

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN POLICY & PROCEDURE

Sections 165-169, Regulations 73, 84,115, 117A, 118, 123, 126, 145, 155, 156, 168, 170-172

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN POLICY

Policy Statement:

Children’s safety and wellbeing are paramount at our service and will be fostered through our child safe culture, responsive relationships, engaging experiences and safe and healthy environment.

Background:

The Tenison Woods College Early Learning and Community Centre needs an Interaction with Children Policy to ensure child safety, consistency in care, and adherence to professional standards. This policy is vital for creating a positive learning environment and maintaining community trust. It aligns with the Education and Care Services National Regulations, ensuring legal compliance and best practices in child protection. Clear guidelines also aid in conflict resolution, supporting a harmonious atmosphere. Overall, the policy is crucial for the Centre’s commitment to providing a safe, nurturing, and educational environment for young children.

National Quality Standards (NQS) Links

QUALITY AREA 4: STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

4.1	Staffing Arrangements	Staffing arrangements enhance children’s learning and development.
4.2.2	Professional standards	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.

QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
5.2	Relationships between children	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships
5.2.1	Collaborative learning	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.
5.2.2	Self-regulation	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

Legislative Requirements:

Regulation 73 Educational Program

- To add a new nominated supervisor at the service, according to law you must include the following: Name of service, service approval number, name and contact details of the contact person for the application, the full name and contact details of new nominated supervisor and the date the new nominated supervisor commences work in the role.

Regulation 84 – Awareness of child protection law

- The approved provider must ensure that a person who is the nominated supervisor of the service, a staff member of the service, a volunteer at the service or a student who participates in the service who works with children is advised of:
 - The existence and application of the current child protection law;
 - Any obligations that the person may have under that law.

Regulation 115 – Premises designed to facilitate supervision

- The approved provider must ensure the premise, including the toilets and nappy changing facilities are designed and maintained that facilitates supervision of children at all times, whilst providing the children dignity and adhering to the rights of the child.

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Regulation 117A – Placing a person in day-to-day charge

- The person is placed in day-to-day charge by the approved provider or a nominated supervisor of the service and the person consents to the placement in writing.

Regulation 117B – Minimum requirements for a person in day to day charge

- The approved provider or nominated supervisor of the service must ensure the person in day-to-day charge of the Centre is over the age of 18 years and has adequate knowledge and understanding of the provision of education and care to children and the ability to effectively supervise and manage at the service.
- The person's history must comply with all laws and regulations.

Regulation 118 – Educational Leader

- The approved provider of the service must designate in writing, a suitably qualified and experienced educator, co-ordinator or other individual as educational leader at the service to lead the development and implementation of educational programs in the service.

Regulation 123 – Educator to child ratios – centre-based services

- The ratio at our Centre, in line with regulations, is children aged over 36 months (3 years-old) to and including preschool (Kindergarten) aged children – 1 educator to 11 children.

Regulation 126 – centre-based services – general educator qualification

- The qualifications in place at the service to meet the Law:
 - At least 50% of educators hold or are actively working towards at least an approved Diploma Level education and care qualification, Early Childhood Teachers are included in this ratio;
 - All other educators who are required to meet the relevant educator to child ratios for the service must hold or actively be working towards at least an approved certificate III level education and care qualification;
 - (1A) The qualification requirements in subregulation (1) (b) do not apply to an educator if the educator has been employed by the approved provider on a probationary basis for not more than 3 months.
- The qualification requirements for educators at the service educating and caring for children

Regulation 145 – Staff Record

- The approved provider must ensure that a staff record is kept for service, which must include:
 - The information about the nominated supervisors (Reg 146)
 - The information about staff members (Reg147)
 - The information about the educational leader (Reg 148)
 - The information about volunteers (Reg 149)

Regulation 155 – Interactions with children

- The approved provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the service provides education and care for children in a way that:
 - Encourages the children to express themselves and their opinions;
 - Allows the children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem;
 - Maintains at all times the dignity and rights of each child;
 - Gives each child positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour;
 - Has regard to the family and cultural values, age, and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for by the service.

Regulation 156 – Relationships in groups

- The approved provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the service provides education and care for children with opportunities to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other and with staff members of, and volunteers at, the service.

Regulation 168 – Education and care services must have policies and procedures

- Our Centre has policies and procedures as set out in sub regulation 2 in Regulation 168.

Regulation 170 – Policies and procedures to be followed

- Nominated Supervisors, staff members and volunteers have an understanding of all policies and procedures and ensure they are followed at the service.

Regulation 171 – Policies and procedures to be kept available

- Digital copies of our policies and procedures are available via a QR code in our foyer, in our digital PowerQIP and in our handbook. A hard copy of our policies and procedures can be found in the ELCC office.

Regulation 172 – Notification of change of policies and procedures

- All families are notified and sent updated policies and procedures.
- If a change to policy is planned, significantly affecting families, they will be given 14 days' notice

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Principles to inform the policy:

All decision-making should be carried out in accordance with the principles of the service's Interactions with children policy.

- We believe that positive educator to child interactions are central to ensuring quality outcomes for children's education and care.
- We value the important role our educators and staff play in children's education and care. We equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to interact positively with the children and promote relationships between children.
- Our educational program encourages children's self-expression, promotes self-reliance, maintains their dignity and rights, gives positive guidance, and recognises their culture, values, and abilities. We regularly reflect on and refine the program as needed in this regard.

Key Terms:

- **ACECQA (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority):** The independent national authority that administers the National Quality Framework.
- **Dignity and rights of the child:** Element 5.1.2 of the National Quality Standard ('Dignity and rights of the child') aims to achieve the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a universally agreed set of non-negotiable standards and obligations founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each child, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth status or ability. Article 19 of the Convention states that children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically, or mentally.
- **Positive interactions between educators and children:** Involves educators viewing each child as capable and competent, with a right to a voice, and able to contribute to decisions that affect them. This enables educators to focus their practices on children's strengths and inclusion in the group environment.

Educators who are responsive to children's thoughts and feelings are supporting them to develop a strong sense of wellbeing. By interacting positively and meaningfully with children, educators help each child to feel accepted and develop a sense of attachment and trust.

Children who are supported to understand themselves experience a sense of belonging that fosters self-esteem which contributes to the development of identity and is critical to children's capacity to understand their own strengths, abilities, and interests. When children feel safe, secure and supported, they develop confidence to explore and learn.

- **Relationships between children:** When educators create supportive environments in which children experience mutually enjoyable, caring and respectful relationships, children respond accordingly.

Positive relationships provide children with the confidence and agency to explore and learn about their world.

As their relationships become more complex and far-reaching over time, children's interactions with others also help them to extend their knowledge, thinking and ability to apply what they already know in new and unfamiliar contexts.

Developing effective relationships with others is a key part of children's social development and these relationships also provide a base for children's learning.

- **Relationships between educators and children:** When children experience nurturing and respectful reciprocal relationships with educators they develop an understanding of themselves as competent, capable and respected. Consistent emotional support contributes to children developing a strong sense of wellbeing and belonging.

Relationships are the foundation for the construction of identity, and help shape children's thinking about who they are, how they belong and what influences them.

Links to other policies:

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Refer to related policies and procedures:

- Providing a Child Safe Environment
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Staffing
- Governance and Management

Induction and Ongoing Training:

- Induction training and ongoing training will be provided to managers, coordinators, educators, and staff to assist them in fulfilling their roles effectively in implementing this policy.

Policy Created/Reviewed:

- This policy was created in January 2024 and will be reviewed annually or as necessary to ensure compliance with regulations and alignment with best practices.

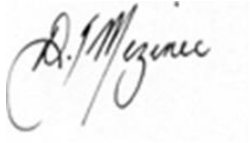
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review:

- This policy will be regularly monitored for compliance by designated staff members and reviewed as necessary to ensure it aligns with current regulations and guidelines.

References:

1. ACECQA
2. South Australian Health Policy and Regulations
3. Catholic Education South Australia Policy and Regulations

Reviewed by David Meziniec
Tenison Woods College Principal



Signed:
Dated: 18.7.24

Reviewed by Fran Scanlon
Early Learning & Community Centre Director



Signed:
Dated: 15.7.24

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INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN PROCEDURE

Procedure Statement:

At Tenison Woods College Early Learning & Community Centre, we are committed to fostering a nurturing and secure environment that promotes positive interactions and relationships between educators and children. Our procedures are designed to align with the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) 2.0 and the National Quality Standard (NQS), ensuring high-quality outcomes for all children in our care. This procedure outlines the specific strategies and actions educators will undertake to build positive interactions with children and cultivate respectful relationships among children.

Procedure:

Location

This policy and procedure will be kept in the Director's office and a soft copy will be available via a QR code in the foyer and online for staff to access in the Centre's digital files.

Ratios

- The Centre follows a ratio of 1:11 in line with the regulations
- If funding for inclusion support has been gained for a room due to a child(ren) having further inclusion support, another educator will be staffed on the days funding is received from Gowrie, lowering the ratio and allowing additional support in the room.
- During an excursion, 3-year-old Kindy will follow the ratio of 1:4 and 4-year-old Kindy will follow 1:5 ratio, ensuring the children are well cared for and safe during these experiences.

Positive interactions between educators and children

Viewing Children as Competent and Capable

Educators will:

- Recognise and respect each child as an individual with unique strengths and abilities, acknowledging, following and recording child voice and agency.
- Encourage children's participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives, fostering a sense of agency and competence.
- Use positive language and reinforcement to support children's self-esteem and confidence.
- Respond not react, using LBi strategies and ELCC adopted practices as key ring regulating practices to help a child regulate before reflecting on what may have happened.

Promoting a Sense of Belonging

Educators will:

- Create a welcoming environment where children feel safe, valued, and included.
- Establish consistent routines and expectations to help children feel secure and understand their environment.
- Engage with children in meaningful ways, showing genuine interest in their thoughts, feelings, and experiences.
- Use the child's mother tongue and culture to feel valued in the space.
- Create a room agreement, using the child voice and developing an understanding of taking pride in the room and the Centre.

Encouraging Self-Expression and Communication

Educators will:

- Provide opportunities for children to express themselves through a variety of mediums such as art, music, dance, and verbal communication.
- Actively listen to children, acknowledging their ideas and feelings, and responding thoughtfully.
- Support children in developing effective communication skills, guiding them to express their needs and emotions appropriately.

Providing Emotional Support

Educators will:

- Offer comfort and reassurance to children, particularly during times of change or stress.
- Build trusting relationships by being responsive and empathetic to children's needs.
- Encourage children to develop self-regulation skills and provide strategies to help them manage their emotions.

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- Utilise the Kimochi program to facilitate this.
- Each room to have their own breakout space, with weighted toy and sensory toys.

Reflecting and Adapting Practices

Educators will:

- Regularly reflect on their interactions with children, seeking feedback from colleagues and families to continually improve their practice.
- Adapt teaching strategies and interactions to meet the evolving needs and interests of each child.
- Participate in ongoing professional development to stay informed about best practices in early childhood education.

Positive Relationships Between Children

Creating a Supportive Environment

Educators will:

- Design the physical space to facilitate interactions among children, including areas for group activities and collaborative play.
- Encourage children to engage in cooperative play and group projects, promoting teamwork and social skills.
- Provide diverse and inclusive materials that reflect the backgrounds, cultures, and interests of all children.

Modeling Respectful Behaviour

Educators will:

- Demonstrate respectful and caring behaviour in their interactions with children and other adults.
- Guide children in understanding and respecting the feelings and rights of others.
- Encourage positive conflict resolution strategies, helping children to solve problems and negotiate disagreements amicably.
- Give children time to negotiate and solve problems before stepping in, helping to develop negotiation skills.
- All educators and staff to be consistent in approaches and language, reflecting their LBi, Kimochi and Emotional Regulation training, allowing the child to be approached with the same techniques, no matter who is helping them through the situation.

Facilitating Social Connections

Educators will:

- Support children in forming friendships by encouraging them to initiate and join group activities.
- Recognise and celebrate positive interactions and friendships, reinforcing the value of healthy relationships.
- Observe and intervene when necessary to support children who may have difficulty in social situations, providing guidance and opportunities to practice social skills.

Encouraging Empathy and Understanding

Educators will:

- Provide activities and discussions that promote empathy, such as role-playing scenarios and storytelling.
- Teach children to recognise and understand different emotions, fostering an empathetic and caring community.
- Create opportunities for children to help and support each other, building a sense of community and mutual respect.

Reflecting on Social Dynamics

Educators will:

- Observe and assess the social dynamics within the group, identifying any emerging issues or areas for improvement.
- Discuss observations with colleagues and families to gain insights and develop strategies to support positive relationships.
- Continuously evaluate and adjust practices to ensure they meet the needs of all children, promoting an inclusive and respectful environment.

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Situations requiring additional support – restorative practice

In a situation where a child is a danger to themselves or others, Teacher or leadership support is to be asked for. At the ELCC we ensure all children are safe and follow through responding not reacting and restorative practice, using the following steps and recorded on One Note after,

- A child is always afforded dignity. A child is never to be forcibly removed, unless a threat to themselves or others.
- If a threat to themselves or others, the child should be removed safely and to a safe space, the Community Room, Meeting Room, outside, the piazza or Director's office.
- At this time the child will be given sensory toys to help regulate, a choice of LBi strategies (found on educator's key chains or on posters throughout the Centre, also included in the appendixes) or time to regulate in a safe space.
- Educators should reflect on their LBi, Kimochi and Emotional Regulation training and respond to the child accordingly.
- When the child is ready, one-on-one they will talk with an educator, leadership member or teacher about what happened using Kimochi strategies and language.
- When re-entering the space, they should be afforded dignity, and the issue should not be dwelled upon.
- The child's family should be informed by either a Diploma or Teacher from the room. They should be given details about what happened and asked to reflect with their child at home. If it is believed a meeting is required, or this is happening frequently, please set up a meeting with the family to discuss strategies to support their child, or to talk about what is happening at home as it may be affecting the child in the Centre. This is to be documented in One Note.
- If another child was hurt or involved in the incident their family should also be called, no names are to be given. Explain what occurred and how it was resolved. This is to be documented in One Note.
- If the child physically assaults multi children, educators or adults, in line with Tenison's policy the parents will be called and informed. If this continues, the child may be asked to be collected from the Centre.

Growth Action Plans (GAPs)

GAPs are put in place when we believe children require extra support in the Centre. These are created by Teachers, with support from the Wellbeing Leader, Ang Cutting and reviewed termly by teams in each room.

They are live documents on One Note and continue to change as the child grows and accomplishes goals.

Broad Growth Intent:	
Client Name (or Cohort):	
Plan Produced By:	
Date:	
Reviewed By: Reviewed date:	

What is happening?	
Consider ' Observations ¹ ', ' Patterns ² ' (Triggers/Context) and ' Under the Surface ³ ' factors (feelings/needs).	
What is important (intent)?	How can this be actioned?

Behaviour Spiral EpiCentre Behaviour Spiral

- Supporting the GAP or a child with heightened behaviour, staff are encouraged to use the 'Behaviour Spiral' as a resource

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- This supports the educator to look from multiple perspectives at the child's actions and potentially uncover new information to help support the child to regulate
- The Epicentre Behaviour Spiral is a resource, that should be reused to support educators interactions with children.

Roles and Responsibilities

The approved provider CESA will:

- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met;
- Ensure that the service provides education and care to children in a way that:
 - Encourages the children to express themselves and their opinions;
 - Allows the children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem;
 - Maintains at all times the dignity and rights of each child;
 - Gives each child positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour »has regard to the family and cultural values, age, and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child (Regulation 155).
- Ensure that the service provides children with opportunities to interact and develop respectful relationships with each other and with educators, staff and volunteers, having regard to the size and the composition of the groups in which children are being educated and cared for (Regulation 156);
- Ensure the service meets minimum educator and staff requirements, such as qualifications and educator to child ratios;
- Ensure all educators and staff, including volunteers and students, have undertaken current child protection legislation training, including for the mandatory reporting requirements and obligations in their jurisdiction;
- Ensure that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or inappropriate in the circumstances;
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the Interactions with children policy and procedures;
- Ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, coordinators, educators, staff, volunteers and families, and available for inspection;
- Notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will:
 - Affect the fees charged or the way they are collected;
 - Significantly impact the service's education and care of children;
 - Significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service.

The nominated supervisor/ the day-to-day responsible person will:

- Implement the Interactions with children policy and procedures;
- Devise methods to lead the development and implementation of quality practices across the service that ensure that the requirements of Regulations 155 and 156 are met;
- Support educators to promote quality practice approaches to interactions with children;
- Ensure minimum educator and staff requirements are met, such as qualifications and educator to child ratios;
- Ensure all educators and staff, including volunteers and students, have undertaken current child protection legislation training, including for the mandatory reporting requirements and obligations in their jurisdiction;
- Ensure that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances.

The educators will:

- Contribute to the development of, and implement, quality practices that ensure that the requirements of Regulations 155 and 156 are met;
- Promote quality practice approaches to interactions with children;
- Be aware of current child protection legislation, including the mandatory reporting requirements and obligations;
- Monitor and maintain staff to child ratios to ensure adequate supervision of children;
- Support children in line with the strategies in the ACECQA Relationships with children information sheet.

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Grounding Strategies

Physical Grounding Strategies

-  Breathing Techniques
-  Go for a walk/run
-  Blow Bubbles
-  Ipad/ Tehcnology
-  Breakout Spaces
-  Watch a timer
-  Sensory Toys
-  Yoga and meditation



Respond not React



Verbal Grounding Strategies

“It’s OK, I’m here”

“It’s Ok to be mad, but it’s not Ok to be mean”

“I’m here to help”

“I see you., I hear you, what you are feeling matters”

“I hear you, I see you, I’m here to help”

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The infographic features a central illustration of an adult and a child holding hands. The adult's head is highlighted with a blue glow, and the child's head with a red glow. To the left, a teal iceberg-like shape contains a list of behaviors and internal states. To the right, a vertical text block asks questions about seeking and connection. The background is decorated with colorful abstract shapes.

What's Beneath the Surface? Be the Frontal lobe

Behaviour (What we can see)

- Over Stimulated
- Sensory Overload
- Sudden Change
- Overwhelmed
- Lonely
- Tired
- Hungry
- Noise Level

**What are they seeking?
Competence? Control? Connection?**

side by side, Hand in Hand