

POLICY STATEMENT

Children Services Unit

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

AUTHORISATION

POLICY TYPE:	Operational
POLICY LOCATION:	Corporate
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Coordinator Children Services
AUTHORISED BY:	Director, Corporate and Community Services
DATE ADOPTED:	16 August 2022
ADOPTED BY:	Manex
MINUTE NO:	
REVIEW DUE DATE:	July 2024
REVISION NUMBER:	

DOCUMENT HISTORY

VERSION NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENTS <i>Include names of former policies that this policy will replace if applicable</i>	AMENDED BY <i>(Where required)</i>
0	May 2012		
1	April 2013		
2	June 2020		June 2022
3	July 2022		July 2024

REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

This Policy will be reviewed within two (2) years from the date of adoption or as required in the event of legislative changes. The Policy may also be changed as a result of other amendment that are to the advantage that Council and in the spirit of this Policy. Any amendment to the Policy must be by way of a Council Resolution for all policies categorised as “Council” policies or the approval of the General Manager for all policies categorised as “Operational” policies.

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to guide staff with appropriate behaviours and strategies when interacting with children, families and community members.

2. Scope:

This policy document applies to all staff and educators employed at Bland Shire Children service and Bland/Temora Family Day Care scheme. Inclusive of students and volunteers participating with a service.

3. Outcomes:

To promote a safe, secure and nurturing environment for all participants. Demonstrate acceptance and respect for culture, rights, community and individuals. Strive to maintain authentic, positive and responsive relationships with families, children and community members.

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

The Nominated Supervisor and Educational Leader will:

- 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.
- Guide and educate educators, staff, volunteers and families about the Child Safe Standards and expectations.

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.

Important strategies to consider when interacting with Children and Families:

- Children's Rights, Family and Cultural Values - Children/Family rights and cultural values are given due consideration and respect when enrolling in a service. Ongoing communication, documentation and conversations create the 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.

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.

5. 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. Families refer to parents/carers of children enrolled within the service.

6. Legislation and Supporting Documents:

- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011; 155, 168.
- NSW Government Child Safe Standards
- Bland Shire Council's Child Safe Policy

7. Relationship to Community Strategic Plan:

This Policy supports Council's Delivery Program Strategy 4.2: Provide quality, accredited and affordable Education and Care within Bland Shire and surrounds (Bland Preschool, Family Day Care, Mobile Resource Unit, Vacation Care and Toy Library Services).

8. Attachments:

NIL