



P5-01: Behaviour Guidance Policy

Version Control	Date	Author	Description of Change
1.0	1999	QDPA	Original document
2.0	2002	QDPA	Scheduled review and update
3.0	2004	QDPA	Scheduled review and update
4.0	2006	QDPA	Scheduled review and update
5.0	2008	QDPA	Scheduled review and update
6.0	2010	QDPA	Scheduled review and update
7.0	2012	QDPA	Scheduled review and update
8.0	2014	QDPA	Scheduled review and update
9.0	2015	QDPA	Scheduled review and update
10.0	May 2021	QDPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document reviewed with change in leadership team in 2021. • Version control and description box added to clarify reviewed items/new inclusions • Format change to include policy statement, purpose, scope and implementation, addition of footers and page numbering and general layout changes • Clarification about what Educators will and will not do to guide behaviour incorporated. • Process regarding continued behaviour /Risk to Educators and/or children incorporated

Links

Education and Care Services National Regulations	155, 156, 168, 174 & 175
National Quality Standard (NQS)	5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 6.1.1

RELATED POLICIES

Anti-Bias and Inclusion Policy	Medical Condition Policy
Educational Program Policy	Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
Family Communication Policy	Respect for Children Policy
Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Policy	Enrolment Policy
Interaction with Children, Family and Staff Policy	Supervision Policy

STATEMENT

Supporting children to develop socially acceptable behaviour and self-regulation is a primary goal for educators and families. This is embedded in fundamental documents including the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), Education and Care Services National Regulations, and the National Quality Standard (NQS).



PURPOSE

The Queanbeyan & District Preschool Association (QDPA) aims to create positive relationships with children by helping them to feel safe, secure, and supported within our Preschools. We will ensure children are treated fairly and equitably and with respect and consistency, as they are supported to develop the skills and knowledge required to behave in a socially and culturally acceptable manner.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of the Service.

DEFINITIONS

Behaviour guidance- this term is used to reflect current thinking about the most positive and effective ways to help children gain understanding and learn skills that will help them to manage their own behaviour.

Self-regulation- The ability to manage energy states, emotions, behaviour and attention: the ability to return to a balanced, calm and constant state of being. Self-regulation is a key factor for mental health, wellbeing and learning (KidsMatter, Early Childhood, 2014).

Inclusion- considering all children's social, cultural, and linguistic diversity (including learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstance and geographic location) in curriculum decision-making processes (Early Years Learning Framework - EYLF).

IMPLEMENTATION

The behaviour and guidance strategies used by staff and Educators at QDPA are designed to provide children with the opportunity to expand their experiences of life in a productive, safe environment that allows individuals the right to safety, tolerance, self-expression, cultural identity, dignity and the worth of the individual.

Educators understand that as children grow and develop, self-regulation becomes an important aspect of social and emotional development as they begin to understand how their actions affect others.



We believe in providing boundaries as part of a caring and trusting relationship with children and families to help them feel secure and self-confident. Children benefit from knowing that their environment is stable and that a competent adult is taking care of them.

There are three key aspects to promoting positive behaviour:

1. Creating a quality learning environment that is positive and supportive and provides developmentally appropriate experiences and resources
2. Implementing guidance strategies for building skills and strengthening positive behaviour based on age-appropriate behaviour expectations
3. Employing strategies for guiding children's behaviour resulting in decreasing undesired behaviours.

QDPA believes that:

All behaviour has a purpose. Strategies implemented will build on a child's strengths to support them to meet that purpose in a safe and respectful way.

- Behaviour is learnt over time. Children will be supported to learn and practice new positive behaviours over time.
- Parents, caregivers, family members, community members, peers and professionals influence children's behavioural development. They are all key partners in supporting positive behavioural change.
- Exclusionary responses can include restrictive practices that seek to remove the child from their learning environment & peers. The overuse of restrictive practices is an infringement of human and civil rights can cause long term harm that may further affect children with developmental trauma. It is for this reason that exclusionary responses will be considered only in extreme cases where significant risk to Educators and other children has been identified and strategies to mitigate these risks have not proved successful.

Positive behaviour strategies

Guiding children's behaviour is an important aspect of caring for and educating children. Positive strategies need to be developed to assist children to learn appropriate ways of behaving. Corporal punishment and unreasonable discipline are not permitted at any time in children's services, not only because the child may be physically harmed, but also because it nearly always has detrimental effects on the child's self-esteem and feelings of security.



All educators and staff at our Service will role model appropriate behaviour and language, encouraging children to socialise with other children, including children of different cultural backgrounds as well as from different age groups and different genders.

Behaviour guidance strategies implemented within our service are appropriate to the child's age and developmental capacity. Children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves and are provided with opportunities for independence and self-regulation. Children are given the opportunity to make choices and experience the consequences of these choices when there is no risk of physical or emotional harm to the child or anyone else. They are acknowledged when they make positive choices in managing their behaviour.

Strategies may include using visual cues, prompting, re-direction, re-teaching strategies, developing logical consequences and conferences with children. In the instance of adverse behaviour being persistently observed, educators will evaluate their program, room set up, supervision etc. to identify triggers and sources of inappropriate or challenging behaviour.

Regular routines and consistency in implementing behaviour guidance strategies are critical to support children's wellbeing and promote children's agency. All staff implement an active and positive approach to guiding children's behaviour within our service.

Management/Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will ensure:

- No child being educated and cared for by the service is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances
- Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury
- Connections are built between our service and local primary schools to support positive learning environments
- Behaviour guidance does not involve making judgements about children or their families
- Information is gathered from families about their children's social skills, relationship preferences, family and cultural values which will be recorded in the child's individual file.
- Educators will use this information to engage children in experiences that support children to develop and practice their social and decision-making skills
- Positive and respectful relationships with children are established and maintained
- Children are empowered to use language and other forms of non-hurtful communication to communicate their emotions



- Positive, empathetic relationships are promoted between children assisting them to develop respectful relationships
- The dignity and rights of each child are always maintained
- Positive and inclusive strategies are implemented to enable educators to encourage positive behaviour in children in order to minimise adverse behaviour
- General information about behaviour guidance is provided to families through parent interviews and newsletters
- A partnership is developed with other professionals or support agencies that work with children who have diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties to develop plans for the inclusion of these specific children. This information will be kept confidential and in the individual child's file.
- Excessive or challenging behaviour is managed and communicated with families
- Strategies are implemented to re-direct a child who may be causing or about to cause harm to himself or herself, another child, or adult. Incidents may include a child who is kicking, spitting, biting, throwing furniture or toys, punching or hitting, or being disruptive. Redirection may also include an incident where a child places him/herself in a dangerous situation, for example, climbing a fence or hiding in a potentially dangerous position. Safety is a priority, and this may mean using physical re-direction in which an Educator will remove the child from the harmful situation if required.
- Families are notified and the incident/behaviour is addressed sensitively. In an instance where a child or children's safety has been jeopardised, parents are required to sign the *Behaviour Incident Report*.
- Should the behaviour continue, the child's behaviour is observed and carefully documented. Additional information is collated related to the context and behaviour guidance strategies implemented.
- Families and professional agencies are consulted to ensure that a consistent approach is used to support the child with diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties
- Application for additional support for educators to build their capacity and capabilities to include children with additional needs will be made as required
- An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed and guided by local support agencies as required for individual children
- The IEP is reviewed on a periodic basis reflecting changes that have been applied through the implementation of the plan
- Professional development is provided for educators to be informed, trained, and supervised to implement the IEP created, ensuring that information is composed and recorded for reflection on its effectiveness for the individual child



- Notification is made to the regulatory authority within the legislated time frames of any circumstance that poses a risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of a child or children, or of any complaint alleging that a serious incident has occurred at the service.

Educators will:

- Encourage and support each child's social and emotional development, striving to develop children's self-regulation and an understanding of the feelings of others
- Actively work with younger children to promote and role-model positive ways to interact with others
- Teach behavioural expectations
- Support appropriate behaviour- visual cues, prompting, positive verbal feedback and quality learning environments
- Children are provided with positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour
- Promote children's initiative and agency
- Actively work with all children to support them in constructing and conveying ways of expressing needs, resolving conflict, and responding to the behaviour of others
- At all times provide positive role-modelling in their dealings with children, other educators and staff, and families
- Discuss guidelines, rules, limits, and what is fair with children, and use their contributions in setting limits and guidelines
- Guide children's behaviour, teaching them how to be considerate of others – to think about the effects of their actions on others. It is important that children understand what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is and how to manage their emotions.
- Talk calmly with children about the consequence of their actions, and the reason for rules
- Use corrective consequences- prompt, redirect, re-teach, provide choice, logical consequence, conference with child and educator
- Provide positive feedback and focus on children's strengths and achievements and build on their abilities
- Take into consideration the child's past experiences as their behaviour could be a result of past trauma such as changes in routine, changes or losses within the family, placement in care, or more serious circumstances involving abuse, neglect, or family violence
- Be responsive to these former experiences, designing and implementing behaviour plans with the individual child that include strategies which will assist alternative and positive behaviour
- Provide age appropriate, challenging, and interesting activities, experiences, and equipment for children to use and become engaged with
- Ensure there are sufficient materials and equipment for individual, small and large group activities



- Set up the environment (indoor and outdoor) for children to engage in activities and experiences in accordance with their abilities and interests
- Adapt a positive approach, excluding cruel, harsh, humiliating or demeaning actions
- Commit to professional development and keep up to date with industry information regarding behaviour guidance strategies
- Support children to explore different identities and points of view and to communicate effectively when resolving disagreements with others
- Participate in planned and spontaneous conversations with children about emotions, feelings and issues of inclusion and fairness, bias and prejudice, and the consequences of their actions, as well as the appropriate rules and the reasons for the rules
- Provide children with the language and vocabulary needed to express their emotions and feelings and verbalise their concerns
- Encourage children to listen to other people's ideas, consider pro-social and altruistic behaviour and collaborate and negotiate in problem solving situations
- Listen empathetically to children when they communicate their emotions, provide encouragement as they reassure the child it is normal to experience positive and negative emotions
- Guide children to remove themselves from situations where they are experiencing frustration, anger, or fear
- Support children to negotiate their rights and rights of others and mediate perceptively when children have trouble in resolving dissimilarity
- Learn about children's relationships with others and their relationship preferences they have and use this knowledge to encourage children to manage their own behaviour and expand on their empathy skills
- Use positive language, gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice when redirecting or discussing children's behaviour with them
- Remain calm, respectful and tolerant as they encourage children who are strongly expressing distress, frustration or anger
- Guide children's behaviour with a focus on preserving and promoting children's self-esteem as they learn to self-regulate their behaviour
- Implement "*time with*" an adult, which will be used when all other strategies (above) have been exhausted. "*Time with*" allows educators to offer reassurance and support so the child can settle and regain self-control, develop some self-calming behaviours and gain composure. Once calm, educators can assist the child to identify what happened, reflect on their actions and consider how they may have done something differently. "*Time with*" will always occur under the supervision of other Educators.



Educators will not:

- Force-feed a child
- Yell at, belittle a child or humiliate a child
- Physically drag a child
- Lock children away (or isolate them)
- Deprive a child of food or drink
- Unreasonably restrain a child
- Exclude children from events or activities
- Consistently move children to the office or other space away from the play areas
- Move children to another room as punishment
- Verbally or physically threaten a child
- Negatively label the child or family
- Criticise a child's actions or behaviours
- Discourage a child from taking part in activities
- Make fun of or laugh at or about a child
- Use sarcastic or cruel humour with or to a child
- Excessively use of negative language to a child, such as, "no" "stop that!" "don't..." "you never..."

Families will:

- Provide consent for the service to consult with professional agencies to assist with implementing an Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- Work collaboratively with Educators and professional agencies when required to develop a broader understanding of the child's developmental level and share any recent events which may be influencing the child's behaviour
- Create consistency in behaviour guidance strategies used at the service and at home

Children will:

- Know they are valued, respected and that they can have their opinions heard by a supportive adult
- Be supported by providing acceptable alternative behaviours when challenging behaviour occurs
- Learn to respect the rights and needs of others by anticipating the result and consequences of their behaviour appropriate to their age and to their developmental stage.



- Be given positive guidance towards understanding the difference between acceptable behaviour and unacceptable behaviour looks, feels and sounds like in the early learning setting
- Gradually develop an understanding of their actions and how their behaviour impacts on others
- Be encouraged to use their words rather than actions to resolve conflicts
- Build on strengthening their communication skills through:
 - greeting others when they arrive and depart from the Service
 - sharing resources
 - assisting when it is time to pack away the indoor and outdoor environment
 - using manners such as 'please' and 'thank-you'
- Learn to wait for their turn for an appropriate period of time- this will depend on age and development level
- Learn about the feelings of others throughout the program in order to assist children to understand the consequences of their actions.
- Be encouraged to engage in cooperative and pro-social behaviour and express their feelings and responses to others' behaviour confidently and constructively, including challenging the behaviour of other children when it is disrespectful or unfair.

Continued Behaviour or Risk to Educators and/or children:

If inappropriate/negative/dangerous behaviours continue, Educators and the Director will work with the family to devise a plan to ensure that consistent and appropriate strategies are used by all parties. Communication will be documented using a variety of techniques (Timelines, ABC forms and frequency charts) for all parties and a follow up on the plan will occur with family regularly. These strategies and agreed approaches will be documented using a *Collaborative Support Plan*. Confidentiality/privacy of the child and family will be maintained.

Complex and unsafe behaviours that are severe, of high frequency or extended duration, or are unsafe for a child or those around them require intensive and individualised interventions in addition to targeted and universal strategies. It is for this reason that the referral to professionals (such as behavioural psychologists or support agencies) may be recommended to the family by QDPA. If families are requested by QDPA to seek this professional support, it is a requirement of the child's continuing enrolment that such support be accessed by families to ensure the wellbeing of the child, Educators and other enrolled children.

The nature of the response to behaviours of this nature by QDPA will be equitable and reflect the child's needs and what is required to support positive and respectful behaviour in future. Exclusionary responses are used as a last resort or when risk to Educators and other children is deemed to be too high. Strategies and interventions to support children's positive behaviour development reflects the QDPA's commitment to safe inclusion for all children.



Certain approaches to children's ongoing behaviour modification plan are only implemented where possible and when endorsed by the therapist or specialist involved i.e. the removal of the child in cases of undesired behaviour.

Discussions about exposure to overwhelming triggers (for example, on excursion) may require the parent to attend as the child's direct supervisor etc. Should this be required, discussions will be held with family and documented in a Collaborative Support Plan.

QDPA will access available funding, with family permission, to assist to support children that may have high learning support needs on an ongoing basis.

Source

Association of Children's Welfare Agencies: www.acwa.asn.au

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Porter, L. (2016). *Young children's behaviour: Guidance approaches for early childhood educators*. Australia: Allen & Unwin.

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