

Interactions with Children Procedure

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the 'Relationships with Children Policy', 'Child Safety Policy', and 'Code of Conduct'

This procedure identifies child safe behaviours that we expect all employees, visitors and those interacting with children to support. If any situation arises where an adult feels unsure of the appropriate response in relation to interactions with a child, they are to seek advice from the supervisor.

Building Positive relationships

The following list is not exhaustive but aims to provide guidance for Educators to collaborate and create strategies to build positive relationships with children.

Educators will...

- Treat all children with dignity and respect, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, health status, ethnic or social origin, culture, ability, or other status
- Treat all children the same and not single any child out
- Listen to and value children's ideas and opinions
- Be inclusive of all families
- Have consideration for cultural values, age, and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child
- Work collaboratively and model positive relationships with others
- Foster children's self-esteem, self-reliance and positive self-image
- View children as capable and competent and approach situations from a strengths based perspective
- Ensure children feel secure and let them know that you are there to help and support them
- Provide positive reinforcement, encouraging a strong sense of identity and pride in themselves
- Encourage children to use a range of communication strategies to express their needs, wants and feelings
- Help children deal with conflict constructively and develop a sense of empathy for others.
- Maintain professional boundaries with children
- Only use acceptable physical contact when dealing with children – this could refer to physically restraining a child who is at risk of harm to others or themselves

Avoiding inappropriate relationships

Greater West Childcare is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that promotes the safety of all children. The following lists unacceptable and concerning behaviours as they relate or can lead to the different forms of child abuse. Engaging in unacceptable behaviour may result in disciplinary action.

Physical

Educators will not...

- Use corporal punishment, such as smacking or other forms of physical discipline
- Use physical force against a child intentionally or recklessly that results in harm to the child's health, development or dignity.
- Threaten to hurt a child through words and gestures, regardless of whether the person actually intends to apply force.

Sexual

Educators will not...

- Initiate hugs with children (acceptable when initiated by the child)
- Facilitate situations which may result in close physical contact with a child (e.g. sitting on Educator's laps, wrestling or tickling)
- Initiate or permit inappropriate physical contact with a child (e.g. massages, kisses, extended hugs, touching in areas generally not considered socially acceptable or that make either party uncomfortable)
- Give children shoulder rides, piggy backs, pick up or carry children (unless the child is injured or at risk of harm)
- Undertake a task of a personal nature for a child if they can do it for themselves (e.g. changing clothes, feeding, personal grooming or toileting)
- Share stories, pictures or videos of inappropriate content with children

Psychological

Educators will not...

- Tease, embarrass, or humiliate a child in any way
- Purposely ignore, isolate or dismiss children
- Discriminate against any child
- Negatively label a child or family
- Initiate or engage in arguments with children
- Criticise a child's actions or behaviours
- Act in a manner that could be perceived as intimidating a child (e.g. yelling, moving into another's personal space, finger pointing, talking over the top of others)

Grooming

Educators will not...

- Use pet names with children (general nick names used by others are ok)
- Show favoritism towards any child which includes personally giving a gift or money (more than a token) to a child



- Befriend or engage with children on social media
- Take pictures, post, or share photos of children personally
- Discuss with children topics of an adult nature, including telling adult jokes

General

Educators will not...

- Spend time one-on-one in a room with a child where appropriate accountability is not available (e.g. maintain line of sight / hearing of others, keep doors open with others walking past)
- Have inappropriate discussions with other Educators in front of children
- Withhold food from children (as punishment or otherwise)
- Use coarse, obscene, sexually suggestive, racist, misogynist or discriminatory language
- Condone or participate in any illegal, unsafe or abusive behaviour towards children, including physical, sexual or psychological abuse, ill-treatment, neglect or grooming

PROCEDURE VERSION AND REVISION INFORMATION

Authorised by GENERAL MANAGER

Current version 1.1

Last review September 2023

Workplace Participant Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the above information and that:

- *I am expected to comply with the information in this procedure; and*
- *there may be disciplinary consequences if I fail to comply, which may result in termination of my employment*

Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____