



**SHEIDOW PARK SCHOOL
OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE**

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Relationships with Children Policy

NQS

QA5	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.
	5.2.1	Collaborative learning - Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.
	5.2.2	Self-regulation - Each child is supported to manage their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

National Regulations

Regs	155	Interactions with children
	156	Relationships in groups

My Time, Our Place

LO1	Children feel safe, secure, and supported.
	Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency.
	Children develop knowledgeable and confident self identities.
	Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.
LO2	Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation.
	Children respond to diversity with respect.
	Children become aware of fairness.
	Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment.

Aim

Our Service aims to ensure that all educators form positive relationships with children that make them feel safe and supported in the Service. Educators will encourage positive relationships between children and their peers as well as with educators and volunteers at the Service.

Related Policies

Additional Needs Policy
Continuity of Education and Care Policy
Enrolment Policy
Orientation for Children Policy
Physical Activity Promotion Policy

Implementation

Interactions with Children

Our Service's statement of philosophy will guide our interactions with children as follows:

The Sheidow Park OSHC/Vacation Care provides quality care for school aged children and operates within all the regulatory and legislative requirements, including the National Quality framework and My Time Our Place framework.

We ensure that all experiences offered to children in our care meet these outcomes and guidelines.

Our commitment is to meet the needs of individual children in our care, their parents, caregivers and the community, through a continuous improvement plan.

The program is set in a safe, supportive and friendly environment, encouraging the learning and development of individual children, whilst encouraging positive attitudes, value of play, respect for others and responsibility.

We encourage appropriate behaviour of children by helping them connect to their world through collaborative learning opportunities, discussion and positive reinforcement.

To ensure we are tailoring activities to suit our children, Educators actively engage children in rich learning experiences, whilst building and maintaining positive, respectful and meaningful relationships.

Through our diverse program, we aim to provide exceptional care, whilst meeting and respecting the cultural and individual strengths and capabilities of all children in our care. This is achieved by reflecting and evaluating on their individual learning and development.

Our goal is to offer a safe, welcoming, fun and creative program that provides children with the opportunity to develop friendships, become effective communicators, experience life skills, and develop their self-esteem.

In order to maintain positive interactions with children our service and educators will maintain the following:

- Our service will provide a relaxed and happy atmosphere for the children.
- Our service will ensure mealtimes are relaxed and unhurried and educators take the time to sit and talk with children.
- Our educators will encourage children to initiate conversations about their experiences inside and outside the service as well as what is happening around them, express their ideas and feelings, share humour with the nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and educators and seek assistance as they take on new challenges and try to do things for themselves.
- Our educators
- will engage in two way communication with children. That is, encourage children to have their own opinions, ideas and comments. Educators should support children with this and let them know that their ideas are valued.
- Our routines, as well as planned and spontaneous experiences will be organised to maximise opportunity for meaningful conversations between children and educators and the service will ensure that all children have equal opportunity to engage in one to one and small group conversations with educators.
- Our statement of philosophy and policy on interactions with children will be visible.
- Our educators will 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 to children and offering assistance.
- Our educators will take into account our children's needs for independence and will enable them to spend a large amount of time with their peers, provide leadership opportunities and allow them to be involved in decision making processes.
- Our educators will model reasoning, prediction and reflection processes and language.
- Our educators will collaborate with children about routines and experiences.
- Our educators will use techniques such as sign language and other resources and tools to support children with additional needs.
- Our educators will use their interactions with children to support the maintenance of home languages and learning English as an additional language.
- Our educators and coordinators will use information from their observations of interactions with children to extend the children's thinking and learning.
- Our nominated supervisor and educators will learn more about the histories, cultures, languages, traditions, child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of families using the service.
- Our educators will allow time to talk to parents about their children. This allows educators to gain insight into their home life.
- Our service will implement strategies to assist all children to develop a sense of belonging and confidence through positive interactions between the children and educators.
- Our service's roster will be planned in a way that promotes continuity for children.
- Our service will gather information from families in the enrolment form in order to be able to provide support for children during the settling in process.

- When children have special needs our service will consult with other professionals or support agencies that work with children to gather information that will guide our interactions with these children. This information will be recorded in the child’s file.
- Our service’s approach to equity and inclusion will be documented in our statement of philosophy.
- Our service will ensure that educators document the knowledge gained about children, through their interactions, in the child’s file for reference for other educators and will continually review the experiences that are planned for children in light of this information.

Our service incorporates the schools values, alongside our own:

RESPECT	RESPONSIBILITY	PERSISTENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept that everyone has the right to their own opinion • Be kind, caring and considerate • Use manners • Value diversity • Look after property • Acknowledge strengths in others • Respect the right of all students to learn • Respect the right of all teachers to teach • Treat others as they would like to be treated • Have reasons for the things you say and do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be honest and trustworthy • Be organised • Share • Be punctual • Take responsibility for your own learning • Engage in all learning opportunities • Take ownership of behaviour including your actions and decisions • Pursue their personal best no matter who they work with • Wear dress code • Acknowledge that it takes great strength to be sensible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach learning opportunities with a growth mindset • Be brave and participate to progress • Listen and respond to feedback • Self-assess and problem solve in tricky situations • Not give up when things are hard • Keep things in perspective • Practise gratitude and kindness • Involve yourself in the school community • Use your strengths everyday • Realise that mistakes are part of the learning process

Group Relationships

In order to encourage respectful and positive relationships between children and their peers and educators our service will adhere to the following practices:

- Our service will encourage children to participate in enjoyable interactions with their peers, respond positively to ideas, negotiate roles and relationships, contribute to shared play, and develop friendships.
- Our educators will engage children in ongoing group projects that involve research, planning, problem solving and shared decision making.
- Our educators will model strategies for children to initiate interactions and participate in group play and social activities and assist them when they have trouble understanding or communicating with each other.
- Our service will ensure that the children have many opportunities to learn about their responsibilities to other, connectedness and interdependence as learners, and the value of collaboration and teamwork.
- Our educators will promote a sense of community in the service.
- Our service will coordinate the staffing and grouping arrangements to support positive relationships between children.

- Our educators will support and promote children’s interpersonal relationships and support the inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds and capabilities in group play, projects and experiences.
- Our educators will learn about children’s shared interests and will use this information to plan further experiences that provide collaborative learning opportunities.
- Our educators will pre-empt potential conflicts or challenging behaviours by monitoring children’s play and supporting interactions where there is conflict.
- Our service will ensure that the program and routines of the service will include regular opportunities for children to engage in social play and group experiences.
- Our educators will consider whether the size and composition of groups enables children to develop positive relationships with their peers and educators. They will minimise the time children spend in very large groups by offering activities where children are able to participate in smaller groups.

Behaviour Guidance

Positive Behaviour

Educators will model positive behaviour and guide children’s behaviour in ways that promote their self-esteem by:

- encouraging children to be cooperative and helpful, to express their feelings and responses to others’ behaviour confidently and constructively, and to respectfully guide the behaviour of other children when it is disrespectful or unfair
- supporting children to explore different identities and points of view, to negotiate their rights and the rights of others in a positive, respectful way and to communicate effectively when resolving disagreements
- discussing emotions and issues of inclusion and exclusion, fairness and bias
- encouraging children to listen to other children’s ideas, consider alternate behaviour and co-operate to solve problems
- using positive language, gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice when redirecting or discussing children’s behaviour with them, and remaining calm, gentle, patient and reassuring even when children strongly express distress, frustration or anger
- using information from families about their children’s social skills and relationship preferences to engage children in experiences that support their social development
- intervening sensitively when children have difficulty resolving a disagreement, and helping them remove themselves from situations where they are experiencing frustration, anger or fear
- interacting with children and teaching them how to play in different ways: movement play, object play (understanding and solving problems), imaginative play (emotional resilience, creativity and empathy), social play (friendship and belonging, rough and tumble play, celebrations and ritual play), storytelling (my world, myself and where I fit in), creative play (new behaviours and thoughts) role play
- Promoting children’s agency by allowing them to be as independent as possible, to try things they see for themselves and experience the consequences of their choices while considering the risk and benefit to others. This may include teaching children how to use things

- ensuring curriculum is mainly based on children's ideas and interests rather than being led by educators
- Setting up rooms and environments to foster positive behaviour eg room is interesting but not cluttered, defined and obstacle free walkways, resources are attractively displayed.
- Supporting children with strategies to deal with their raw emotions eg anger, fear, panic and being patient when children revert to old behaviour if they are stressed, tired, hungry etc. This includes listening empathetically to children when they express their emotions and reassuring them that it is normal to experience positive and negative emotions
- supporting children who appear to be insecurely attached by sensitively building relationships with the child and family
- providing explicit instruction for routines and learning
- Understanding that children's comprehension of vocabulary concepts or instructions may require support such as visuals, key word signing, two step instructions or allowing time for a child to process the instruction or information. This may be as simple as waiting three seconds after speaking to the child so they can process what has been said

Inappropriate Behaviour

Educators understand that inappropriate behaviour is a child's way of saying they need support. Educators will reflect on the reasons for the child's behaviour and develop strategies or a plan with the Nominated Supervisor which can be implemented by all educators to ensure consistent responses to the child's behaviour at the service.

Children's behaviour may be inappropriate for a variety of reasons. Some of these include:

- insecure attachment to educators or families
- emotional immaturity
- insufficient language skills to express their needs and wishes
- used to gaining attention from negative behaviour
- condition or number of toys, resources and equipment
- A diagnosed or undiagnosed spectrum disorder.

Depending on the reason for the behaviour, some strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviour may include:

- ignoring the negative behaviour and praising the positive behaviour (while ensuring the safety of all children), and ensuring all body language is consistent with actions and words
- building strong social bonds through a focus on attachment theory and Circle of Security approaches
- using key words or visuals to help children with communication difficulties
- using minimal steps in directions then allowing time for a child to understand eg 3-5 seconds
- using terminology that children understand such as 'my turn' 'your turn' rather than assuming children understand eg children may not understand that saying "sorry" does not mean they can repeat the behaviour
- talking with children about the consequences of their actions, our rules and why we have them
- intentionally teaching behaviours like walking inside, never assuming children know how to do things or behave, and reaffirming those and other positive behaviours

- using empathy and putting themselves in the child's position to try and understand where the behaviour came from (rather than yelling at the end result of the behaviour)
- documenting incidences of inappropriate behaviour and when they are occurring and developing a behaviour plan with parents, schools and if relevant other professionals
- appointing one person (eg Nominated Supervisor) as a contact point for parents

Parents will:

- work in partnership with educators where concerns are raised about the behaviour of their child
- consent in writing where educators believe liaising with relevant professionals to support the learning and development of their child and apply for funding to do this where necessary
- Agree to work with educators to minimise risk where the child's behaviour is a danger to children and educators. This may include seeking professional support from, for example a paediatrician, speech pathologist or family support services, or reducing the hours of care until the child's behaviour is supported and risk to others is minimised.

Children's responsibilities

If the OSHC expectations are not followed consequences will apply:-

- 1st Warning - reminder of the OSHC expectations
- 2nd Warning - discussion with an Educator
- 3rd Warning - think time / time to sit quietly and think about inappropriate Behaviour, then a further discussion with the Educator.

Any unresolved issue will result in discussion with Director /Assistant Director

- This is a time to discuss the inappropriate behaviour and work out strategies so the inappropriate behaviour is not repeated
- Parent/guardian involved
- This is not necessarily a time to deal out more consequences but to encourage discussion at home that might stimulate communication regarding:
- why the behaviour is occurring
- how we can meet the child's needs to alleviate the inappropriate behaviour
- Your support of us in conveying why the behaviour is unacceptable and inappropriate.

The Director (Nominated Supervisor) /Assistant Director can suspend or terminate a child's enrolment, if he or she believes the child's behaviour poses an unacceptable risk to the welfare and safety of other children and educators, this will take place after discussion with the School Principal/Deputy Principal.

- 1st Suspension (1 booked days)
- 2nd Suspension (3 booked days)
- 3rd Suspension (5 booked days)
- Termination from service

Inclusion

Australia is a pluralistic society regardless of specific regional variations in cultural profiles. In order to reduce bias and ensure that no child is excluded our service will abide by the following practices:

- Our service will promote and value cultural diversity and equity for all children, families and educators from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds;
- Our service will recognise that children and adults from all cultures have similar needs and that each person is unique and valuable;
- Our service will develop a positive self-concept for each child and adult in the group by exploring the cultural backgrounds of each family and child;
- Our service will endeavour to provide a foundation that instills in each child a sense of self identity, dignity and tolerance for all people;
- Our service will explore family compositions, customs and lifestyles of children and families in many cultures;
- Our service will assist, in partnership with parents, extended family and the community in exploring their own “roots” as they involve children in the culturally diverse environment of the Service;
- Our service will provide support for fostered or adopted children to develop a sense of heritage and belonging;
- Our service will avoid common stereotypes and recognise individual differences within a cultural or ethnic group;
- Our service will assist wherever possible families who are new to Australia with a transition to a new and different culture.
- Our educators will become aware of their own beliefs, attitudes, cultural backgrounds, their relationship with the larger society and their attitudes to people;
- Our educators will acknowledge that they too have been influenced by their own background prejudices and their points of view;
- Our educators will accept that all children can learn and that differences in lifestyles and languages does not mean ignorance;
- Our educators will broaden their own cultural and ethnic group awareness and help children to understand themselves in relation to their family, community and other cultures;
- Our educators will be actively involved in the development of appropriate resources, support and implement an anti bias, cross cultural program throughout the Service environment which is reflective of all families/children and the diversity present in Australian society and network with community agencies involved with cross cultural issues wherever possible;
- Our educators will be actively involved with children, showing respect, sharing ideas and experiences and asking questions.
- Our educators will reflect on the service’s philosophy and ensure that practices and attitude concur with the philosophy.
- Our educators will work with families to encourage positive attitudes to diversity and an anti-bias ethos.
- Our educators will ensure that casual workers or visitors to the service are aware of these practices and respect these values.
- Children will be encouraged to become increasingly independent wherever possible and be actively involved with their peers.

- Our service will help children to develop ease with and have a respect for physical, racial, religious and cultural differences.
- Our service will encourage children to develop autonomy, independence, competency, confidence and pride.
- Our service will provide all children with accurate and appropriate material that provides information about their own and other's disabilities and cultures.
- Our service will not isolate a child for any reason other than illness, accident or a prearranged appointment with parental consent.

Supporting Children through Difficult Situations

When a child, family, educator or the service as a whole experiences a stressful or traumatic situation such as a bushfire, car accident, sudden illness or death, crime or violent situation it is important to provide appropriate support so they can recover from the ordeal. A child's reaction to a stressful or traumatic situation will depend on factors such as their age, stage of development and impact of the event on people around them. A child may react in ways that you don't expect and sometimes will act normally at first but be wary of a delayed reaction. Some reactions include:

- Physical symptoms such as stomach aches and headaches.
- Being anxious or clingy.
- Suffering from separation anxiety.
- Having sleeping problems or nightmares.
- Re-living the experience through drawing or play.
- Losing interest in activities.
- Loss of self-confidence.
- Regressing to "babyish" activities.

Our educators will talk with a child about the event to bring any issues out into the open. The ways our educators will approach this are:

- Reassuring the child that they are safe, but only if they really are.
- Talking to the child about what happened in a way that they will understand and without going into frightening or graphic detail. Our educators will not leave out important information though, as children will fill in the gaps.
- Ensuring the child hasn't jumped to conclusions. Some children will think they are to blame in a tragic event; our educators will make sure they know this isn't so.
- Talking about the event with appropriate people (for example, all children if the event has affected the whole service or the children that have been affected) and letting everyone have their say including children.
- Talking to the children about how people react to stressful or traumatic situations and that the feelings they are feelings are normal.

Coping Mechanisms

Some strategies that our educators will use to help children cope in these situations are:

- Giving children a sense of control of their environment and life. Letting the child make decisions, for example, about the daily indoor or outdoor activities will make the child feel more in control.
- Helping the children physically relax with quiet activities.
- Limiting stimulants like chocolate, lollies etc.

It is important to remember how you respond to the stressful or traumatic event will affect the child's response. Children look to their families and educators to find ways to deal with a situation they probably don't understand. Children need their family members (and other adults who are close to them) to help them understand the situation and their emotions and also offer comfort and support. If adults are distressed about a situation it is important for them to seek help for themselves.

At the service, we wish to help in whatever way we can if your family has undergone a tragedy. Talk to educators (or confidentially to the Nominated Supervisor) and we will endeavour to work with families and children to support all parties through the situation.

Should it be required, educators will liaise with appropriate authorities, such as the Department of Education and Children's Services, and follow any recommendations made by these authorities.

Bullying

In order to overcome bullying in our service, our educators will be aware of the following information and maintain the following practices:

Our educators will be aware of the following characteristics in children who bully -

- Children of all backgrounds can bully
- Preconceived notions of children who bully should be avoided
- The child who bullies may also be the victim of bullying
- The child who bullies will often think that they are innocent, and that the child being bullied is somehow deserving of this negative experience.

Our educators will be aware of the following characteristics of victims of bullying -

- Children of all backgrounds can fall victim to bullying
- Preconceived notions of children who fall victim to bullying should be avoided
- Boys are victims of bullying more than girls.
- Victims may have low self-esteem, lack of confidence, lack social skills or be viewed as unpopular.

- It is important to remember that victims are often sensitive and easily hurt, and feel incapable of preventing such negative experiences.

Our educators will implement the following strategies to overcome bullying -

- Our educators will practice all-encompassing and socially inclusive care.
- Programs will recognise, value and reflect the social and cultural diversity of our community.
- Our educators will role model and actively encourage appropriate behaviours.
- Our educators will form a close relationship with family members in order to work cooperatively to overcome instances of bullying.
- Our educators will empower children by giving them responsibilities that will make them feel valued.
- Our educators will help children deal with their anger. This includes offering alternative dispute resolution techniques that are socially acceptable.
- Our educators will seek the support of children's services professionals when it is necessary.
- Our educators will respond promptly to children's aggressive or bullying behaviour.

Sources

**National Quality Standard
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
My Time, Our Place Framework for School Aged Care**

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually.

Review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

Reviewed: Nov 2020

Date for next review: Nov 2022