

# 6. Behaviour Guidance Policy

## Aim

- To promote a positive approach to guiding the behaviour of all children within our care so that effective learning and teaching can occur.
- 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
- Promote collaborative approaches to behaviour guidance between the Centre's stakeholders and/or external agencies.

## Guiding Principles for Behaviour Guidance

At Kidz Magic - Heathwood, we emphasise that children have the same rights as adults, recognising the values and celebrating the differences and similarities that are the essence of all people. As with all areas of child development, children require assistance and support from adults. Children often develop behaviours that result in their needs being met, unfortunately, at a later stage these behaviours may be considered inappropriate and in some instances anti-social. Adults need to model appropriate self-control and management of their behaviour and assist children to recognise frustrations, anger, and appropriate ways to deal with these emotions.

Families and educators should use appropriate strategies to guide children to recognise, manage and learn from their behaviours and express their emotions in positive, non-threatening and productive ways.

Behaviour guidance should never include physical aggression, insults, or verbal humiliation.

## Behaviour Guidance Strategies

It is the responsibility of all adults to assist children to manage their behaviours and to find appropriate methods to express frustration and anger. Strategies used by adults must be appropriate to age/stage of development of the child:

- Families and Educators display respect and empathy towards children when they label behaviour and not the individual child. This means the behaviour is managed not the child.
- While educators are aware and respect individual children's and families' backgrounds and beliefs, it may be necessary to balance the individual needs of stakeholders with the Educators knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices and current best practice recommendations from recognised authorities.
- The Occupational Health and Safety Act states that employers have a duty of care to their employees to ensure that the working environment supports emotional and mental wellbeing.

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### With Babies, we may:

- Remove them from the area without eye contact.
- Distract them with something appropriate
- Smile and give verbal encouragement for complying
- Ignore non-threatening behaviours and respond to positive behaviours

### As children grow and their language develops:

- Assisting children to label their feelings.
- Talking to children about our frustrations and the methods we use to deal with them
- Accepting when a child tells us, they are angry/upset/frustrated, rather than trying to tell the child that they are not angry etc.
- Giving children useful phrases to express their feelings
- Giving children appropriate physical means to deal with their anger/frustrations-e.g. Going outside for a run/ finding a quiet area.
- Establishing a “safe area” where children can go to calm down themselves and valuing this area.
- Responding to situations before they escalate into major conflicts.
- Acknowledging and responding to children who are being bullied by others.
- Working together with families to develop and maintain a non-threatening environment for all people at the Centre.
- Working with families to support children and provide individualised plans to manage challenging behaviours.
- Using outside agencies for assistance in supporting children

### Children

Children are active participants in the development, implementation and monitoring of behaviour guidance management, needing to be consistently communicated with during the process.

### Establishing Limits

- Children are involved in establishing play and safety limits in the Centre, which reflect recommended best practices, and the consequences involved when limits are not observed.
- Reflective questions engage children to think about their practices and environment. Encouraging children to develop their own play and learning limits and consequences, reinforces ownership of the Centre’s practices.
- Defining limits in terms of a “positive” instead of a “negative” assists children to remember what to do rather than what not to do. For example, “children walk inside” is preferable to “children do not run inside”
- Establishing limits depends on developmental level of children. Younger children require safety and guidance limits established for them by adults, while educators can vary their communication style and language with older children to negotiate limit setting.



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### Establishing Spaces

- Children are involved in establishing play and learning spaces in the environment, which include areas where children can find solace, peace and relaxation.

Environments need active, loud and energetic play spaces balanced with passive, quiet and peaceful areas where children can find solace and peace. It is important that our Centre provide both types of spaces, especially for those children who recognise that they require time apart from their peers.

### Families

Crucial to the success of behaviour guidance is the role families play, especially parents. Families should be provided with regular opportunities to contribute to the development and review of their child's behaviour guidance strategies and plans along with the Centre's overall strategies to promote positive outcomes. This can be achieved through:

- The enrolment process, orientation and settling families into care.
- Establishing open lines of continued communication through informal and formal meetings to provide feedback regarding any problems being experienced in the rooms.
- Families are encouraged to make appointments with their family GP and if necessary ask for a referral to a paediatrician
- If possible, a sort break may be arranged for the child to allow everyone to reassess the situation and stop the cycle of inappropriate behaviour.
- Families who are unwilling to follow through with Centre recommendations will have their care reduced to manageable times, or ultimately, if the centre feels they are unable to managed a child's care taking into consideration, the child's welfare, the rest of the group and staff then the centre will be forced to cease care. This decision would not be taken lightly and would be the last resort.

### Educators

Guidelines to assist educators in recognising and implementing behaviour guidance strategies and practices are:

- Respond to, and acknowledge children's emotions, such as happiness, anger, pleasure, fear, anxiety, frustration, sadness and pride.
- Acknowledge that the emotions experienced by children are significant. E.g. an adult who is not scared of thunder should not trivialised the fear or anxiety expressed by the child.
- Understand that children may not have developed the appropriate strategies to express emotions due to their age and/or stage of development.
- Attitudes and care giving strategies demonstrate an understanding and empathy towards children who display behaviours that are not always consistent with their development and/or general disposition.
- Interact with children, families and peers equitably and respectfully,
- Use language that promotes empathy and understanding
- Actively monitor children's behaviour

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- Encourage empathy towards others.
- Avoid making comparisons between children and families.
- Be aware of situations, group dynamics and scenarios that may contribute to children's behaviours.
- Support and encourage children to be fair and respectful of others.
- Educators support each other and do not expect or allow other educators to always be involved in managing a situation/specific child.
- Educators recognise the right of children and families to be afforded a level of confidentiality where behaviour management plans are concerned.
- Educators are aware that the Centre is committed to maintaining and respecting an individual's privacy when behaviour management strategies are developed and implemented into the Centre's play and learning experiences.
- Educators will review, reflect and evaluate behaviour guidance strategies used to monitor their effectiveness.

#### Environment

- A well-designed and well-equipped environment tailored to the development level of the children prevents frustration, interruption and hazards. It offers privacy, independence and easy adult supervision. In addition, the daily routine provides enough time for play, a sense of security, little waiting and few transitions.
- Flexible routines are important for all children to enable them to feel secure, comfortable and nurtured in their environment
- Consider a change of group within the childcare setting
- Consult with Inclusion Support Team, and together ascertain whether further referral is to be made.
- Follow up with workshops and educational materials

#### Protective Behaviours and Practices

Within the Early Years Learning Framework, discuss with the children their personal safety including

- Body ownership messages that your body belongs to you
- Teaching children correct names for body parts in order for them to be clearly understood
- Teaching children how to say NO/STOP in all kinds of age appropriate conflict situations
- Encourage children to feel proud of themselves & their abilities

Discuss these procedures with Educators and parents.

#### For further information, please contact:

Queensland Centre for Prevention of Child Abuse (QCPCA)  
G.P.O. Box 806  
BRISBANE QLD 4001  
Phone (07) 3224 7588

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## Biting

Reasons for biting and ways of dealing with it differ with under three's and over three's. Over three's usually have more understanding of the extent to which biting is hurtful and, disapproved, and they should be able to control their urges to bite.

Under threes may bite because: –

- they are teething
- they may bite impulsively
- they may have been bitten by older children and are passing on the same behaviour
- Frustration e.g. caused by an inability to use words, may be expressed through biting.

A good way to stop biting is for Educators to be present to prevent it as much as possible. This can be done through distraction and by setting up an appropriate environment that encourages both the sharing of toys and individual experiences. This will reduce frustration. Also, consistent reactions of disapproval to biting are important. Manner and tone of voice should convey the severity of what has been done. Educators should encourage children of all ages to express their reasons for biting in words. The child's development level should be a consideration when asking the child to verbalise reasons.

Remember to comfort the child who has been bitten, before dealing with the biter. Children must never be bitten back – It is a normal part of development for under threes to snatch, push, bite and hit.

## Crying

Crying for a young child is a means of letting you know that they need attention. Crying can be a normal reaction to separation in the first few weeks of attendance until trust is formed. Children who attend only for 1 or 2 days a week may take longer to adjust to their new environment. Crying can also be a result of tiredness or illness. Children in these circumstances need cuddles, patience and understanding. Perhaps the program needs to be adjusted so that Educators have time to attend to upset children. Become sensitive to the time a child is crying e.g. when a parent leaves, and develop strategies to discourage this behaviour. For example, allow children to see parents leaving and wave "Good-bye" to them.

Educators need to be sensitive to the cultural practices of the home when helping a crying child. Parents from some cultures may be more sensitive to leaving a crying child than other parents.

Children should be encouraged to use self-discipline. Offer a distraction or reward for not crying.

If a child in another group is crying over a lengthy period, approach the Educator and offer to take the child for a brief period. If you are frustrated with a crying child do not be too proud to accept offers of assistance.

In cases of prolonged crying consult with the Nominated Supervisor.

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## Behaviour Guidance Management Plan

A behaviour guidance management plan is an example of how a Centre and its stakeholders observe, plan, implement and document strategies that reflect when a child is non-compliant to the establishment of limits of play and interactions. For example, swearing, hitting and/or kicking other children or adults, or potentially causing harm to themselves.

### These Plans should:

- Be based on evidence that the displayed behaviour is inappropriate through documentation of Behaviour Incident Report.
- Be observed and documented over a period of time that suggests a pattern is emerging
- Include inappropriate behaviours that occur consistently
- Include inappropriate behaviours that occur with consistent triggers if observed.
- Identify that the behaviour could possibly harm another child or adult
- Define the context within which the behaviour occurs
- Reflect a collaborative approach with the child's family

It is important for the Centre to identify the context of the behaviour. For example, if a child is displaying signs of tiredness at lunch, and then begins to hit other children, it may be that the inappropriate behaviour does not require a behaviour guidance management plan. Educators may consider preparing the child's lunch earlier than normally scheduled, which may possibly minimise the risk of the child hitting others.

## Procedures

Managing children's behaviour can be a complex task, at times it may be necessary for the Educator to discuss with the Centre Manager elements of a child's behaviour that they may find challenging. The Centre Manager will take the following steps:

- Continue to document with the Educators the behaviour, looking for patterns, causes and triggers.
- Plan developmentally consistent strategies and share these with all staff allowing feedback and consistency.
- Liaise with parents asking them for background information regarding the behaviour.
- Ask parents to support the work that the centre is trying to achieve reinforcing at home the appropriate behaviours.
- Provide feedback to families which may occur informally or formally in a meeting situation. Families are encouraged to have both parents involved in these meetings.
- Hold meetings with parents will include both the Centre Manager and Senior Educator. If the Senior Educator is unable to participate in the meeting, then the Centre Manager will include a member of staff who is available at this time. Parents may be asked to make an appointment with their GP and seek assistance from a paediatrician.
- Contact the Inclusion Support Team for external assistance in helping with the behaviour. A referral may be made.

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- Continue to monitor the child's behaviour and review daily observations and Lead Educator to monitor and review. If a child's behaviour begins to affect the other children within the group, parents may be required to collect their child.

If inappropriate behaviour continues that puts staff and children at risk. The centre working with families during this time, may decide that shorter monitored inclusion is the best for all concerned. The centre will constantly liaise with families sharing information, offering support and assistance where possible.

Families who do not support the centre or follow up with centre or Inclusion support recommendations, and their child continue to put staff and children at risk may have their care suspended.

### Behaviour Guidance Incident Report Procedure

When a child consistently needs to be redirected or spoken to due to inappropriate behaviour

- An Educator will be required to complete a Behaviour Incident Report and submit it to the Centre Manager/Nominated Supervisor
- Discussion relating to the child and circumstances of the inappropriate behaviour will occur. A decision is made to monitor the child's behaviour for a specified length of time, to confirm the behaviour exhibited is of a nature that is disruptive and could cause harm to other children and staff.
- The documented Behaviour Incident reports will be presented to and discussed with the parent/guardian at a pre-arranged meeting.
- During this meeting, Strategies to assist in the child's behaviour will be addressed with the cooperation of the parents and current pedagogical guidelines.
- If required follow up discussions/meeting will be held and documented
- All documentation to be recorded in the child's file
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## Behaviour Guidance Model







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### References and Professional Guidance Support

- Inclusion Support - <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/help/inclusion-support-program>
- Early Childhood Australia Inc Code of Ethics
- United Nations Rights of the child
- Family Planning Association
- Management of Young Children Program CAMP HILL 2003
- Rob Paterson - A Positive Approach to Managing Behaviour 2002
- Ayres & Hedeem- Developing a Positive Behavioural Support Plan 2001
- Porter, L. (2008) Young children's behaviour. Practical approaches for caregivers & teachers (3rd ed) SYD. MacLennan & Petty
- Triple P Program QLD Government Incentive 2001
- Child Safety Commission Victoria 2007

### Considered and Accepted by

KAL Management	<i>A. Lunnado</i>	20 July 2018
Centre Representative		
Parent Representative		