

Behaviour Guidance Policy

Policy Statement:

OSHC will provide a secure, caring and stimulating environment, which encourages children to co-operate, enhances their self-esteem and encourages their ability to interact with others. OSHC promotes the use of proactive strategies to encourage socially acceptable and age appropriate behaviours in children. Children will be encouraged to develop skills to self-regulate. Limits to behaviour will be clearly expressed in positive terms and reinforced consistently in a developmentally appropriate way. OSHC educators will role model positive and responsible behaviour during the course of their interactions with all children.

Objective:

- Provide guidelines for keeping children safe
- Provide guidelines for children, educators and families for dealing with children's behaviour.
- Provide educators with strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and to support children to manage their own behaviours.

Details of policy:

At OSHC appropriate strategies are used to guide children to recognise, manage and learn from their behaviours and express their emotions in positive, non-threatening and productive ways.

Acceptable forms of behaviour are encouraged through purposeful, positive reinforcement, staff modelling and developing rapport between staff and children.

A guidance approach highlights that adults must teach children, not punish them for not knowing how to act with respect.

OSHC educators recognise and understand that a child's behaviour may be affected by their:

- Age and development
- General health and wellbeing
- Relationships with their family
- Play and learning environments, that includes the physical indoor/outdoor settings, the weather, the time of year and time of day.
- The way in which staff implement strategies and practices
- Relationships with other children and stakeholders, such as students, volunteers and visitors
- External factors, such as family, home life, school or peer group experiences, or media coverage of traumatic events.

Educators use strategies that support children to learn self-regulation and manage their own behaviour.

Families and educators manage behaviours and not children, through respect and empathy towards children. They identify and discuss the behaviour and not the child.

Behaviour Guidance Policy

Educators demonstrate an understanding and empathy towards children who display behaviours that are not always consistent with their development and/or general disposition.

Educators apply Catholic Education's Guidelines for Professional Conduct in the Protection of Children and Young People when dealing with parents, children and other staff members.

Educators are not permitted at any time to use physical force/restraint or physical, verbal or emotional punishment and practices that demean, humiliate, frighten or threaten a child.

The use of food (ie. Lollies and snacks) must not be used as a reward system.

Procedures:

Children

- The rules – Care for Yourself, Care for Others and Care for the Environment will be used to set OSHC expectations in collaboration with the children – these will be regularly reviewed and discussions on behaviour with children should be founded on these rules/expectations.
- Children will be consulted when establishing play and behaviour limits and the consequences involved when limits are not maintained.
- Consequences will be natural consequences. For example, a child who throws a block and hits another child will need to pick up the block, look after the child to make sure they are okay and may not be able to play with the blocks. Having a child pick up papers because they aren't listening to educators is not a natural consequence as it doesn't fit with the behaviour.
- Children will not be told to say 'Sorry'. When children are forced to say sorry it becomes a meaningless word. We would rather children experience how their actions have impacted on another child and begin or continue to develop empathy by looking after the other person until they feel happy and safe again.
- Limits are defined in terms of a 'positive' instead of a 'negative'. This assists the child to remember what to do rather than what not to do. For example, 'children ... walk inside' is preferable to 'children – don't run'.
- When discussing behaviour with a child the educator will wait until the child is calm enough to talk about the incident. The staff member will sit with the child and use reflective questions to encourage the child to think about the choices that they have made and how these choices have affected themselves and others.
- At times, children may need to be removed from a situation because of their behaviour. In this situation, when a child is calm enough to talk about the incident, the educator will then facilitate the conversation with the child about their behaviour.
- Before talking about an incident it may be necessary for a staff member to leave a child to calm down. If this is necessary, the educator will communicate to the child that they are moving away to let them calm down and that they will have the conversation when the child is ready. The child must always be in sight of a staff member during this time.

Behaviour Guidance Policy

- In some instances, children may experience a sensory overload and need to be withdrawn from the over-stimulating environment. In these situations, the child may spend some quiet time in a space that is quiet, calming and has adult supervision (eg. Office, another room). It is reinforced to the child that they are not in trouble, however, their bodies need some time to be able to calm down so they can re-join their friends.

Spaces

- Where possible, children will be consulted when establishing play and learning spaces in the environment.
- Environments will have active, loud and energetic play spaces balanced with passive, quiet and peaceful areas where children can find solace and peace. This allows for a child who recognises that they are becoming frustrated with other children to retreat to an area that is calming and allows them to refocus.

Families

- All families have access to the Behaviour Guidance Policy
- Educators may seek information from families about the behaviour guidance strategies used at home.
- Families have the opportunity to express their thoughts, expectations and feelings openly with all staff in a respectful manner.
- Families should recognise that some behaviour guidance strategies or practices established in the home cannot be enforced in the service's environment.
- Families are encouraged to work with educators, children, and when required, with the school, to establish a behaviour guidance plan, if needed.
- Parents/guardians are not permitted to approach other children attending the service regarding behaviour incidents and/or issues. If there is a concern parents/guardians are to approach the Coordinator or the Directors.

Educators/Visitors/Students and Volunteers:

- Model appropriate behaviour, including using positive language, gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice.
- Monitor children's play, pre-empting potential conflicts or challenging situations and support children to consider alternative behaviours.
- Constantly and consistently use positive guidance strategies when reinforcing the OSHC behaviour expectations.
- Support children to make choices, accept challenges, manage change, cope with frustration and to experience the consequences of their actions.
- Acknowledge children when they make a positive choice in managing their own behaviour.
- Educators are required to follow the service behaviour management strategies and techniques, including completion of an incident/accident/injury report to be signed by the parent/guardian at the end of the day.
- Educators, other children and families will refrain from labelling a child's inappropriate or negative behaviour as 'naughty' or 'bad'. Similarly, educators will try to refrain from using traditional labels such as 'good boy' or 'good girl', which identify the individual but not the behaviour;

Behaviour Guidance Policy

For example, when a child completes a task directed by an adult, such as washing their hands before a meal, staff will identify the behaviour that reinforces the achievement and not label the worth of the individual. Instead of 'good boy/girl' the educator can respond with 'thankyou (child's name) for washing your hands with soap before lunch' or 'thank you for remembering to clean your hands before you eat'.

- Educators will communicate concerns or issues with the coordinators or Director.
- Educators respond to, and acknowledge children's emotions, such as happiness, anger, pleasure, fear, anxiety, frustration, sadness and pride.
- Educators will acknowledge that the emotions experienced by children are significant. For example, an adult who is not scared of thunder should not trivialise the fear or anxiety expressed by a child.
- Educators understand that children may not have developed the appropriate strategies to express emotions due to their age and/or stage of development.
- All educators are encouraged to seek advice from supervisors if they are ever unsure of how to effectively guide the behaviour of a child.
- Educators are encouraged to use the following steps when a child has displayed inappropriate behaviour;
 1. Reminder of expectations
 - I. Talk to the children about what the expectation is and ask them if they know why the expectation is in place.
 2. Discuss what happened
 - I. If necessary, move the child away from the situation/area. The child may need to be away from the situation, other children, etc.
 - II. Acknowledge what has occurred (ask what happened, relay what you have seen). Ensure that you find out what happened in the lead up to the event as well as this may have impacted what has happened.
 - III. Acknowledge the feeling or hurt that has resulted from this action (describe how you feel as a result of what has happened or how the victim feels if someone else has been hurt/injured/upset through their actions).
 - IV. Discuss the choice the child has made (encourage the child to take responsibility for their actions, ensure they understand that the choice has affected someone else)
 - V. Discuss and alternative choice of behaviour (ask the child 'what could you have done differently?', make suggestions)
 - VI. Assist the child to articulate if the situation were to occur again how would they handle things differently so this result did not happen again.
 - VII. Discuss with child how they are going to make the situation better or what needs to happen from then (this could be that they look after the person who is upset, that they aren't able to use equipment that wasn't being used properly, etc. If there is a consequence, then it needs to be a natural consequence).
 - VIII. Assist the child to return to play (they may now be feeling emotional about what has happened).

Behaviour Guidance Policy

3. On advice from a member of the leadership team, an incident report may be required to be filled out for the child/children involved in the incident.
4. If unacceptable behaviour continues direct them to a member of the leadership team. Where possible, remain a part of the conversation.
5. Further actions after speaking to a member of the leadership team, depending on frequency and severity of incidents:
 - I. Parents called as soon as practical.
 - II. Depending on the situation the parent may be asked to collect their child.
 - III. The child may be excluded from the program for a period of time.

High Level Behaviours

High level behaviours are behaviours that cause or may reasonably cause physical and emotional danger to educators, children or the child themselves.

Examples of high level behaviours are:

- Bullying
- Intimidation
- Sexual harassment
- Premeditated physical fighting
- Physical aggression at staff
- Deliberate destruction of property
- Leaving program – running away
- Misusing equipment with the intent to harm others or cause damage

If children engage in high level behaviours, the behaviour guidance procedure will apply and the parent of that child will be contacted immediately and asked to collect the child. The child will stay with an educator until the parent can collect.

Exclusion from the program due to behaviours:

The service has a duty of care to all children who attend and educators who work within the service. A child may be excluded from the program for a period of time if the behaviour guidance procedures have been properly applied but without success and the child continually exhibits inappropriate behaviours.

If it is deemed that a child needs to be excluded from the program

- The school Principal will be notified
- A letter will be sent to the parent/guardian detailing the child's behaviours, exclusion time and expected return date.

Prior to the child's return:

- A meeting will be held between the Director, parent and child to discuss possible strategies and expectations on return to the service.
- A behaviour support plan may be developed for including the child back into the program.

If the child is included back and the same behaviour continues upon return, the child may be excluded permanently from the service.

Behaviour Guidance Policy

Exclusion from school

If the Director/Coordinator becomes aware of any child, who usually attends the service, being excluded from the school, they will:

- Contact the school to confirm exclusion;
- Speak with the principal to confirm if exclusion applies at the OSHC service;
- Contact the parent to confirm exclusion from the service (in accordance with Principal's direction).

Relevant Laws and other provisions:

The Laws and other provisions affecting this policy include:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act, 2011 and Regulations 2014
- 'My Time, Our Place' Framework for School Age Care 2011
- NQS Area:1.1.5, 1.1.6; 2.1.1; 2.3; 4.1; 4.2.1; 5.1; 5.2; 6.1.1, 6.1.3; 6.2; 6.3.2, 6.3.3; 7.1.2, 7.1.4, 7.1.5; 7.2.2; 7.3.1, 7.3.2, 7.3.4, 7.3.5.
- Policies: Duty of Care, Respect for Children, Enrolment and Orientation, Orientation for Families, Participation of Volunteers, Employment of School Employees (Catholic Education Office Policy).

Review:

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