



Behaviour support and interactions with children

Reviewed and approved by parent committee and staff – March 2023 (Previously known as Behaviour Guidance Code)

Overview

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

The staff are guided by the practices and principles of the Early Years Learning Framework – Belonging, Being, Becoming and the National Quality Standards

Rationale

Good relationships in early life help children to connect with others, build positive friendships and support children to self-regulate their emotions.

At West Lakes Kindergarten and ECC we believe in building meaningful interactions – that are warm, caring and responsive. When attention is given to building connections and maintaining them over time, children are more likely to feel a sense of security, well-being and belonging. We also believe that children need to develop ‘social competence’ and the ability to interact with others with care, empathy and respect. Social competence is the foundation that allows children to understand and self-regulate their own emotions and negotiate their interactions with others. We do this through, building quality relationships between educators and children to support children feel secure, to explore, play and learn and to offer opportunities for children to learn how to interact with others, respect others’ rights, and be appropriately assertive and caring.

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.

Quality Relationships with children

At WLK&ECC, each staff member builds positive relationships with children that are responsive, respectful and promote children's sense of security and belonging and we do this through:

- Develop respectful and equitable relationships with each child.
- Have responsive and meaningful interactions with children through building trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
- The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
- Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships
- Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.
- Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

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.

We all have the right to feel safe!

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 '**Time Away**', for a brief amount of time and the child will be supervised by an educator. The Director will inform the child's parents and discuss options for supporting behaviour, or accessing further support or services.

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