

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

Policy Number	P-Q5-B002	Version Number	1.00
Drafted by	Director of Education	Approved Date: Review Date:	May 2025 July 2027
Responsibility	The Board of Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children’s Centre Association (Inc.)		
Related Service Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child Safe Environment Policy ▪ Code of Conduct Policy ▪ Complaints and Grievances Policy ▪ Interactions With Children Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inclusion and Equity Policy ▪ Occupational Health and Safety Policy ▪ Privacy and Confidentiality Policy ▪ Supervision of Children Policy 	
Legislation and Standards	<p>Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i> (Vic) ▪ <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i> (Vic) ▪ <i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005</i> (Vic) ▪ <i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015</i> (Vic) ▪ <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> (Cth) ▪ <i>Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010</i> ▪ <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</i> ▪ <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i> (Vic) ▪ <i>National Quality Standard, Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children</i> ▪ <i>Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 166, 167</i> 		
Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Behaviour guidance practice note series: https://www.vic.gov.au/supporting-childrens-behaviour-early-childhood-services ▪ Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/EYLF-2022-V2.0.pdf ▪ Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics: https://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/ ▪ Guide to the National Quality Framework, ACECQA: www.acecqa.gov.au ▪ Inclusion Support Program (ISP), Department of Education and Training: https://www.dese.gov.au/child-care-package/inclusion-support-program ▪ The Kindergarten Funding Guide (DET): https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/funding/j641-Kindergarten-Funding-Guide-v6.pdf ▪ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: https://www.unicef.org/ ▪ Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework: http://www.education.vic.gov.au ▪ Child Safe Standards (Vic) https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/ 		

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children’s Centre Board of Governance on February 2023.

PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines to ensure:

- Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children’s Centre implements appropriate behaviour guidance strategies that all staff members follow
- each child at Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children’s Centre is guided and encouraged toward acceptable behaviour

PRINCIPLES

At Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre, our guidance of behaviour will:

- protect the rights and dignity of children
- provide opportunities for children' to develop their sense of agency through real choices and decision making
- begin with the understanding that all behaviour is communicating a need
- facilitate positive peer-peer interactions and support the development and understanding of respectful relationships, both child-to-child and child-to-adult
- grow from the understanding and knowledge that each child's developmental age and stage, background, culture, community and family may affect a child's behaviour
- promote the use of positive and respectful language when communicating with children
- model desirable behaviours in interactions with children and other adults
- empower children to self-regulate
- be free from judgements of children and families and respect the diversity that exists within our community and different parenting styles and cultural practices
- consider the environment as a variable in supporting children to manage their own behaviour
- examine the language used when referring to behaviour and the way it can impact children, educators and families
- be guided by, promote, and share current research-based behaviour guidance practices
- maintain confidentiality of children and families as per our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
- not include any form of corporal punishment, isolation or discipline
- use fair, firm and consistent limits and behavioural consequences
- protect the rights and safety of educators working with children

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Persons with Management or Control, Nominated Supervisor, Persons in day-to-day Charge, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre.

DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

Adequate supervision: entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- number, age and abilities of children
- number and positioning of educators
- current activity of each child
- areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)
- developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
- need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies).

Behaviour guidance: consists of the most positive and effective ways that adults help children learn to guide or 'self-manage' their behaviour in order to gain an understanding of acceptable behaviour. This progressive definition contrasts with the past approaches of 'behaviour management' or 'discipline' that imply an adult is 'managing'

children's behaviour or using punishment, or inappropriate discipline to control them. (*Behaviour guidance practice notes (DET) – see source*)

Behaviour guidance plan: A plan that documents strategies to assist an educator in guiding a child with diagnosed behavioural difficulties or challenging behaviours to self-manage his/her behaviour. The plan is developed in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor, educators, parents/guardians and families, and other professional support agencies as applicable.

Challenging behaviour:

Behaviour that:

- disrupts others or causes disputes between children, but which is part of normal social development
- infringes on the rights of others
- causes harm or risk to the child, other children, adults or living things
- is destructive to the environment and/or equipment
- inhibits the child's learning and relationship with others
- is inappropriate relative to the child's developmental age and background.

Inclusion Support Program: Funded by the Commonwealth Government to assist services to build their capacity and capability to include children with additional needs in mainstream services; providing them with an opportunity to learn and develop alongside their typically developing peers: <https://www.education.gov.au/>

Mental health: In early childhood, a child's mental health is understood as a child's ability to 'experience, regulate and express emotions; form close and secure interpersonal relationships; and explore the environment and learn – all in the context of family, community and cultural expectations for young children. Infant mental health is synonymous with healthy social and emotional development. <https://beyou.edu.au/>

Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) Program: The role of the PSFO Program is to support the access and participation of children with additional needs in preschool: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au>

BACKGROUND

'Educators guide children's behaviour through their interactions and communication at all times. The service's approach to behaviour guidance in daily practice impacts on learning outcomes for children. Research indicates that quality learning environments and sensitive, nurturing adults are essential for achieving positive learning outcomes for children.' (*Behaviour guidance practice note series (DET) - refer to sources*)

This policy has been created to set clear guidelines of appropriate behaviour guidance to be used within the educational and care settings and the children's services across our centre as laid out in the principles of this policy. Positive behaviour guidance encourages children to regulate and manage their own behaviour, supporting children to understand and make positive choices around their interactions with the peers and adults in their lives. At Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre, we use research-based strategies to guide children, understanding that as research progresses, these strategies may change. We acknowledge that not all strategies work with all children, and that a variety of behaviour guidance strategies will be required when working with any one child or group of children.

Child Safe Standard 3 requires services to have strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children. When children feel respected and valued, they are much more likely to speak up about issues of safety and wellbeing. Enabling and promoting the participation of children within a service has multiple benefits in addition to enhancing the safety of children, including demonstrating a commitment to upholding the rights of children, checking that what the service is doing is what children want and building the communication and leadership skills of children. With any behaviour guidance strategy used, the rights and dignity of each child must be respected, empowering children to become confident and capable.

ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Approved Provider (Board of Governance) is responsible for:

The Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre Board is the Approved Provider and has ultimate responsibility for the management and control of the service.

The Board delegates operational responsibility and day to day management of the service to the Nominated Supervisor and monitors the performance of the organisation, including responsibilities contained in this policy, through regular reporting and by ensuring appropriate resources are available to carry out the organisation's functions.

The Nominated Supervisor and Persons in Day to Day Charge are responsible for:

- developing and implementing the *Behaviour Guidance Policy* in consultation with educational leaders, staff and parents/guardians, and ensuring that it reflects the philosophy, beliefs and values of the service
- providing access to the *Behaviour Guidance Policy* for parents/guardians and families
- ensuring parents/guardians, and all staff are provided with a copy of the *Behaviour Guidance Policy* and comply with its requirements
- ensuring all staff are aware of the service's expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and interactions when working with children and families (refer to *Code of Conduct Policy*)
- ensuring children are adequately supervised (refer to *Definitions*) and that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times (refer to *Supervision of Children Policy*)
- ensure that the service provides children with opportunities to interact and develop positive relationships with each other, and with the staff and volunteers at the service (Regulation 156(1))
- supporting and organising educators/staff to access resources and gain appropriate training, knowledge and skills for the implementation of this policy, including promoting social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing
- ensuring the environment at the service is safe, secure and free from hazards for children (refer to *Child Safe Environment Policy*, *Occupational Health and Safety Policy* and *Supervision of Children Policy*) and promotes the active participation of every child
- ensuring that the Nominated Supervisor/Persons in day-to-day Charge and all other staff members at the service who work with children are aware that it is an offence to subject a child to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive in the circumstances (National Law: Section 166)
- promoting collaborative relationships between children/families and educators, staff and other professionals, to improve the quality of children's education and care experiences
- ensuring educators and staff use positive and respectful strategies to assist children to manage their own behaviour, and to respond appropriately to conflict and the behaviour of others
- developing links with and referral pathways to services and/or professionals to support children experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and their families
- ensuring that there is a behaviour guidance plan developed for a child if educators are concerned that the child's behaviour may put the child themselves, other children, educators/staff and/or others at risk
- ensuring that parents/guardians and other professionals and support agencies (as appropriate) are consulted if an individual behaviour guidance plan has not resolved the challenging behaviour
- ensuring that additional resources are sourced, if required, to implement a behaviour guidance plan
- ensuring that educators/staff at the service are provided with appropriate training to guide the actions and responses of a child/children with challenging behaviour.
- developing warm, responsive and trusting relationships with children that promote a sense of security, confidence and inclusion
- supporting each child to develop responsive relationships, and to work and learn in collaboration with others
- using positive and respectful strategies to assist children to manage their own behaviour, and to respond appropriately to conflict and the behaviour of others
- implementing a behaviour guidance plan and incorporating identified strategies and resources into the service program
- undertaking relevant training that will enable them to guide children who exhibit challenging behaviour

- maintaining ongoing communication and consultation with parents/guardians
- documenting assessments and evaluations for each child to inform the educational program (Regulation 74)
- being aware that it is an offence to subject a child to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive in the circumstances
- making educators aware of positive behaviour guidance strategies, using the guidance outlined in Attachment 1 Behaviour Guidance - Responding to Conflicts and Attachment 2: Behaviour Guidance Phrases to support positive interactions with children.
- maintaining confidentiality at all times (refer to *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*).

Educators & all other staff are responsible for:

- assisting with the development and implementation of the *Behaviour Guidance Policy*, in consultation with Nominated Supervisor, parents/guardians and families
- complying with the principles of the *Behaviour Guidance Policy*
- being aware of service expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and reactions when working with children and families (refer to *Code of Conduct Policy*)
- providing adequate supervision of children at all times (refer to *Definitions and Supervision of Children Policy*)
- communicating and working collaboratively with parents/guardians and families in relation to their child's learning, development, interactions, behaviour and relationships
- developing warm, responsive and trusting relationships with children that promote a sense of security, confidence and inclusion
- supporting each child to develop responsive relationships, and to work and learn in collaboration with others
- using positive and respectful strategies to assist children to manage their own behaviour, and to respond appropriately to conflict and the behaviour of others
- assisting the Nominated Supervisor to develop a behaviour guidance plan in consultation with parents/guardians and other professionals as appropriate
- implementing a behaviour guidance plan and incorporating identified strategies and resources into the service program
- undertaking relevant training that will enable them to guide children who exhibit challenging behaviour
- maintaining ongoing communication and consultation with parents/guardians
- providing regular progress reports to the Nominated Supervisor on the implementation and effectiveness of the agreed strategies contained in an individual behaviour guidance plan
- documenting assessments and evaluations for each child to inform the educational program (Regulation 74)
- being aware that it is an offence to subject a child to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive in the circumstances
- maintaining confidentiality at all times (refer to *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*)
- modelling desirable behaviours in their own everyday interactions with children and other adults
- Using the guidance outlined in Attachment 1 Behaviour Guidance - Responding to Conflicts and Attachment 2: Behaviour Guidance Phrases to support positive interactions with children.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- reading and complying with the *Behaviour Guidance Policy*
- engaging in open communication with educators about their child
- informing educators/staff of events or incidents that may impact on their child's behaviour at the service (e.g. moving house, relationship issues, a new sibling)
- informing educators/staff of any concerns regarding their child's behaviour or the impact of other children's behaviour
- working collaboratively with educators/staff and other professionals/support agencies to develop or review an individual behaviour guidance plan for their child, where appropriate

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- working with educators on creating a consistent approach in both the home and centre environments
- using appropriate channels of communication when referring to any behaviour concerns within the educational program.

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Nominated Supervisor will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service’s policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures unless a lesser period is necessary because of a risk.

Relevant Forms/Documents

Version History			
Date	Version	Author/s	Details
February 2023	1.00	Director of Education	New policy
May 2024	1.00	Director of Education	Links updated, no changes made.
May 2025	1.00	Director of Education	Policy reviewed, no changes made.



Behaviour Guidance - Responding to Conflicts

<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your voice low and quiet. • Stay calm. • Stay neutral. <p>These conflicts are a part of learning. Empathy is an emotion children need to be taught for lifelong interactions with peers.</p> <p>Element 5.2.1: Each child is supported to work with, learn from and help others through collaborative learning opportunities.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>Approach the children and get down on their level.</p> <p>Keep your reactions minimal.</p> <p>What Happened?</p> <p>Describe what you think has happened if the children are not able to express it.</p> <p>Listen to them if they can explain.</p> <p>"Why" Questions:</p> <p>Why questions require higher order thinking so it is best to avoid this type of question.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p>You may like to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe each child's facial expressions. This can help children feel more understood. • Name the feelings and talk them through the conflict. <p>Element 5.2.2: Each child is supported to manage their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts, has a strong focus.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p>What to say:</p> <p>"I can see [child's name] is sad. How can we make them feel better?"</p> <p>What not to say:</p> <p><i>"Some examples of inappropriate conversations with young children regarding their behaviour include demanding answers to questions such as 'Why did you do that?' or insisting that children apologise for their behaviour."</i></p> <p>Victorian Department of Education and Training</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <p>Move on. Once you have resolved this conflict and made sure all children are safe, support each child to re-engage.</p> <p>Each time you support children in these interactions, you are providing attention.</p> <p>Remember to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your conversations short. • Keep your sentences short. • Remember to stay neutral. • Provide positive attention to positive interactions!!!
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We use gentle hands.

I can see [child's name] is sad. How can we make them feel better?*

[Child's name] is using this toy right now. Let's see if we can find another one!

Can [child's name] use the toy when you finish?

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE PHRASES
Remember to KEEP IT POSITIVE!!

Is the environment designed to foster children's learning and development?

Does the environment offer a range of challenges and experiences?

Is the educational program based on the interests, ability and experiences of each of the children?

Are our interactions with children down at their level as well as positive, respectful, engaging, caring and supportive?

Do our interactions with children enhance children's confidence, abilities and self-esteem?

Are our interactions with children consistent from educator to educator?

1. Are we considering each child's individual stage of physical and intellectual development?

**Some appropriate ways to make children feel better are *giving a cuddle, gently rubbing their arm, getting their water bottles* or simply *giving them space* as you support the other child to find another place to play.

It is not appropriate to make a child apologise.