and then soothe instigators so that they can regain their emotional balance.
- When children have behaved inconsiderately, ask them what they need and how you can help them.
- Once children are calm, ask them how you could help them when they are becoming upset in future.
- Allow children time to negotiate solutions to their own peer conflicts. Depending on their age and developmental capacity, adults will give them the opportunity to do this independently or with the guidance from an educator.
- Respond flexibly, taking account of staff members' relationship with the child, the number of children in the room and the demands on adults at the time.

Attunement to the child, alongside partnership with families and ongoing information gathering and reflection will support educators to identify how to meet children's emotional, social and developmental needs through their educational program. During this process Educators can seek support from their Centre Director, Educational Leader or other educators within their centre. All centre staff should maintain currency of skills and knowledge about guiding children's behaviour.

#### Centre team: If the child's behaviour intensifies or becomes more frequent and concerning:

- Educators will observe children to gather information about what is happening with the child so that an informed decision can be made on whether an Individual Support Plan is required. To assist with information gathering see: NQS5 Individual Support Plan Procedure.
- Educators can also consult Goodstart's Inclusion Handbook for further assistance, <https://intranet.goodstart.org.au/ArticleDocuments/2888/Goodstart%20Inclusion%20Handbook%20.pdf.aspx>

## Related documents

Antcliff, G., Burgess, C., Daniel, B., & Sale, A. (2014). Resilience Practice Framework: Practice Resource. 2nd edn. Paddington. The Benevolent Society.

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2013). Guide to the National Quality Standards. Sydney. Retrieved from: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/the-national-quality-standard>

Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (2009). Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia Retrieved from: <https://docs.education.gov.au/node/2632>

Deci, E.L. & Ryan, R.M. (1987). The support of autonomy and the control of behaviour. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 53 (6), 1024-1037.

ECA. (2013). Learning positive behaviours through educator-child relationships. A Research in Practice Series. Reference #1484.

Education and Care Services National Law Act. (2010). Section 166 & 167 found at <http://acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/legislation/>

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011). Regulation 155, 156, 168 found at <http://acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/national-regulations/>

Porter, L. (2016). Young children's behaviour: Guidance approaches for early childhood educators. (4th ed.) Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

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United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: found at [www.unicef.com](http://www.unicef.com)

ECA Code of Ethics: found at

<http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/>

## **Related policies**

[BM1 Code of Conduct POLICY](#); [NQS5 Relationships with Children POLICY](#)

## **Related documents**

[NQS5 Individual Support APPENDIX](#); [NQS5 Individual Support GUIDELINE](#); [NQS5 Individual Support Plan PROCEDURE](#)

## **Responsibilities**

This requirement is to be implemented by: All in-centre staff.

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