



Interactions With Children Policy

BACKGROUND

The National Quality Framework includes a learning framework My Time, Our Place for school age children in education and care settings. This framework recognises the valuable role OSHC services play in the lives of children and families. My Time, Our Place sets a vision for children's learning through play and leisure, in contrast to the expectations in classroom settings.

POLICY STATEMENT

Holy Family Catholic School OSHC service uses the My Time, Our Place Framework for School Age Care in Australia to underpin the operational development of the service and ensure that the needs of each child are addressed. Our philosophy states the service's purpose and direction underpins all policies and procedures. We value our OSHC educators and enable them to access professional development and training. This informs them of the latest research findings that will guide and empower them to effectively support and nurture children.

HOW THE POLICY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED

1. General

My Time, Our Place contains broad principles that support practice and reflect contemporary theories and research regarding children's play, leisure and learning. The principles of secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships, partnerships, high expectations, equity and respect for diversity should guide interactions with children.

'Educators who are attuned to children's thoughts and feelings support the development of a strong sense of wellbeing and social competencies' (My Time, Our Place, p10).

Educators who strive to build strong connections with children contribute to their sense of belonging, fairness and self-esteem. Partnerships are based on effective communication which builds the foundations of understanding about each other's expectations and attitudes and build on the strength of each other's knowledge. Important qualities for educators when building relationships with children include fairness, integrity, authenticity, humour, sympathy, understanding and open communication.

Reflective practice is another principle underpinning the school age care framework. It is central to sustaining high quality programs and interactions with children and brings theory and practice together to enable learning from experiences and to adapt and develop practices in the light of new understandings. Learning together with children and colleagues draws upon the diverse knowledge, experiences, views and attitudes of individuals within the group. Being reflective means being open to change and examining current beliefs, attitudes and knowledge while constantly looking for ways to improve. Services implement reflective practice by providing time for educators to examine aspects of service delivery: firstly, how it is done then, questioning why it is done this way. This examination allows educators to reflect on current theory as well as attitudes and beliefs, which may influence their views. Inquiry may increase levels of cultural appropriateness and reveal practices that may impact on children's wellbeing

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2. Promoting participation

Participation is an ongoing process of engagement and involvement through which children and young people:

- are actively listened to.
- are supported to express their views.
- have their views taken into account and recorded.
- are involved in decision-making processes.

The underpinning principles of the Child and Young Person (Safety) Act 2017, emphasise participation by children and young people, respect for their rights, consideration of their views and, where possible, involvement in decision-making processes affecting their lives.

3. Inclusion

Our OSHC service is committed to providing an environment with activities and experiences that encourage all children to learn, extend their skills and have fun. Educators will respect individual differences and treat everyone without bias, prejudice or reference to stereotyping, and will encourage the children to reciprocate these ideals.

- The individuality of all children and staff will be respected.
- The service is respectful of staff, children and families all backgrounds, and structures the program to assist these individuals wherever possible.
- Programming will be inclusive of each individual's cultural needs and differences as much as possible; diversity will be celebrated. This assists children in understanding and appreciating cultural diversity.
- The service will actively seek input from cultural identities within the local community.
- Children with disabilities and additional needs will be included into the service once appropriate levels of support to facilitate effective inclusion are available. This may include some physical facilities, specialised staff training, and additional staff.
- A positive relationship is formed with all families of children with additional needs to learn more about their child/ren, his/her requirements and the expectations of the family.
- Staff will help children to show understanding, acceptance and respect for individual differences by modelling appropriate behaviour and using opportunities such as informal discussions during play to address issues of fairness and justice.
- Staff will encourage children to communicate with each other respectfully and to be fair to one another.
- The service will program equitably for boys and girls and, where possible, offer opportunities for activities to be done individually or collaboratively, providing the children with choice within the service.
- The service identifies and encourages children's differing special qualities and ensures that programming enables each child to succeed.
- Resources will be monitored within the service to ensure that there is no evidence of stereotyping, bias and discrimination.
- To ensure that all children are receiving optimal care within the service, staff will participate in professional development and training and have ready access to reference materials within the service.

4. Behaviour guidance policy

Our OSHC service is committed to meeting the needs of the children in care in a way that fosters a positive and nurturing environment. The safety of all children and educators is a priority. Children and

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educators are to be treated respectfully. Within the service environment, educators and children work collaboratively to define consequences for the actions of children who do not respect, or consider the safety of, others. The service has a clear process for unacceptable behaviour, which is compatible with the school policies and procedures.

We believe that to effectively guide children’s behaviour we need to:

- ensure children are continually guided positively and encouraged towards acceptable and inclusive behaviour in order to maintain their self-esteem, dignity and personal integrity
- guide children to recognise personal responsibility and self-discipline
- acknowledge that children can learn from their mistakes
- be fair and consistent
- place focus on the behaviour and not the child when guiding behaviour
- recognise that a child’s behaviour is affected by a multitude of factors, including age, physical environment, time of day, staff and other children’s actions, family experiences and cultural backgrounds
- work together with families and teachers to build positive relationships
- provide a wide and varied program to reduce boredom and discontent
- seek input from families and children when reviewing behaviour management policy, to encourage ownership and acceptance.
- The behavioural expectations are as follows:
 - We respect and care for ourselves, other people and property.
 - We work and play safely and cooperatively.
 - We follow directions of educators.
 - We stay inside the supervised boundaries.

The following process will be introduced when expectations are not being followed:

- An informal reminder is given to the child about their behaviour
- Reflection time or a conversation with an Educator is given to the child to provide opportunity to review their own behaviour and ensure they are emotionally ready to re-join other children at the service.
- If a child poses a threat to themselves or others or displays frequent, inappropriate behaviour, parents will be called to pick their child up.
- The Educators will discuss behaviour management at scheduled meetings.

5. Harassment

Our OSHC service is a place of belonging where each person has the right to feel safe and secure at all times and the responsibility to make it happen, and so we seek to live justly, through our mutual respect for each other.

5.1 What is harassment?

Harassment is any repeated action, which threatens, hurts, frightens, embarrasses or humiliates a person.

Some examples include:

- Fighting, pushing, shoving, gestures
- Picking on others
- Threats
- Name calling, put downs, etc.
- Offensive language, notes or graffiti about others
- Repeatedly teasing, making fun of others

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- Spreading stories about someone or their family
- Intimidating anyone or their family by 'nuisance' actions e.g. telephone calls, chain letters

Other forms of harassment include:

Racism:

- Calling a person name or saying unpleasant things because of their culture, background or language
- Telling jokes or showing offensive material that is degrading to a person of a different racial background
- Deliberately excluding others because of their race

Sexual:

- Inappropriate touching or brushing against someone
- Unwelcome staring, whistling, gesturing or making comments about someone's body, looks or clothes
- Writing and/or distributing rude/unpleasant notes about someone
- Telling jokes or showing reading material/pictures that are offensive
- Making suggestive comments of a sexual nature
- Making comments about someone's sexuality

5.2 Examples where harassment can occur:

- Between children
- From a child to a staff member
- From a staff member to a child
- Between staff members
- From a parent to a staff member
- Between parents
- From a parent to a child

REFERENCES:

- Quality Area 1 – Educational program and practice
- Quality Area 2 – Children's health and safety
- Quality Area 5 – Relationships with children
- Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011), R 155 & 156
- [Holy Family Catholic School Behaviour Education and Personal Responsibility Policy](#)

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