ARDROSSAN AND DISTRICTS COMMUNITY KINDERGARTEN
GUIDING CHILDREN’S BEHAVIOUR POLICY INCLUDING
ANTIBULLYING

PHILOSOPHY

At Ardrossan and Districts Community Kindergarten we aim to provide a friendly and caring environment that supports and encourages positive relationships with children, parents, families, staff and community to ensure opportunities for quality learning.

At Ardrossan Kindergarten we are committed to a Guiding Children’s Behaviour Policy that:

• reflects the values, attitudes and current recommended strategies that promote positive play and antibullying behaviour
• respects the importance of positive interactions and relationships between children, families and staff
• understands why children behave in certain ways in specific circumstances
• promotes realistic play and behaviour limits that guide children’s safety and security rather than curb their play experiences, curiosity or creativity
• defines clear strategies that communicate how behaviour guidance is implemented by the service;
• informs children, parents, caregivers, families, staff and community about the procedures involved in guiding children’s behaviour.
• explains the service’s commitment to professional development and utilisation of external agencies.

The purpose of the Guiding Children’s Behaviour Policy is to:

• respect that individual children have rights but also responsibilities
• recognise, value and celebrate differences and similarities
• encourage acceptable forms of behaviour by using strategies that build children’s confidence and self-esteem
• provide children with support, guidance and opportunities to manage their own behaviour and
• promote collaborative approaches to behaviour and antibullying guidance
• model to families the use of appropriate strategies to guide children to recognise, manage and learn from their behaviour and express their emotions in positive, non-threatening and productive way

We understand that a child’s behaviour, whilst attending our Kindergarten, may be affected by:

• age and development
• general health and wellbeing
• the layout and organisation of the play and learning environment, which includes the physical indoor/outdoor settings, the weather, the time of year, time of day
• care giving strategies and practices, including how these strategies are implemented
• relationships with other children and adults and
• external factors, such as relationships, family considerations, home life, school or peer group experiences, media and traumatic events.

We encourage and acknowledge the ongoing learning of:

• Individuals to display respect and empathy towards children and label the behaviour rather than the individual child so that the behaviour is managed
• Staff to consider and respect individual children’s and families’ backgrounds and beliefs, whilst considering they may need to at times balance individual needs with a knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices and recommendations from recognised authorities.
• Staff as employees under the Occupational Health and Safety Act ensure that the working environment supports the emotional and psychological wellbeing of participants
• Staff to implement behaviour guidance strategies and/or plans for children that display inappropriate behaviour, (especially if the behaviour is aggressive towards other children or adults) and are provided continued support and assistance.
• The use of physical punishment\(^1\), humiliation, intimidation or negative labeling as a behaviour guidance strategy is not acceptable under any circumstances.

**Families need:**

• clear guidelines about acceptable behaviour
• open communication with staff
• involvement in determining appropriate strategies for dealing with poor behaviour
• opportunities and support to further develop knowledge and parenting skills
• awareness that some behaviour guidance strategies or practices established in the home are unable to be enforced in a Kindergarten environment

**Families are provided:**

- Information about the Guiding Children’s Behaviour Policy in Enrolment Package
- Opportunity to inform staff about routines and behaviour strategies used at home
- Opportunity to express their thoughts, expectations and feelings
- Information or support to assist and reinforce positive guidance practices
- Avenues to seek further clarification or explanation (see Grievance and Managing Complaints policy)

**Staff need:**

• To provide programs that meet the developmental, social, emotional and cognitive needs of children
• Appropriate knowledge and training to deal with behaviour issues and anti-bullying
• Support from parents and management in dealing with difficult behaviours.

**Staff are positive role models and:**

• respond to, and acknowledge children’s emotions eg happiness, anger, pleasure, fear, anxiety, frustration, sadness, pride.
• acknowledge that the emotions experienced by children are significant.
• understand that children have varying strategies to express emotions due to their age and/or stage of development.
• interact with children, families and peers equitably and respectfully;
• use language that promotes empathy and understanding;
• actively monitor children’s interactions and behaviour
• maintain observational and anecdotal records of individual children
• emphasise and encourage positive effort and behaviour
• encourage empathy towards others
• consider environmental factors such as noise, tone of voice, weather, time of day, incidental situations, group dynamics and scenarios that may contribute to children’s behaviour
• support and encourage children to be fair and respectful of others.
• display attitudes and practices that demonstrate understanding and empathy towards children whose behaviour may not be consistent with their development and/or general disposition
• develop a range of strategies to guide children’s positive behaviour
• participate in ongoing professional learning, training and development

**Children need to:**

• be safe, secure and protected;
• be able to express their emotions appropriately;
• explore, enjoy and share learning experiences
• have their feelings acknowledged and accepted
• have consistent expectations.
• have their social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds respected;

**Children are guided and supported, as is developmentally appropriate for their age, to:**

- self regulate their own behaviour
- recognise and acknowledge their own feelings and emotions
- consider their actions in relation to themselves and others
- seek support and guidance from peers and adults
- respond positively to ongoing encouragement and praise from others

---

\(^1\) For the purpose of this policy, physical punishment includes smacking, hitting, slapping, kicking, pinching, pulling, pushing, shoving or the inappropriate manhandling of a child by an adult.
- consider and discuss play and safety rules, boundaries and consequences
- follow routines that are manageable, consistent and clearly communicated
- consider explanation and questioning for thinking and problem solving
- be involved in the arrangement and organisation of their environment
- balance active, loud and energetic play with passive, quiet and relaxation times

Age and Developmentally appropriate behaviour

Babies need:
- emotional support and a secure and caring environment
- ongoing routines that are established as similar to home as possible in close communication with parents / carers
- awareness and consistency between staff of gestures/tone of voice/ noise levels/environment
- acknowledgement and written information re behaviour cues eg tiredness, hunger, distress
- stimulation and play development to foster their learning

Toddlers need:
- Regular and repetitive experiences to explore, discover, practice and develop independence
- Involvement to assist with daily routine tasks that are known and familiar eg helping others
- Minimal choices to enable them to make decisions, maintain focus and achieve success
- Positive and encouraging language with explicit explanation and praise for their actions
- Reassurance and comfort in unfamiliar or unexpected situations
- Redirection or distraction to focus on positive or appropriate behaviour
- Firm, reassuring and calm tone of voice supported by a guiding hand and positive gestures

Preschoolers need:
- Reasonable, easy and consistent expectations where they can attempt and achieve success
- Familiarity and routine to develop sense of security and own decision making
- Simple, clear and concise directions to follow that have a purpose
- Role modeling and assistance to show attention to the behaviour you would like to see
- Consequences that are immediate where child can make a choice to refocus their behaviour
- Positive alternatives eg we can pack the cars in the box or put the books in the cupboard

Children are encouraged to develop positive behaviour with the support and role modeling of staff:
- Sharing and taking turns
- Negotiating with peers
- Active listening to the speaker (other child, staff member or parent/ carer)
- Identifying a problem and attempting to solve it
- Displaying empathy for others
- Managing emotions and behaviour appropriately;

Behaviour guidance management plans

- In the event that a child demonstrates consistently inappropriate and/or bullying behaviour such as swearing, hitting, smacking, or kicking other children or adults; or potentially causing harm to themselves staff will initiate communication with parents / carers to discuss their child’s behaviour and when necessary to develop an appropriate Behaviour Guidance Management Plan.

- The plan will;
  - be based on evidence collected that the displayed behaviour is inappropriate;
  - be observed and documented over a period of time that suggests a pattern is emerging;
  - include inappropriate behaviour that occur consistently;
  - include inappropriate behaviour that occur with consistent triggers;
  - identify that the behaviour could possibly harm another child or adult;
  - define the context within which the behaviour occurs
  - be developed collaboratively with the child’s family
  - enlist the support of external agencies with signed parent/caregiver consent.
  - be used to plan, implement and evaluate strategies to support the child in developing appropriate behaviour.
  - include regular review dates and include liaison with all involved persons.
Management/Governing Council need:

- Appropriately trained staff
- Resources to implement and maintain a safe and secure environment for all
- Partnerships between families and educators to support policies and initiatives
- Support from other agencies and professionals to make appropriate decisions in the best interests of an individual child and other children

Management / Governing Council work in partnership with Preschool Director and staff to ensure:

- Compliance with legislation and / or regulatory requirements is undertaken
- Non-compliance of Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy is monitored
- Mandatory Notification processes are in place to uphold individual staff’s responsibility to notify suspected child abuse or neglect
- Confidentiality and privacy is maintained in regards to children’s developmental records and behaviour management plans.
- Staff and volunteers are committed to maintain and respect an individual’s privacy Information is transferred to other support agencies following discussion and signed consent of parents/ carers.
- Induction process are in place for staff to ensure availability of all site policies
- Relief staff are inducted and briefed into the sites behaviour guidance strategies
- Staff are the primary role models for relief staff, students and volunteers to inform and reinforce practices as stated in Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy.
- Anti bullying will be addressed at Governing Council meetings when appropriate

Definition of Bullying
Bullying is repeated verbal, physical or social behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber-bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies. Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not regarded as bullying. Bullying in any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Definition of Harassment
Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act.

Definition of Violence
Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person (s) that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.
Policy review

- The service will review the Guiding Children’s Behaviour Policy and guidelines annually and as necessary.
- Families are encouraged to collaborate with the service to review the policy and procedures.
- Staff will be actively involved in the policy review process.

Links to other policies

- Child Protection
- Grievances and complaints management
- Occupational health and safety
- Supporting children’s individual health needs

Sources and further reading

Early Childhood Australia website – www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au
Children, Youth & Women’s Health Service – Child & Youth Health – www.cyh.com
QIAC Quality Practices Guide – Principles: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.3, 4.2
Dept Education and Children’s Services Supporting and Managing Children’s Behaviour Policy and Resource Handbook

Policy created April 2012 Policy review date April 2013
Next Review date April 2014

Signatures

Chairperson Governing Council Centre Director