

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND STAFF POLICY

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) identifies secure, respectful, and reciprocal relationships with children as one of the principles that underpin practice. Within an early childhood community many different relationships are negotiated with and between children, educators, and families. The way in which these relationships are established and maintained, and the way in which they remain visible impacts on how the early childhood community functions as a whole. Relationships directly affect how children form their own identity, whether or not they feel safe and supported, and ultimately, their sense of belonging.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
5.2	Relationships between children	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.
5.2.1	Collaborative learning	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	Parents views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS		
155	Interactions with children	
156	Relationships in groups	
157	Access for parents	
6.1.2	Parents views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.

Victorian Child Safe Standards	
Standard 1	Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued
Standard 2	Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
Standard 3	Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
Standard 4	Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
Standard 5	Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
Standard 6	People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
Standard 7	Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused
Standard 8	Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
Standard 9	Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
Standard 10	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved
Standard 11	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved

RELATED POLICIES

Arrival and Departure Policy Behaviour Guidance Policy Code of Conduct Policy Educational Program Policy Enrolment Policy Family Communication Policy Management Committee Policy Open Door Policy	Orientation of New Families Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Relief Staff Policy Respect for Children Policy Social Media Policy Staff grievance Policy Student and Volunteer Policy Supervision Policy Transition to School Policy
---	--

PURPOSE

We aim to build positive relationships with children, families, and educators through collaboration and interactions, which is reflective of our Family Day Care Service philosophy, and the approved learning frameworks of the *Early Years Learning Framework* and *My Time Our Place*. Educators will encourage positive relationships between children and their peers as well as with educators and families at the FDC Service, ensuring children feel safe and supported.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, and visitors of the Family Day Care Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

In order to build and maintain positive and respectful relationships with children, families and educators our Family Day Care Service will adhere to our philosophy and code of ethics to guide:

Interactions with children

Children need positive relationships with FDC educators that are trusting and responsive to their individual needs. Through these experiences and interactions children will develop a positive understanding of themselves and feel a sense of belonging.

Relationships in groups

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor will take reasonable steps to ensure that our FDC service provides children with opportunities to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other and with educators, educator assistants, coordinators and volunteers.

FDC educators and educator assistants will ensure:

- create a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere in which children experience equitable, friendly and genuine interactions with educators in each approved residence or venue

- role-model appropriate language and behaviour
- support children to be aware of their own feelings as well as the feelings of others
- encourage children to treat all children with respect
- provide children with the opportunity to explore their dispositions for learning by expressing themselves and their opinions
- assist the children to build resilience and self-assurance through positive interactions
- guide children's behaviour positively and with encouragement
- respect the rights, dignity and agency of children
- support children in the early childhood environment
- speak to children in a positive manner at all times, promoting respect, tolerance and empathy, including the use of non-verbal cues and communication
- engage in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning of children
- respect each child's uniqueness, be attuned to, and respond sensitively and appropriately to children's efforts to communicate and use the child's own language, communication styles, and culture to enhance interactions
- have regard to the family and cultural values, age and physical and intellectual development and abilities of children cared for
- listen to children and take them seriously; support and encourage children to use appropriate language in their interactions with adults and peers. FDC educators will extend upon children's interests and ideas through questions and discussions, supported and made visible in observations, reflections, and programming.
- communicate with children by getting down to their level, using eye contact, and showing respect to the child whilst engaging in and promoting effective communication
- show empathy to children
- ensure that the values, beliefs, and cultural practices of the child and family are considered and respected
- ensure that no child is ever isolated for any reason other than illness, accident or pre-arranged appointment with parental consent. During this time, they will be under adult supervision.
- regularly reflect on their relationships and interactions with children and how these can be improved to benefit each child
- facilitate children's individual development extending upon their strengths, interests and abilities.

Interactions with Families

Effective communication is the key to developing and maintaining positive interactions and relationships with others and helps to build trusting and respectful partnerships with families. Educators use positive and open communication with families and siblings in order to create a responsive and inclusive environment for children and families. Interactions with families help to inform educators' knowledge of each child's distinctive interests, skills cultures and abilities. This helps to build a positive experience and a safe learning environment that encourages children to expand their knowledge and understandings.

FDC educators and educator assistants will ensure:

- all families are treated equitably without bias or judgement, recognising that each family is unique
- families are provided with information and resources in their first language
- families are asked to identify a preferred method of regular communication with the FDC Service (this may include utilising a translator service)
- families and children are greeted upon arrival in a respectful manner
- they learn the names of family members and use these names when they greet them
- two-way communication is established through leading by example and asking questions and a willingness to offer information about ourselves
- common terminology (not jargon) when talking to parents regarding their child's development
- privacy and confidentiality are respected at all times
- information about another child or family information is never discussed with a parent or visitor
- they remain sensitive to cultural differences amongst families and encourage families to share cultural aspects with the children and FDC educators
- the advice and opinion from other professional experts is requested, with parental permission, to assist educators develop and implement strategies to support the inclusion of children with additional needs
- they seek additional resources and professional support for families through a range of organisations such as KU Inclusion Support, Area Health and other specific health professional networks
- verbal communication is always open, respectful and honest
- families are provided with up-to-date service information and notices through Daily Reports, newsletters, communal notice boards, emails and sign-in sheets.

- they regularly reflect on parent input into the program and make changes where necessary that will best benefit the service and children
- connections between families are promoted and enhanced through inviting families to participate in routines and events.

Interactions with Other FDC educators

The Family Day Care Service recognises that the way educators interact with each other when together has an effect on the interactions they have with children and families. FDC educators are required to demonstrate mutual respect towards each other and value the contributions made by each FDC educator working within Dalas family Day Care

To maintain professionalism at all times, FDC educators and educator assistants will:

- engage in professional communication in order to create an effective work environment and to build a positive relationship children and families. Communication amongst colleagues creates a positive atmosphere and a professional image for families. Communication between educators and families ensures that important information is being passed on consistently.
- be respectful when listening to each other's point of view and ideas
- maintain effective communication to ensure that teamwork occurs
- communicate their professional reflections and ideas for continuous improvement
- attend in-service training to update and refresh and add to individual skills and knowledge
- refer to the *Grievance Policy (Staff) /Procedure* if they feel a situation with another educator or staff member is not being handled with professionalism, respect, and fairness
- recognise the strengths and value the contribution each person makes to different work roles
- work collaboratively to reach decisions which will enhance the quality of the education and care offered at the FDC Service
- welcome diverse views and perspectives
- work together and engage in open and honest communication at all times
- respect each other's positions and opinions
- develop and share networks and links with other agencies
- resolve differences promptly and positively and use the experience to develop more effective methods of working together.

To maintain professionalism at all times, Management and the FDC Coordinator will:

- provide new FDC educators with relevant information about the Family Day Care Service and program through an educator handbook, induction, and daily communication
- treat FDC educators with respect
- be sensitive to the feelings and needs of FDC educators
- provide constructive feedback to FDC educators as part of their professional learning plan support
- appreciate and utilise FDC educator skills and interests
- provide support, assistance and mentoring to FDC educators
- hold regular educator meetings to encourage and support professional growth and reflective practice- these may be offered flexibly using online platforms such as Zoom, Skype
- use appropriate conflict resolution techniques to solve problems
- ensure policies and procedures are up to date regarding communication, expected behaviour and grievances
- provide opportunities for professional development.

To enhance communication and teamwork when together, FDC educators will:

- maintain privacy and confidentiality
- be respectful, caring and inclusive of colleagues
- be sensitive to the feelings and needs of others
- support colleagues during difficult situations
- provide constructive feedback to each other
- trust each other
- value the role and contribution of colleagues
- appreciate and utilise colleague skills, strengths and interests regardless of qualification and experience
- provide support and assistance to each other
- share responsibilities
- have a flexible attitude towards roles and responsibilities
- greet each other by name
- show genuine interest in the other person by using active and reflective listening
- communicate ideas and opinions clearly and professionally
- use a communication book or daily diary to pass on messages and record relevant information
- use appropriate conflict resolution techniques to solve problems
- engage in opportunities for professional development.

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
 Child Australia *Cultural Connections Booklet*. (2017).
 Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
 Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2009) *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*
 Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2011). *My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia*
 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).
[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011)
 Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).
 Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2018). (Amended 2020).
Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (Cth).
 Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).
 Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (2011) Melbourne Graduate School of Education *Evidence Paper Practice Principle 5: Respectful relationships and responsive engagement*
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/edcare/respectrelns.pdf>

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	August 2022	NEXT REVIEW DATE	August 2023
MODIFICATIONS	Policy checked for currency		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
August 2020	additional section added Relationships in groups reference to My Time Our Place included additional sources added- Regulations and National Law rewording of some points to ensure clarification additional sources utilised within policy as referenced Changes made to relate to Family Day Care Services Modifications made to comply with changes to the National Quality Standard Contextualised points to be more relevant to FDC.		August 2021

	Sources checked for currency. Policy purchased from Child Care Desktop	
--	---	--