

Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

CONSIDERATIONS:

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD	1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1 and 7.2
NATIONAL LAW ACT & NATIONAL REGULATIONS	Law Sections: 165-167, 174 Regulations: 73, 74, 84, 85-87, 155, 156, 168, 181
OTHER	Child Protection Act 1999 Child Protection Regulation 2011 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

POLICY STATEMENT:

To support children to learn and understand appropriate ways to manage their behaviour by empowering them with a range of strategies to guide various situations and particularly conflict situations particularly situations of conflict or high emotions.

To encourage children to take responsibility for their own actions where relevant to their individual development. To support children in understanding self-regulation and co-regulation strategies.

To support all children and staff in having an awareness of the range of emotions which children and adults may experience and ways in which to process these safely in a group education and care context and in such a way that the dignity of all children is upheld.

RELEVANT FORMS/MATERIAL:

- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Code of Conduct (for staff).
- Circle of Security.
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Child Protection Policy.
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Interactions with Children Policy.
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Incident, Injury & Trauma Policy.
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Individual Education Plan.
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record.
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Program Planning and Development Policy.
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Safety and Supervision Policy.
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Sleep and Rest Time Policy.
- Individual Education Plan.
- Resources such as Box Full of Feelings and Story Books about emotions.

SOURCES:

- Australian Government, Department of Education and Training, (2009). Belonging, Being and Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework For Australia. Commonwealth of Australia.
- The State of Queensland (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority), 2018. Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline (QKLG). Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority: South Brisbane.
- Child Australia (2012). When Children Bite! A resource for early childhood educators.
- Porter, L (2016) Young Children's Behaviour, Guidance approaches for early childhood educators 4th Ed. Allen & Unwin: Australia
- Dent, M. (2018) Read Kids in an Unreal World.
- Dolby, R. (2007) The Circle of Security: Roadmap to building supportive relationships.
- Hunter Institute of Mental Health. (2014). Connections: A resource for early childhood educators about children's wellbeing. Canberra. ACT: Australian Government Department of Education.
- Children's Service Central. Self-regulation, a foundation for wellbeing and involved learning.
- Circle of Security (www.circleofsecurityinternational.com)
- The Mehrit Centre, Dr Stuart Shanker (www.self-reg.ca)
- Be You (www.beyou.edu.au)
- ACECQA (www.acecqa.gov.au)
- ACECQA (2018) NQS Information Sheet: Quality Area 5 Relationships with Children.
- ACECQA (2018) NQS Information Sheet: Quality Area 5 Supporting Children to Regulate their Behaviour.
- Education and Care Services National Law Act (Queensland)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
(Accessed 2022)

Reviewed: July 2022

Date to be Reviewed: January 2024

IMPLEMENTATION

BEFORE YOU
START
REMEMBER

RATIONALE

It is recognised that children, families and staff may have experienced a range of approaches to supporting social and emotional development and behaviour guidance prior to attending the Service.

At all times the safety and wellbeing of each child, including interacting and supporting them, in a way which upholds their dignity, is paramount. Our understanding of social and emotional development has evolved and the following information is a guide to support staff to engage with families and children.

In some circumstances it is recognised that in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider, further research may need to be undertaken to identify support strategies for an individual context, should there be ongoing situations where staff are not finding information shared in this policy to be effective.

Teacher or educator needs to:

- Understand the guidance approach used and why it is valued;
- Have knowledge and realistic expectations of children’s developmental stages and individual differences, individual needs and that these needs may change regularly;
- Recognise that children behave in certain ways for a range of reasons e.g. environment, equipment, home situations, skill level in relation to conflict resolution or understanding of emotions;
- Recognise how routines can affect the way children behave;
- Understand that conflict situations are a normal part of life and children need support from adults;
- Work at building trusting relationships with each child where self-esteem and feelings of competence are developed to assist in coping with awareness of emotions, processing of emotions and conflict;
- Use the environment as the third teacher by incorporating the children’s interests and ideas into the program;
- Understand that developing effective interpersonal and intrapersonal skills is a lifelong process and there is a process that children need to go through to become skilled (appropriate to their age level);
- Support collaborative relationships and open communication between families and the teacher or educator regarding children’s behavior. This ensures consistency between the home and the Service and may provide insight into possible causes for behaviour;
- Encourage children to appreciate the capabilities and areas of growth or continued learning of others;
- Believe that children are competent thinkers and are able to participate in problem solving situations;
- Listen to children’s concerns and problems and use this type of intervention as a tool for preventing potential inappropriate behaviour;
- Encourage acceptable forms of behaviour by using strategies that build confidence and self- esteem;
- Network and consult with behavioural specialists when necessary;
- Understand that appropriate behaviours need to be modelled for the children –

	<p>that what adults do matter as much (if not more than) what they say;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and support not just positive behaviours but also the children’s awareness of appropriate behaviours.
<p>WHAT YOU SHOULD DO</p> <p>PREVENTION</p>	<p>PREVENTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model positive behaviour through the appropriate use of verbal and non-verbal communication to encourage children to express their needs and feelings. Communications should be without blame, judgement or assumptions. • Evaluate the effectiveness of the physical environment both indoors and outdoors. This evaluation is then reflected in follow up planning and implementation. At all times in the environment there should be a space for one or space for a small group, should a child recognise that they would prefer to be in a calming or quieter space than engaging with multiple peers and adults. • Anticipate and eliminate potential problems with equipment and learning experiences. Be willing to make amendments to the routine and program to accommodate for individual children’s behavioural needs. • Engage in critical reflection regarding the routine of the program for the individual child and the overall group. Consider alternative ways in which support can be provided if challenges in relation to behavior are experienced during play, arrival or departure, transitions, group time, meal times or a rest period if this takes place at the Service. • Establish clear and consistent guidelines, limits, expectations and possible effects or consequences of behaviour e.g. gentle hands, calm voices, hands to self, kind words, walking feet and listening ears. It is noted that a consequence of behaviour may be, for example, the time to repair a situation/resource may mean that there is not time for the child to engage in a preferred experience. At no time of the behaviour guidance process, is a consequence that the child is placed in ‘time out’. Time out is an inappropriate discipline and is not accepted in our Service environments. • Involve children (3 years of age and older) in establishing rules and problem solving through group discussions, role-playing and literature. • Provide positive feedback for children’s behaviour and acknowledge children’s efforts to express their emotions or seek assistance in regards to self regulation in an appropriate way. • Develop close relationships and an interest in each individual, so self-esteem and confidence is constantly built on. • Allow children verbal prompts throughout the day in regards to what is happening next with the routine e.g. “In 5 minutes we need to start to finish what we are doing. This will allow us to pack away to be ready for....” • Provide a consistent, firm and respectful approach to guiding behaviour by discussing issues with colleagues and parents.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that feelings and emotions are important in resolving conflict and children need opportunities to explore and discuss a variety of emotions. This can be achieved through ‘feelings and faces’ lotto game, through discussing with children the responses they are seeing from peers and adults, through story books and by using puppets and music. The resource Box Full of Feelings is available in all Lady Gowrie Community Kindergarten Services and may be used throughout the program year, with the group in general and for specific experiences with individual children as relevant in supporting their social and emotional development. • Include ongoing support and guidance on working through emotions throughout the year, adapting conversations and group times to meet children’s changing needs i.e. what is relevant for a new group at the beginning of the year may look different to what some children will require later in the year when play is more complex. • Use relaxation and visualisation techniques as part of the daily program. • Be active in seeking out further tools and resources to support children’s social, emotional, cultural and physical needs, e.g. ESL books, weighted lap sashes, sitting supports, fiddle boxes/bags, sensory resources including head phones to reduce noise input, visual timers and quiet space for one or two. • Discuss with children ways of dealing with conflict, emotions and interpersonal relationships and the development of problem solving skills. • Supply information about specialist resources and referral support services which could assist with issues related to the child and family situation. • Use resources such as ‘Circle of Security’ to reflect on children’s behavior and ways in which they may indicate their needs. Remember that when children engage in any behavior – positive or challenging - they are seeking a connection.
<p>LADY GOWRIE EARLY CHILDHOOD WELLBEING ADVISOR</p>	<p>Staff, Committee Members and families are able to access the support of the Lady Gowrie Early Childhood Wellbeing Advisor, in regards to social and emotional development. This provides all stakeholders an opportunity to discuss and reflect on strategies and how these can further support the Service program where relevant.</p>
<p>WHAT YOU SHOULD DO</p> <p>ACTION</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff must immediately follow up behavior which poses a concern for the safety of the children, peers or adults. Where a child demonstrates a behaviour which is not a preferred behaviour, however there is not a concern for the safety of themselves or others, staff will assess, from their knowledge of the individual child, when it is best to redirect or discuss this behaviour with the individual child. • Focus on the child’s behaviour e.g. “When you use your rough hands I am worried that someone is going to get hurt”. <i>Let children know they are still valued and it is the behaviour which is inappropriate.</i> • Provide simple explanations to the child about how their behaviour has affected others and equipment e.g. if a child is throwing blocks you might say,

	<p>“Blocks are for building with” or “If we throw the books on the floor they might get ripped. Let’s put them on the shelf together”. “Let’s pause and do a bubble breath as I see your body is getting really excited, after the breath can you please remind your feet to be safe near other people, if your feet still need to move really fast, we can move over to x area to do some jumping.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use positive “I” statements when setting guidelines e.g. “I like it when you keep the sand in the sandpit” or “I like it when you use your walking feet inside” or “Thank you for remembering to ask for a turn of the red car, I know you like to use it most days you are here”. • When a child is experiencing an emotional response that is not harmful to the child, peers or adults, staff may use phrases such as “I can see you’re really angry at the moment, I’m going to give you some space by staying here and waiting with you while your body starts to calm down” or “I can see you’re really upset at the moment, would you like a cuddle?” When the child has calmed down, redirect them to a new learning experience, or discuss their emotional reaction and how to deal with it appropriately. Staff should remain available and at an appropriate distance if the child is needing space. Staff should reassure other children during this time that they are safe and that staff are supporting the child to process their emotions. • Model and praise empathy, encouraging children to assist and support others e.g. “It’s nice to see you giving your friend a cuddle when they are sad” “Thank you for coming to tell me name had hurt their knee” “Thank you for remembering to use your quiet inside voice, this helps everyone to do their thinking and learning”. • Acknowledge and validate children’s feelings. There are 4 steps in this process: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Listen for feelings. 2. Identify the child’s feelings. 3. Validate the child’s feelings. 4. Accept the child’s feelings, specifying the importance of distinguishing between feelings and actions. • Where a group of children or an individual child is demonstrating inappropriate behaviours on a regular basis, staff will reframe the behaviour, reflect on how the learning environment or routine may be contributing to the child’s stress levels or behaviour, reflect on how strategies can be implemented to minimise stressors. This may include revisiting social emotional learning with all children or an individual child, reminding children of self-regulation strategies and how staff are available to support them, resetting a space within the environment to provide further quiet spaces or spaces for small groups, or offering further opportunities for physical activity and heavy work throughout the program day.
<p>WHAT YOU SHOULD DO</p> <p>SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURS</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <p>When responding to ‘hurting’ behaviours such as hitting, biting, pushing or kicking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a calm voice. During this process where a child is injured from the interaction reassure them and arrange first aid as needed. • Gain the child’s eye contact (if developmentally and culturally appropriate).

- Discuss with the child that these behaviours are inappropriate by tone of voice, facial expression and redirect the child to another experience.
- Use age appropriate responses.
- In the instance of biting, staff should keep their reaction to the behavior as neutral and calm as possible. Attention should be focused on the other child and minimal attention directed to the child who did the biting. The child who did the biting should be supervised and directed to another experience, the inappropriate behavior is then discussed a short time later in a brief conversation. When suitable, during the program highlight positive behaviours which the child is engaging in and providing attention to them when they are engaged in learning and positive behaviours rather than the attention which they receive being predominantly when they have engaged in biting.

When responding to specific behaviours;

1. *Stop and think before proceeding any further. Does the child need support to connect and co-regulate first?*
 2. *Find out what happened (What had happened? / Can you tell me about the problem?)*
 3. *Identify the problem from everyone's perspective.*
 4. *Encourage children to brainstorm alternative possible solutions (What else could you do? / How could you do this?)*
 5. *Help children identify the consequences of their possible solutions (What might happen if.....?)*
 6. *Restate the problem, the proposed solutions and accompanying consequences.*
 7. *Help children find and agree on a solution they are satisfied with. If no solution can be reached, make some suggestions for the children to choose from.*
 8. *Work out a fair plan of action with the children, identifying what each child needs to do (who, what, how, when) to follow through with the plan.*
 9. *Work out with the children what to do next time.*
- Use quiet/reflection time. This occurs alongside a staff member and in such a way that the child's dignity is upheld and peers may also come and engage in the quieter learning experience / co-regulation exercise such as breathing or talking about the shapes or colours you can see in the environment.
 - If a child continues to participate in dangerous play, direct the child to a quiet learning experience within view of staff e.g. a puzzle, book or drawing. Quietly sit with the child and discuss how the play/behaviour has affected others. The child will then be encouraged to reflect on the incident and ways in which they could manage their emotions or have support from staff to co-regulate their emotions in the future. When suitable in the program staff should support the child with a learning experience which allows for positive reinforcement, in turn helping the child to build feelings of competence and self-esteem. For example, supporting a child to show their expertise with a construction set, sharing their knowledge of a particular topic through discussion or recording of information in a cloud bubble or an opportunity for the child to contribute to looking after the service environment / assisting with part of the routine of the day and this assistance being acknowledged.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform parent/guardian about the incident. • If a serious incident has occurred the teacher or educator will contact the parents/guardian with a courtesy call. The Responsible Person will inform the President or an Executive Committee Member. If necessary please notify the Regulatory Authority of any Serious Incidents. Copies of this notification are also provided to Lady Gowrie Qld as the Service's Central Governing Body. • Where the incident posed a risk to the health and wellbeing of the child, peer or staff member / resources were damaged or injury occurred, an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record is completed. Where more than one child is involved in the incident, an individual Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record is completed, noting only the reference of 'another child' or 'peer' on respective records. At no time is any child other than the child who the record relates to, identified in this record. When advising families of an incident or injury, due to confidentiality staff are not able to share with the family information about any other child/ren involved in the incident.
<p>MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPPORTING THE CHILD AND FAMILY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In circumstances of recurring behaviour the teacher/educators will discuss guidance strategies that are in place for individual children with the Nominated Supervisor. • Educators, with support from the Nominated Supervisor will discuss guidance strategies for individual children with the family and actively seek information to assist them in providing support to the child in relation to their engagement in the program, minimising the occurrence of the behaviours and effective response strategies to the behaviour for the individual child. These discussions will be documented for the individual child's file, be undertaken from a strengths based approach and at all times, be respectful of the child. An Individual Education Plan template can be used in documenting these strategies. Educators and the child's family will meet or communicate regularly to review the ongoing effectiveness of the strategies being implemented. • When undertaking these discussions the individual child's wellbeing, dignity and the opportunity for them to experience a positive engagement in a group care environment is the priority.
<p>WHAT YOU SHOULD DO</p> <p>BEHAVIOURS WHICH POSE A RISK TO THE CHILD'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING OR THAT OF ANOTHER CHILD OR STAFF MEMBER</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where an emotional response involves self-harm and or dangerous behaviour to others and or poses a risk to the health and wellbeing to the child, another child or staff member, staff need to respond to the situation as most appropriate to their understanding of the individual child. • Staff should use a calm voice and explain that the behaviour needs to stop and that they will stay with the child to assist them during this time. Staying with the child can be from within the environment, not in the child's personal space. • Staff should calmly communicate to other staff and children as necessary, should the group need to move to another space while the child is supported.

At all times a staff member should be within sight of another staff member. Where it is appropriate that the other children remain in the area, staff reassure them with simple statements such as “I’m helping (Name) to make safe choices, I can see you are reading and I will join you later” which supports children to have a sense of security during that period.

- Staff should only physically support a child where the child’s actions pose / are a direct harm to themselves, another child or the staff member. Staff should verbalise their actions succinctly at all times. Staff are to release the child as soon as it is safe to do so, reassuring the child that they are remaining with them and available to support them at this time. At no time should physical restraint be used to redirect or keep a child within an experience or as an expectation of complying with a routine.
- Staff are to be aware of their ‘state of mind’ and capacity to be emotionally available to the child in the context of the situation.
- When necessary the staff member is able to notify another staff member they are needing to step out of being the person providing support to the child at this time.
- When necessary another staff member may check in with the staff member, sharing that they are available to provide support or swap out if needed.
- When necessary another staff member may also identify that this change is required and verbally inform the staff member and child that this change is taking place, using a phrase such as “(Name), I’m here to support (Child’s Name) now, can you please support the group by moving to a story session etc.” The initial staff member involved must then immediately remove themselves from the situation. This process ensures that the best support can be provided for the child, staff members and whole group during any situation. It is of no reflection of the individual staff member’s skills or understanding of behaviour management. As educators it is important to note our duty of care is extended to be mindful and supportive of our colleagues and their actions and at all times prioritise the best outcomes for children.
- Staff remain with the child until the child and staff member are able to re-engage in the program. In exceptional circumstances where a child is not able to return to a stable emotional state, their parent is to be contacted and advice sought from the family. In the interest of the health and wellbeing of the child when necessary the Responsible Person is able to request that the family attends the Service to support the child and or that the child is collected from the program for the remainder of the day.
- Staff are able to consider attending non-violent intervention courses to understand further techniques in supporting the child, if relevant to the context.
- As per procedures noted in previous sections, the family of the child involved is to be informed, the incident documented and meeting arranged with the family to discuss and document further strategies as relevant to the situation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Nominated Supervisor is also to be informed of the incident and strategies in place to support the child's engagement in the program.• The Service is able to seek support from their Lady Gowrie Qld Early Childhood Education and Care Co-ordinator or Early Childhood Wellbeing Advisor in regards to debriefing, following an incident or discussing strategies to implement in supporting the child's engagement. At all times of these discussions the health and wellbeing of the child and staff member is the focus and confidentiality maintained.
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