

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

ORIGINAL ADOPTION DATE: 16 April 2013

Policy Objective

Interactions with children will:

- promote a safe, secure and nurturing environment;
- be authentic and responsive;
- be based in fairness, acceptance and empathy with respect for culture, rights, community and the individual.

Policy Statement

A positive atmosphere and the wellbeing of children within Bland Shire Council (BSC) Children Services Unit are promoted through attentive care and quality interactions with children. Emotional development and social relationships are enhanced through thoughtful and sophisticated approaches to conversation, discussion and promotion of children's language and communication.

Children who experience relationships that are built on respect, fairness, cooperation and empathy are given the opportunity to develop these qualities themselves. When children have positive experiences of interactions they develop an understanding of themselves as significant and respected, and feel a sense of belonging.

Definitions

In this policy "staff" refers to staff employed by Bland Shire Council Children Services Unit and Educators registered with the Bland/Temora Family Day Care Scheme.

Statutory Legislation & Considerations

- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011; 155, 168.

Recommended Practices

The Nominated Supervisor and Educational Leader shall:

- Guide professional development and practice to promote interactions with children that are positive and respectful;
- Establish practice guidelines that ensure interactions with children are given priority and those interactions are authentic, just and respect difference.

Educators and staff will:

- Respond to children's communication in a just and consistent manner;
- Respect and respond sensitively to children's attempts to initiate interactions and conversations;

- Initiate one to one interactions with children, particularly babies and toddlers during daily routines and conversation with each child;
- Allow children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem;
- Support children's efforts, assisting and encouraging as appropriate;
- Support children's secure attachment through consistent and warm nurturing relationships;
- Support children's expression of their thoughts and feelings;
- Encourage children to express themselves and show an interest and participate in what the child is doing;
- Encourage children to make choices and decisions;
- Ensure the dignity and rights of each child are maintained;
- Acknowledge children's complex relationships and sensitively intervene in ways that promote consideration and alternative perspectives and social inclusion. Guidance strategies should be reflective of this approach;
- Acknowledge each child's uniqueness in positive ways;
- Respect cultural differences in communication and consider alternative approaches to own;
- Where applicable, recognise the importance of sibling interactions and provide opportunities throughout the day for children of different ages to interact.

Families will:

- Provide information to the Educator about their child's individual likes, dislikes and needs, assisting with the smooth transition to the service for the child and family;
- Provide information to the Educator that may support the belonging and wellbeing of the child.

Children's Rights, Family and Cultural Values

Interactions within the setting are greatly enhanced when children's rights and family and cultural values are given due consideration and respect. Administrative procedures, initial conversations, documentation and ongoing communication with children and families are a reference point for interactions and a foundation for authentic and respectful communication.

Listening

Educators and staff must use listening as a foundation for interactions. Listening is based on observation and in leaving spaces in conversations and communication, suspending judgement and in giving full attention to children as they communicate. Truly attending to children's communication promotes a strong culture of listening.

Children and Families

A culture of respectful interaction is promoted when children's attempts to communicate are valued. Turn taking and regulating children's conversations promotes active engagement. Respectful communication with families generates greater confidence in interacting.

Reflection and Consideration

Time is dedicated to reflecting upon interactions with children. Reflections should consider how to spend extended periods engaged in interactions with children that comprise communication and listening.

Role Modelling

Educators model positive interactions when they:

- Show care, empathy and respect for children, Educators, staff and families.
- Learn and use effective communication strategies.

Quality interactions increase children's knowledge and understanding of themselves, each other as unique individuals and develop the skills and understandings needed to interact positively with others.

Evaluation

Interactions between Educators and children are genuine, positive and responsive and based on respect, fairness, acceptance, co-operation and empathy. This is evident in conversations, communication, pedagogy, and planning for children and families.

References

ECA Code of Ethics (2017)

Guide to the National Quality Framework (2018)

DEEWR (2009). Belonging Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.

Authorisation

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