

Relationships with children

Policy statement

At Goodstart Early Learning (Goodstart) our fundamental belief is that children's learning, development, and wellbeing are firmly anchored in reciprocal, responsive, and respectful relationships that are attuned to the context of children's lives within their families and community.

"Children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children's learning."
EYLF (DEEWR 2009 p.9)

Goodstart Early Learning recognises that young children thrive in early childhood settings when they have positive and secure relationships with educators and teachers who know how to nurture and stimulate their early learning, development, and wellbeing.

Goodstart educators are attuned to individual children and create warm, trusting, and secure relationships with them and between groups of children. This is fundamental to children's emerging self-regulation, learning, development, and well-being. Goodstart, educators and teachers ensure every child feels safe, is safely heard, and is included to access and participate meaningfully in early childhood education and care.

Goodstart provides inclusive early learning environments that support the participation of all children, reflect diversity, and upholds equity for all children. Goodstart strives to ensure no child is excluded from early childhood education and care. Our policies and procedures have been developed to prevent child abuse and harm resulting from discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation.

Only suitable persons will be employed in positions that have direct contact with children, and all employees who work directly with children will have a current working with children check before commencing work.

What does this policy apply to?

- ▶ Ensuring respectful and equitable relationships are developed and maintained with each child.
- ▶ Ensuring each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults.
- ▶ Ensuring that all Goodstarters uphold and respect children's wellbeing and rights.
- ▶ Ensuring children feel empowered to learn about their rights and how to exercise these.
- ▶ Ensuring each child is provided a culturally safe environment to thrive, make connections with others to promote learning.

This policy relates to the National Quality Standard's Quality Area 5: Relationships with children

STANDARD/ ELEMENTS	CONCEPT	DESCRIPTOR
QA5		Relationships with children
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.

DOCUMENT NUMBER & TITLE		NQS5 Relationships with Children POLICY			
CONTENT OWNER	Sue Robb, GM Pedagogy and Practice	DOCUMENT AUTHOR	Catherine Tisdell, National Lead Pedagogy and Practice		
DATE PUBLISHED	01/07/2022	DOCUMENT VERSION	V11.0	REVISION DUE DATE	30/06/2023
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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.

Related National Law and National Regulations:

STANDARD/ ELEMENTS	CONCEPT	NATIONAL LAW OR REGULATIONS
QA5		
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Section 166 Offence to use inappropriate discipline Regulation 73 Educational program Regulation 155 Interactions with children Regulation 156 Relationships in groups Regulation 168(2)(j) Policies and procedures are required in relation to interactions with children, including the matters set out in regulations 155 and 156
5.2	Relationships between children	Section 166 Offence to use inappropriate discipline Regulation 155 Interactions with children Regulation 156 Relationship in groups Regulation 73 Educational program Regulation 74 Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program Regulation 168(2)(j) Policies and procedures are required in relation to interactions with children, including the matters set out in regulations 155 and 156

Educators develop and maintain respectful and equitable relationships with each child:

Positive relationships between children and educators occur when educators are attuned to individual children and take the time to get to know them. At Goodstart we deliver this through our key educator relationship approaches. Educators use the knowledge they have of children during interactions or planned experiences to connect with each child, which in turn promotes the child's sense of belonging. Strong educator relationships with children are fundamental to children's learning, development, and well-being. These relationships will continue to grow through responsive one-to-one interactions and conversations.

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Educator's interactions with children are meaningful and respect individual children's rights, dignity and wellbeing. Through planned and spontaneous social interactions educators can promote children's learning, development and well-being. It's these social interactions that support the development of children's self-regulation, as well as speech and language so that they can accommodate new knowledge and ideas.

Through these interactions, educators acknowledge that each child has their own individual abilities and needs. Educators are respectful of this knowledge and ensure every child feels included and secure. Educators make sure their environments are set up in a way that reflects every child, their family and community. (NQS: 2018)

Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults:

As children play together in a positive, relationship-oriented environment educators will provide support and guidance to ensure children build upon and extend knowledge through collaborative relationships.

Educators take a positive approach to guiding children's behaviour, in a way that promotes each child's rights, dignity and agency at all times. Educators use guidance strategies and practices that support the needs of individual children, acknowledge possible reasons for behaviour and engage children to contribute to their own pro-social solutions. These strategies and practices will support children to acquire new skills and understandings to move towards positive (pro-social) behaviour.

(NQS: 2018)

Related documents

Goodstart documents that support this policy:

[NQS5 Guiding Children's Behaviour REQUIREMENT](#) ; [NQS5 Individual Support Plan PROCEDURE](#) ; [BM1 Code of Conduct POLICY](#) ; [BM1 Child-safe Behaviour Standards REQUIREMENT](#)

[NQS6 Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities POLICY](#) ; [NQS1 Educational Program and Practice POLICY](#) ; [NQS2 Look, Do, Tell Framework \(for Safeguarding Children\) REQUIREMENT](#) ; [BM8 Recruitment and Selection POLICY](#)

Responsibilities

This policy is to be implemented by: All Goodstart Early Learning employees.

Safeguarding Children Responsibilities

All Goodstarters have a responsibility to champion and model a culture that promotes and protects the safety and wellbeing of children in everything we do. Together we "look, do, tell" and prevent, identify and respond to child abuse, neglect and harm

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Definitions

Agency: “being able to make choices and decisions, to influence events and to have an impact on one’s world.” (EYLF, 2009, p.45)

Key Educator Relationships: ensure a triangle of trust, where a named educator is attuned and responsive to a small group of children and their family’s need. The relationship is: purposeful and intentional, sufficiently consistent, in tune and responsive to children’s individuality and mutually owned.

References

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

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>

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 73, 74, 155, 156, 162 (2) (j) found at <http://acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/national-regulations/>

Goodstart Early Learning (2016) The Goodstart Practice Guide: An essential resource for early learning professionals. Victoria: Goodstart Early Learning.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: found at www.unicef.com

ECA Code of Ethics: found at

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

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