

## RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN POLICY

---

### Contents

1	NQS .....	2
2	National Regulations.....	2
3	EYLF .....	2
4	Aim .....	2
5	Related Policies .....	2
6	Implementation – Interactions with Children.....	2
7	Group Relationships .....	4
8	Guiding Children’s Behaviour and Supporting Self-Regulation for children .....	5
9	Strategies for Educators .....	7
	Prevention .....	7
	Explanation.....	7
	Redirection .....	7
10	Working with Children Who Display Extreme Behaviours.....	8
11	Inclusion .....	9
12	Gender Equity .....	11
13	Supporting Children through Difficult Situations .....	11
14	Coping Mechanisms .....	12
15	Bullying.....	13
16	Biting .....	14
17	Changes to Room Environment to reduce biting incidents.....	15
18	Epidemic Response .....	16
19	Maintaining Positive Relationships with Families .....	16
20	Sources .....	16
21	Review .....	17
22	Version Control Table .....	17

## 1 NQS

QA5	5.1	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
	5.2	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.

## 2 National Regulations

Regs	155	Interactions with children
	156	Relationships in groups

## 3 EYLF

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.

## 4 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.

## 5 Related Policies

The Kids' Uni Policies and Procedures apply to Kids' Uni North, Kids' Uni South, Kids Uni CBD, Kids Uni iC – Preschool, Kids Uni iC – OOSH.

Inclusion Policy (CHI-ADM-POL-003)

Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy (CHI-ADM-POL-016)

Enrolment and Booking Policy (CHI-ADM-POL-022)

Orientation for Children Policy (CHI-ADM-POL-041)

Physical Activity Promotion Policy (CHI-ADM-POL-045)

## 6 Implementation – Interactions with Children

Our Service's statement of philosophy guides our interactions with children. In order to maintain positive interactions with children our service and educators will maintain the following:

- 6.1 Our service will provide a relaxed and happy atmosphere for the children.
- 6.2 Our service will ensure mealtimes are relaxed and unhurried and educators take the time to sit and talk with children. There will be many opportunities for autonomy for children during routine times in our program.
- 6.3 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 and seek assistance as they take on new challenges and try to do things for themselves.
- 6.4 Our educators will respond sensitively and appropriately to children's efforts to communicate and engage them in sustained conversations about their interests in a positive manner.
- 6.5 Our educators will talk with children in a two-sided manner. 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.
- 6.6 Our service will have in place predictable personal-care routines that are enjoyable experiences for babies and toddlers and will respond to babies and toddlers when they practice their verbal communication skills.
- 6.7 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.
- 6.8 Our educators will be knowledgeable in the communication strategies and non verbal cues of babies and toddlers, and staffing arrangements within the service will support the development of trusting relationships between educators, babies and toddlers to allow them to feel secure in the service.
- 6.9 Our statement of philosophy and policy on interactions with children will be visible.
- 6.10 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.
- 6.11 Our educators will model reasoning, prediction and reflection processes and language.
- 6.12 Our educators will collaborate with children about routines and experiences.
- 6.13 Our educators will use techniques such as sign language and other resources and tools to support children with additional needs.
- 6.14 Our educators will engage in communication by adding to interactions initiated by babies and toddlers by describing objects and talking about routine activities with babies and toddlers.
- 6.15 Our educators will use their interactions with children to support the maintenance of home languages and learning English as an additional language.
- 6.16 Our educators will use information from their observations of interactions with children to extend the children's thinking and learning.
- 6.17 Our educators will also support children to build secure attachments with one and then many educators to help them feel secure in the service. Many children suffer a form of separation anxiety when away from their families. Educators will reassure children, acknowledge their feelings and work with families in order to make the child feel safe and happy at the service.

- 6.18 Our service will ensure that there are many opportunities for babies and toddlers to experience relaxed physical contact and close interactions with familiar educators.
- 6.19 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.
- 6.20 Our educators will frequently talk with families to get an idea of the non-verbal forms of communication used by their children in order to convey messages such as hunger, needing the toilet, tiredness and emotions.
- 6.21 Our educators will allow time to talk to parents about their children. This allows educators to gain insight into their home life.
- 6.22 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.
- 6.23 Our service's roster will be planned in a way that promotes continuity for children.
- 6.24 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.
- 6.25 When children have special needs our service we 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.
- 6.26 Our service's approach to equity and inclusion will be documented in our statement of philosophy.
- 6.27 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.
- 6.28 Our educators will use their knowledge of Circle of Security to identify children who need further support at particular times of the day.
- 6.29 Our educators understand the importance of being emotionally available to children. They will make being available to children the priority within the routine. They will be conscious of slowing down the pace of the room to take time to enjoy meaningful moments and interactions with children.
- 6.30 Our educators will be at the children's level, they will delight in children and use welcoming body language when children come in to us.
- 6.31 Our educators will have an understanding of empathy, empathetic language and their interactions will come from a place of empathy, particularly when children are upset or need support.

## **7 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:

- 7.1 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.

- 7.2 Our educators will engage children in ongoing group projects that involve research, planning, problem solving and shared decision making.
- 7.3 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. They will support children to develop play entry skills.
- 7.4 Our service will ensure that the children have many opportunities for peer scaffolding.
- 7.5 Our educators will promote a sense of belonging in the service where children's voices are evident throughout the program and the environment.
- 7.6 Our service will coordinate the staffing and grouping arrangements to support positive relationships between children.
- 7.7 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.
- 7.8 Our educators will learn about children's shared interests and will use this information to plan further experiences that provide collaborative learning opportunities.
- 7.9 Our educators will pre-empt potential conflicts or challenging behaviours by monitoring children's play and supporting interactions where there is conflict.
- 7.10 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.
- 7.11 Our service will ensure that food is being used appropriately and not as a reward or punishment.
- 7.12 Our service will ensure that corporal punishment is not used as part of behaviour guidance or any other aspect of our interactions with children. Corporal punishment is never to be used in our service.

## **8 Guiding Children's Behaviour and Supporting Self-Regulation for children**

- 8.1 We understand that when we as educators create high quality social and physical environments that this will prevent children's behaviour from escalating in the first instance.
- 8.2 When we observe challenging behaviour in children we will view this as an opportunity to reflect on ourselves as educators, our teaching strategies, our relationships and the environments that we are offering.
- 8.3 We will use our knowledge of circle of security to support children to come in to educators for emotional support when needed.
- 8.4 We will use empathy to be present with children when they are experiencing overwhelming emotions that they cannot control. We will acknowledge these feeling for children.
- 8.5 The behaviour guidance we provide children with will be guided by the following practices:
  - i. Our service will encourage children to engage in cooperative and pro-social behaviour and express their feelings and responses to others' behaviour confidently and constructively, including challenging the behaviour of other children when it is disrespectful or unfair.
  - ii. Our educators will support children to explore different identities and points of view and to communicate effectively when resolving disagreements with others.

- 8.6 Our educators will recognise and discuss emotions, feelings and issues of inclusion and fairness, bias and prejudice and the consequences of their actions and the reasons for this as well as the appropriate rules.
- 8.7 Our educators will encourage children to listen to other children's ideas, consider alternate behaviour and cooperate in problem solving situations.
- 8.8 Our educators will listen empathetically to children when they express their emotions, reassure them that it is normal to experience positive and negative emotions and guide children to remove themselves from situations where they are experiencing frustration, anger or fear.
- 8.9 Our educators will support children to negotiate their rights and rights of others and intervene sensitively when children experience difficulty in resolving a disagreement.
- 8.10 Our educators will learn about children's relationships with others and the relationship preferences they have and use this knowledge to support children manage their own behaviour and develop empathy.
- 8.11 Our educators will work with each child's family and, where applicable, their school, to ensure that a consistent approach is used to support children with diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties.
- 8.12 Our service will gather information from families about their children's social skills and relationship preferences and record this information in the child's file. Our educators will use this information to engage children in experiences that support children to develop and practice their social and shared decision making skills.
- 8.13 Our service will collaborate with schools and other professionals or support agencies that work with children who have diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties to develop plans for the inclusion of these specific children. These will be kept in the individual child's file.
- 8.14 Our service will ensure that children are being allowed to make choices and experience the consequences of these choices when there is no risk of physical or emotional harm to the child or anyone else.
- 8.15 Our service will ensure that children are being acknowledged when they make positive choices in managing their behaviour.
- 8.16 Our educators will use positive language, gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice when redirecting or discussing children's behaviour with them. They will also remain calm, gentle, patient and reassuring even when children strongly express distress, frustration or anger.
- 8.17 Our educators will guide all children's behaviour in ways that are focused on preserving and promoting children's self esteem as well as supporting children to develop skills to self-regulate their behaviour.
- 8.18 Our educators will speak in comforting tones and hold babies to soothe them when they are distressed.
- 8.19 Our educators will also respond positively to babies' and toddlers' exploratory behaviour.
- 8.20 Our service will have in place strategies to enable educators to encourage positive behaviour in children while minimising negative behaviour. We will also have strategies in place to involve children in developing behaviour limits and the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. Strategies will also be put in place for the nominated supervisor and educators to

manage situations when a child's behaviour is particularly challenging and when families have different expectations from the service in relation to guiding children's behaviour.

- 8.20 Our service will support educators to enhance their skills and knowledge in relation to guiding children's behaviour.

## 9 Strategies for Educators

### Prevention

- 9.1 Educators will develop relationships with the children. Children are more likely to respond to your expectations if they sense you know them and like them. In establishing relationships between new educators and children, educators are to endeavour to gain mutual respect.
- 9.2 Educators will role model appropriate and positive behaviours.
- 9.3 Change the environment to facilitate appropriate interactions and to communicate expectations.
- 9.4 Review and change accordingly the program to reflect the changing needs of the child/ren.
- 9.5 Be aware of the need to settle or redirect play.
- 9.6 Plan the routine for active and non-active play.
- 9.7 Give attention to appropriate behaviour with specific praise.
- 9.8 Remember a child's developmental needs, abilities and behaviours.
- 9.9 Ensure provision of sufficient resources.
- 9.10 Educators will monitor children's play and interactions in efforts to anticipate tension or conflict. Positive strategies are implemented to manage and prevent such events occurring.
- 9.11 Educators will be emotionally available to children by being at their level.

### Explanation

- 9.12 When using behaviour guidance strategies indicate clear expectations for the child and provide them with a variety of choices.
- 9.13 Explain clearly the consequences of their actions.
- 9.14 Use positive directives for example 'do' instead of 'don't'.
- 9.15 Seek input from children on service expectations / rules / suitable choices.
- 9.16 Review service and educator expectations as required.

### Redirection

- 9.17 Provide a distraction to the child's play that diverts their attention from the heated situation (eg:- providing another shovel where there is a conflict due to lack of equipment on offer; put out the totem tennis as well as having the shuttle cock)
- 9.18 Initially acknowledge that the child is finding this difficult. Use words like *"I can see that this is difficult for you, you really want that spade"*. Reassure the child that you are there is support them *"I am here to help"*. Encourage the child to talk about why they are behaving in a certain way and discuss consequences of this behaviour. If the child continues to display an inappropriate behaviour they should understand the boundaries of their play and actions *"You can dig with the spade but I cannot let you throw the sand"*. Offer children choices. For

example, use the shovel to dig with or come over to the puzzle with me. Finally, if the behaviour continues the child should be redirected from the activity to another area. This process may be consolidated or shortened in a dangerous or serious situation.

### **General**

- 9.19 Educators are always mindful not to label the child, but rather the behaviour when guiding children's behaviour.
- 9.20 In extreme behaviours educators are to call upon other educators, other staff or the Nominated Supervisor to provide assistance.
- 9.21 Serious instances of behaviour must be written up as a critical incident within 24 hours of the behaviour occurring. This report must be given to the Nominated Supervisor and also the Children's Services Manager for and review.
- 9.22 Parents must be advised of serious or ongoing behaviour issues exhibited by their child.
- 9.23 Parent input / feedback regarding their child's behaviour is crucial to resolving such issues.
- 9.24 Serious or ongoing behaviour issues will require a meeting with parents, educators and management in order to work together on an appropriate range of strategies.
- 9.25 Educators are to call for expert advice from local community agencies for support if needed.
- 9.26 Strategies implemented for behaviour guidance must be written into a support plan, reviewed regularly and adjusted accordingly.
- 9.27 The Nominated Supervisor and Children's Services Manager must be kept abreast of all serious behaviour issues.

## **10 Working with Children Who Display Extreme Behaviours**

- 10.1 This procedure is to be followed when an enrolled child's behaviour is so extreme that educators can no longer guarantee to meet the needs of all children enrolled. It is not intended to be implemented when children display behaviour which falls within typical range of developmentally appropriate behaviour.
- 10.2 Prior to this procedure being implemented it is expected that educators have undertaken all acceptable methods of managing a child's behaviour, that the parents have been consulted on an ongoing basis and that all available organisational resources have been utilised. Documented evidence of this will be contained in the child's individual file.
- 10.3 The Nominated Supervisor identifies and documents that a child's behaviour is outside the typical range of behaviours and the child is not responding to accepted behaviour management strategies. The Children's Services Manager is also to be notified.
- 10.4 The Nominated Supervisor will arrange a formal meeting with the child's parents. The purpose of this meeting is to:
  - i. provide an overview of the concerns.
  - ii. identify possible outside support agencies which can assist the child and family as well as support the child's enrolment at the service.
  - iii. In consultation with the family to enlist the support of specialist assistance.
  - iv. In consultation with the family that strategies agreed upon will be consistently implemented both at home and at the service.



- 10.5 A specialist in children's behaviour is enlisted to support the child both in the context of the home and service environment. Any cost associated with this is incurred by the family.
- 10.6 At this time the suitability of the child's enrolment in a group setting will be assessed by the Nominated Supervisor and specialist.
- 10.7 The conditions of the child's continued enrolment may include continuation of the enrolment as it exists, with the implementation of a special program or suspension of the place or reduction of hours or days.
- 10.8 Regular review periods will be set.
- 10.9 In the event that the child's continued existing enrolment is not recommended, a meeting will be held with the family and the Nominated Supervisor and options will be identified including withdrawal of the child. If no agreement can be reached a meeting will be held in conjunction with the family, Nominated Supervisor, Children's Services Manager or Department of Education and Communities or an Early Childhood Specialist.
- 10.10 The Chief Executive Officer of UOW Pulse Ltd will be advised by Children's Services Manager of the issue, progress, final outcomes. A decision will be made with regard to the child's continued enrolment and the parents will be notified of the outcome in writing.
- 10.11 If the parents refuse to enlist the support of a specialist, the service will gather more information for the parents and organise a meeting. If they still refuse then they are to be informed the service is unable to continue to provide care for the child.

## 11 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:

- 11.1 Our service will promote and value cultural diversity and equity for all children, families and educators from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds;
- 11.2 Our service will recognise that children and adults from all cultures have similar needs and that each person is unique and valuable;
- 11.3 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;
- 11.4 Our service will endeavour to provide a foundation that instils in each child a sense of self identity, dignity and tolerance for all people;
- 11.5 Our service will increase the knowledge and understanding each child has about his or her own cultural ethnic heritage in partnership with their family, educators and community and other children in the Service;
- 11.6 Our service will explore family compositions, customs and lifestyles of children and families in many cultures;
- 11.7 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;
- 11.8 Our service will provide support for fostered or adopted children to develop a sense of heritage and belonging;

- 11.9 Our service will avoid common stereotypes and recognise individual differences within a cultural or ethnic group;
- 11.10 Our service will assist wherever possible families who are new to Australia with a transition to a new and different culture.
- 11.11 Our educators will become aware of their own beliefs, attitudes, cultural backgrounds, their relationship with the larger society and their attitudes to people;
- 11.12 Our educators will acknowledge that they too have been influenced by their own background prejudices and their points of view;
- 11.13 Our educators will accept that all children can learn and that differences in lifestyles and languages does not mean ignorance;
- 11.14 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;
- 11.15 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;
- 11.16 Our educators will be actively involved with children, showing respect, sharing ideas and experiences and asking questions.
- 11.17 Our educators will access and make available resources and information supporting the delivery of inclusive concepts in the program and attend regular training courses as required. Such resources will be integrated into the daily program and be made available to families.
- 11.18 Our educators will reflect on the service's philosophy and ensure that practices and attitude concur with the philosophy.
- 11.19 Our educators will work with families to encourage positive attitudes to diversity and an anti-bias ethos.
- 11.20 Our educators will ensure that casual workers or visitors to the service are aware of these practices and respect these values.
- 11.21 Children will listen to records and practice singing songs in different languages;
- 11.22 Children will learn words and phrases in a language not native to children in their group;
- 11.23 Children will talk to other children using the words from their culture;
- 11.24 Children will be encouraged to become independent wherever possible and be actively involved with their peers.
- 11.25 Children will explore with foods from other cultures (eg. have family members from different home cultures come in and cook, to have "food tasting" parties);
- 11.26 Our service will encourage children to bring in real objects and artefacts used by their families that may be historical or typical of that child's/family's cultural group including food;
- 11.27 Our service will help children to develop ease with and have a respect for physical, racial, religious and cultural differences.
- 11.28 Our service will encourage children to develop autonomy, independence, competency, confidence and pride.

- 11.29 Our service will provide all children with accurate and appropriate material that provides information about their own and other's disabilities and cultures.
- 11.30 Our service will not isolate a child for any reason other than illness, accident or a prearranged appointment with parental consent.
- 11.31 Our service will acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we learn, play and work. We will encourage children to learn about the rich history of Aboriginal people in Australia.
- 11.32 Our service will create a Reconciliation Action Plan and work with our community to include Aboriginal perspectives in our programs and environments.

## **12 Gender Equity**

- 12.1 Gender equity is based on the understanding that differences in experiences and outcomes, impact on the expectations, interests and behaviours of both sexes. It acknowledges that the impact is often one which constrains and limits, rather than expands options and possibilities for all children.
- 12.2 We will provide a stimulating learning environment in which all children will be encouraged to explore a full range of experiences and emotions. Educators will discourage the identification of particular skills, behaviours and feelings as 'masculine' or 'feminine' which may restrict life's opportunities and choices.
- 12.3 Educators will be mindful of the images of women and men that are prevalent within society and be aware of and monitor their own language, attitudes and assumptions with regard to gender and anti-bias.
- 12.4 Educators will ensure, throughout daily interactions with children and families that they give positive messages about gender equity through their actions and words and avoid giving messages that promote traditional gender roles and gender bias.
- 12.5 Educators will encourage and support all children to participate in the full range of experiences and activities.
- 12.6 Educators will encourage all children to express their emotions and to display affection and empathy.
- 12.7 A range of texts and images will be included in the program which represent a range of possibilities for males and females and explores issues of race, class and family structure.
- 12.8 Educators will encourage all children to build strengths in all areas of the program.
- 12.9 Educators will actively encourage children to explore their own gender identities and the impact of gender relations in their play.
- 12.10 Engage children in discussion about the gender identities presented in a range of media.

## **13 Supporting Children through Difficult Situations**

- 13.1 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.

- 13.2 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:
- i. Physical symptoms such as stomach aches and headaches.
  - ii. Being anxious
  - iii. Suffering from separation anxiety.
  - iv. Having sleeping problems or nightmares.
  - v. Re-living the experience through drawing or play.
  - vi. Losing interest in activities.
  - vii. Loss of self-confidence.
  - viii. Regression in development
- 13.3 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:
- i. Reassuring the child that they are safe, but only if they really are.
  - ii. 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.
  - iii. 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.
  - iv. 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.
  - v. Talking to the children about how people react to stressful or traumatic situations and that the feelings they are feeling are normal.

## 14 Coping Mechanisms

- 14.1 Some strategies that our educators will use to help children cope in these situations are:
- i. Giving children a sense of control of their environment and life. Letting the child have a voice in decision making, such as what to eat for lunch, what to wear or what toy to play with will give the child a great sense of autonomy over their life.
  - ii. Allowing the children plenty of time to play and to do physical exercise; this will help the child burn off stress chemicals and allow for more sleep.
  - iii. Helping the children physically relax with story times and cuddles.
  - iv. Limiting stimulants like chocolate, lollies etc.
- 14.2 It is important to remember how you respond to the stressful or traumatic event will affect your 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.

- 14.3 At the service, we wish to help in whatever way we can if a family has undergone a tragedy. Families should 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.
- 14.4 Should it be required, educators will liaise with appropriate authorities, such as the Department of Education or Families and Communities and follow any recommendations made by these authorities.

## 15 Bullying

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. Very young children may be aggressive and act out when they are angry or don't get what they want, but this is not bullying.  
(<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/WhatIsBullying/DefinitionOfBullying>)

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

- 15.1 Our educators will be aware of the following characteristics in children who bully:
- i. Children of all backgrounds can bully.
  - ii. Preconceived notions of children who bully should be avoided.
  - iii. The child who bullies may also be the victim of bullying.
  - iv. The child who bullies will often think that they are innocent, and that the child being bullied is somehow deserving of this negative experience.
- 15.2 Our educators will be aware of the following characteristics of victims of bullying -
- i. Children of all backgrounds can fall victim to bullying.
  - ii. Preconceived notions of children who fall victim to bullying should be avoided
  - iii. Boys are victims of bullying more than girls.
  - iv. Victims may have low self-esteem, lack of confidence, lack social skills or be viewed as unpopular.
  - v. It is important to remember that victims are often sensitive and easily hurt, and feel incapable of preventing such negative experiences.
- 15.3 Our educators will implement the following strategies to overcome bullying -
- i. Our educators will practice all-encompassing and socially inclusive care.
  - ii. Daily programs will recognise, value and reflect the social and cultural diversity of our community.
  - iii. Our educators will role model and actively encourage appropriate behaviours.
  - iv. Our educators will form a close relationship with family members in order to work cooperatively to overcome instances of bullying.
  - v. Our educators will empower children by giving them responsibilities that will make them feel valued.
  - vi. Our educators will help children deal with their anger. This includes offering alternative dispute resolution techniques that are socially acceptable.
  - vii. Our educators will seek the support of children's services professionals when it is necessary.

## 16 Biting

- 16.1 All individuals involved in the care of a child need to recognise that at times, some children, for a variety of reasons, attempt to bite other children. Biting is quite a common among young children. Biting occurs for various reasons with children of all ages and circumstances.
- 16.2 Some reasons a child may bite are:
- i. Infants – Experimental, Sensory Pleasure, Teething
  - ii. Toddlers – Frustration, fatigue, attention seeking, confined spaces, inability to express themselves using language.
  - iii. Older Children – Frustration, inability to express themselves using language.
- 16.3 In the event of a biting incident, educators will abide by the following procedure:
- i. Educators are to avoid any immediate response that reinforces the biting, including dramatic negative attention.
  - ii. The biter is immediately removed with no emotion, using words such as "biting is not okay - biting hurts". The caring attention is focused on the child that was bitten.
  - iii. Check for broken skin. Clean all bites, regardless of whether the skin is broken or not. Wash the bite area with soap and running water, apply a cold compress to the bitten area and cover with a clean dressing if required. Rinse the biting child's mouth with water to prevent cross-infection from the bitten child. If needed, advise the family of the injured child to seek medical advice about risks of infection and further management.
  - iv. The biter is spoken to on a level that is understood before returning to play. We communicate that we understand the child's frustration (or needs for exploration or teething relief with an infant) and are willing to help the child: "I am here to help you", "I can see this is hard for you"
  - v. Look intensively at the context of each biting incident and look for patterns based on past incidents. Was, there crowding, over-stimulation, too few toys, too much waiting, other frustration? Is the biting child getting enough attention, care, and appropriate positive reinforcement for not biting? Does the child need help getting engaged in play?
  - vi. Complete Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record; provide an oral report to parents of the biter and the child bitten.
  - v. Work with each biting child on resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner. We notice and reinforce all the occasions that the child does not bite.
  - vi. Adapt the environment, and work with parents to reduce any child stress.
  - vii. Encourage the child who is biting to stay close to an educator so that they can seek support if needed instead of biting.
  - viii. Our educators will contact the families of the child who has bitten and the child that has been bitten as soon as possible. Families are then responsible for any follow up medical treatment.

- ix. If the biter is a known infectious disease carrier, or can be seen to have facial herpes and the victim's skin is broken, the Nominated Supervisor will convey this information to the family.
- x. Should the behaviour continue, our educators will work in conjunction with families and, if necessary, external agencies, to develop a Behaviour Support plan for the child who is biting.
- xi. Our educators will record on the Accident Register whenever a child bites to keep a record of when, who and why it happened.
- xii. We will monitor the behaviour of the child who has bitten and ensure that we are creating an environment where the child feel safe and secure to prevent the child reaching the point where the child feels the need to bite.

## **17 Changes to Room Environment to reduce biting incidents**

- 17.1 Analyse the room environment, routines, and expectations of children and educators to minimise -
  - i. Congestion
  - ii. Confusion and disorder
  - iii. Child waiting
  - iv. Child frustration
  - v. Child boredom
  - vi. Commotion
  - vii. Competition for toys and materials
  - viii. Competition for adult attention.
  - iv. Noise levels
- 17.2 Avoid large groups and break into small groups -
  - i. Use other spaces in the service and the playground.
  - ii. Within the room, spread out the activities and the educators to avoid bunching up
- 17.3 Look for ways to increase the promotion of the children's sense of security and stability:
  - i. We maintain a predictable routines and ensure that children understand and anticipate the progression of the day.
  - ii. Ensure the educators are emotionally available to children.
  - iii. Avoid educator changes.
- 17.4 Look for ways to calm children after periods of excitement -
  - i. Relaxed transitions
  - ii. Calming music.
  - iii. Calming physical contact with educators.
- 17.5 Analyse grouping of children to avoid combinations that might lead conflict or biting -
  - i. Avoid grouping biters and likely "victims" together.
  - ii. Avoid grouping children who will compete for toys.

## 18 Epidemic Response

- 18.1 When biting changes from a relatively unusual occurrence to a frequent and expected occurrence, we consider this to be a serious situation to the well being of the children in the room (including the biter). We continue to apply the previous strategies. In addition we apply extraordinary resources to this situation, by doing the following:
- 18.2 Room educators meet with the Nominated Supervisor on each day the child attends (until the situation is resolved), for advice, support and to maintain a perspective free of blame of children, parents and educators.
- 18.3 Record every occurrence on the Biting Register, including attempted bites, and indicate location, time, participants, behaviours, educators present, and circumstances.
- 18.4 Evaluate the immediate educator response to each biting situation to ensure appropriate intervention that includes comfort the injured child.
- 18.5 Analyse the Biting Register and profile the behaviour patterns and the environmental context of frequent biters and children who have a tendency to be bitten.
- 18.6 "Shadow" children who indicate a tendency to bite and anticipate biting situations.
- 18.7 Teach socially appropriate responses to situations and reinforce appropriate behaviour in potential biting situations;
- 18.8 The parents, Nominated Supervisor and educators work together to evaluate and develop a comprehensive program to respond to the individual child's needs. The program is fully consultative to ensure consistency for the child.
- 18.9 "Shadow" children who have a tendency to be bitten and anticipate biting situations.
- 18.10 Teach responses to potential biting situations that minimise the chance of becoming a victim.
- 18.11 When developmentally appropriate, we consult with parents regarding, early transition of children in a biting behaviour pattern, for a change of environment.
- 18.12 If necessary, bring in outside observers to help in the analysis of the entire situation (not just the child who is biting).

## 19 Maintaining Positive Relationships with Families

- 19.1 Work in partnership, with the parents of biting children to keep them informed and develop a joint strategy for change.
- 19.2 Work in partnership with the parents of the children who are bitten to keep them informed and develop a joint strategy for change.
- 19.3 Our duty of care requires that if all the above strategies have been implemented and the issue has not been resolved, we will work with the parents to find more appropriate care for this child and the family.

## 20 Sources

National Quality Standard  
 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011  
 Early Years Learning Framework



Four Keys to Managing Difficult Behaviour in Children, Michael Hawton, 2007

Managing Highly Able Children's Behaviour, Elaine Hook, 2006

Young Children's Behaviour (2008) Porter, L. Maclennan & Petty

Beyond behaviour Management (2004) Bimes, J.

Framework for Action on Gender Equity in Schooling [http://www.mceetya.edu.au/verve/\\_resources/genderframwk1-22.pdf](http://www.mceetya.edu.au/verve/_resources/genderframwk1-22.pdf)

Early Childhood Australia Gender Equity (2006) Barry, H. – Waterloo Press

[www.parentlink.act.gov.au](http://www.parentlink.act.gov.au)

[www.cyh.com](http://www.cyh.com) Child & Youth Health

[www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au)

No Biting (2002) Kinnel, G. – Redleaf Press

<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/WhatIsBullying/DefinitionOfBullying>

## 21 Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years and the review will include Management, Employees, Families and Interested Parties.

## 22 Version Control Table

Version Control	Date Released	Next Review	Approved By	Amendment
1	03/2012	03/2013	Michele Fowler Manager – Kids Uni	
2	03/2013	03/2014	Michele Fowler Manager – Kids Uni	Paragraph inserted re application of policies across all centres. Migrated into new QA format. This policy replaces: Working with Children who display extreme behaviours Policy, Positively Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy, Inclusion Policy, Gender Equity, Code of Ethics Policy, Child Biting Policy, Anti-Bias Policy.
3	Mar 2014	Sep 2016	Michele Fowler Manager – Kids Uni	Policy reviewed with minor editorial changes. The review period changed to 2 years.
4	Jul 2018	Jul 2020	K.Grose - Children's Services Manager	Added recent changes to philosophical perspectives around relationships with children and behaviour guidance including the Circle of Security approach. Clarified definition of bullying.