

West Lakes Kindergarten and Early Childhood Centre
294 Sportsmans Drive West Lakes 5021
Policies and Guidelines

Interactions with Children

*Approved by the staff and parent management committee - June 2017
Previously known as Behaviour Guidance Code*

These guidelines regarding behaviour and guidance for children help ensure that children, families and staff have a safe environment, consistency and clarity around acceptable behaviour and guidance measures that will be implemented.

(In conjunction with the DECD Protective Practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people. Guidelines for staff working and volunteering in education and care settings. 2011)

At our Kindergarten we encourage and support managing behaviour in a positive way. We encourage children to:

- Care for themselves and keep safe,
- To respect others and keep them safe,
- To care and respect the Kindergarten's equipment and the environment.

We believe that staff and parents need to share the responsibility for managing challenging behaviours by being consistent at all times, by creating safe and secure environments for children and by modelling appropriate behaviours.

As a staff team we believe:

- All children have the right to feel secure and to learn and develop in a psychological and physically safe, environment
- Children have a right to express their feelings and to be supported to develop positive behaviours that underpin the development of relationships with peers and adults
- Effective communication and learning occurs when families and educators work together to develop common goals for a child's well-being, learning and development.
- That the consideration of children's individual, and contextual needs are crucial to successful learning and the development of positive behaviours
- That family consultation is valued and their individual perspectives respected
- Children have the right to be supported by educators who model appropriate behaviours and ensure consistent limits are set
- No child should be made to feel rejected, insecure, embarrassed or ashamed

As a staff team we promote positive behaviour and interactions by:

- Planning for and providing an environment that promotes a sense of belonging, being and becoming and provides enhanced opportunities for learning through play
- Ensuring that limits set are reasonable and understood by all children and adults
- Providing an enriching and engaging program that enables each child to experience success, a sense of well-being and gives opportunities to express feelings through sensory and other forms of play
- Using positive verbal and nonverbal guidance
- Demonstrate empathy and sensitivity to each child being mindful of the variety of factors that influence behaviour
- Planning enabling opportunities for the development of skills including resilience, agency, entry and exit skills when playing, appropriate risk taking, conflict resolution, independence, leadership, respect for others and communication.
- Interacting positively, using positive language and acknowledging and modelling respectful behaviour
- Valuing children as individuals within their family and cultural context
- Involving children in goal setting, developing group norms and the development of behavioural expectations and consequences
- Intentional teaching of appropriate behaviours and play skills, building on each child's strengths and achievements and providing choices when possible
- Encouraging open two way communication with families to ensure that each child's rights are met.

We will respond to challenging behaviours by:

- Reminding children of expectations and limits and the reasons for these,
- Supporting children to problem solve, negotiate, find resolutions and manage emotions appropriately
- Using Restorative Justice practices that support children to empathise with others and restore relationships
- Communicating with and involving families at the earliest opportunity to work together positively to assist the child's well-being and learning
- Assessing individual children's learning and development and reflecting on and reviewing our planned program and how the active learning environment supports positive behaviours
- Planning, implementing, monitoring and reviewing individual behaviour plans in partnership with families and support services
- Being aware of our limitations and seeking assistance when required
- Withdrawing children when they are at risk of hurting themselves or others, ensuring that an adult is with them all the time.

Children are constantly learning - to be 'social' and to know the accepted ways of living, playing, working and being with others. As they develop they are learning to share, to take turns, to resolve conflict, to listen, to play together and to communicate and share their ideas. Sometimes they don't always get it right, and some children need more support than others to develop these skills.

Acceptable behaviour

Acceptable behaviour that we encourage and model for children include;

- Respecting each other-accepting each person as an individual, their differences, culture and beliefs
- Listening to others – everyone has something valuable to contribute
- Using positive language (having a 'can do' attitude)
- Being co-operative
- Helping each other out
- Taking turns
- Sharing - equipment and materials
- Being friendly
- Participating in activities and experiences

These behaviours provide the foundations to life-long learning and teach children to respect, value, understand and care for each other.

Minimising Challenging or Unacceptable Behaviours

Learning to play appropriately with others takes time. The staff at our Kindy uses a range of strategies to minimise unacceptable behavior such as:

- Those which **physically hurt or frighten** others eg *Kicking, punching, biting, spitting, pushing and shoving*
- Those which are **dangerous** to the children themselves or to others eg *throwing equipment, running inside*
- Those which hurt or frighten others through **language** or bullying - eg *name calling, insults, put downs*
- Those which spoil other's achievement or work eg – *deliberately knocking down or ruining other children's work*
- Those which interfere with the routines around the center such as deliberately disrupting learning/play time.

We understand that all children are individuals and will have different levels of understanding and have experienced different types of rules. Some children who have learning difficulties/ delays or disorders may have greater difficulty in self-regulation and in understanding rules.

Children learn best when they experience success and feel good about themselves but sometimes children do feel angry, frustrated and upset and need some help and support to express their feelings appropriately.

When unsafe/unacceptable behaviour occurs, staff will:

1. **Redirect** the play or the child
2. **Offer choices/give warnings**
3. **Talk** about the problem (eg. "what would happen if...")
4. Support children using statements such as **'Stop, I don't like that'**
5. If the unsafe behaviours are repeated, staff will provide some time away from the situation called **'Thinking Time'**, for a brief amount of time and the child will be supervised by an educator. The Director will inform the child's parents and have a discussion about options for supporting behaviour.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's behaviours, please see one of our staff.