

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE: BULLYING POLICY

Our centre is diligent and passionate about the emotional and physical safety of each and every child within our centre. No form of bullying is acceptable within our environment.

Bullying can occur among children of any ages, sex or background. In most instances, children need adult assistance to deal with bullying. This includes adults taking responsibility to develop strategies for the prevention of bullying, and for dealing fairly and effectively with allegations of bullying.

Being, Belonging and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia identifies secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships with children as one of the principles that underpin practice. Within the 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 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.

Educators at Highland Grove Preschool understand that young children are learning to be socially appropriate and develop ways of interacting positively. We strive every single day to ensure that children maintain positive self-esteem, a sense of self, and learn inclusive and respectful behaviours. Educators are also aware of the individual backgrounds, cultures and diverse expectations of families in the care of their children, and their responses to challenging situations.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
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: 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.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S. 2A	Paramount consideration—safety, rights and best interests of children
S. 3A	Paramount consideration [NSW]
S.165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
S. 166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
S.166A	Offence to subject child to inappropriate conduct [NSW] Offences relating to inappropriate conduct
S. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
S. 174	Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
73	Educational program
84	Awareness of child protection law
123	Educator to child ratios- centre based services
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available

PURPOSE

To create a safe and healthy environment for children where bullying behaviours are not tolerated. As reflected in our Service philosophy and Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), educators will encourage positive relationships between children and their peers.

SCOPE

This policy applies to educators, staff, families, students, volunteers and management of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our service does not tolerate bullying of any kind.

The priority of Highland Grove Preschool is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child being bullied.

Although there may be underlying reasons causing a child to display or use bullying behaviour towards others, it is essential that the child experiencing bullying behaviour receives the adult attention and support in the first instance. It is important that the needs of the child who uses or displays bullying behaviour do not overshadow the needs of the child being bullied.

‘Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological aggressive behaviour by a person or group directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear’ -Dept of Education (2017).

Behaviours in early childhood may be *precursors* to bullying rather than true bullying. This could include making faces, refusing to play together, telling lies or stories about another child, grabbing objects, pushing, pinching or shoving another child. Without intervention, these behaviours could turn into a pattern of bullying.

Early childhood educators assist children to recognise bullying behaviour and assist children in developing strategies to develop positive relationships and prevent bullying. Skills to develop to assist in preventing bullying include:

- empathy- understanding and responding to what others feel
- problem solving- how to resolve problems constructively without using aggression
- language- understanding what to say when the child is feeling targeted by another
- child- ‘stop it!’

EDUCATORS WILL:

- Teach social skills through, for example, role play, stories, puppets and games.
- Guide children to practice how to interact with others positively and respectfully when talking about bullying.
- avoid using terminology such as ‘bully’ or ‘victim’ when describing behaviour being displayed
- focus and guide children to practice more appropriate ways to interact with others positively and respectfully when talking about bullying
- maintain and respect the dignity and rights of children
- refrain from any behaviour that may be considered inappropriate conduct or inappropriate discipline, including behaviour that is threatening, intimidating, humiliating, degrading, hostile or otherwise inappropriate.

PROCEDURE WHEN A CHILD DISCLOSES ALLEGED BULLYING

Educators will:

- immediately report any behaviour by another person that may constitute inappropriate conduct towards a child to the nominated supervisor/approved provider and regulatory authority
- understand their mandatory reporting requirements and respond to any incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse, harm, neglect or ill-treatment they witness or suspect immediately by notifying the approved provider and **NSW Department of Communities and Justice (Child Protection Helpline)** (insert state/territory agency for reporting)
- listen when a child attempts to talk about behaviours that might indicate bullying
- respond to incidents in a constructive, supportive and timely manner
- learn as much as possible about the children involved and the tactics used
- summarise the problem they are discussing
- ensure the child knows that the educators at the service are there to help them
- provide support and empathy
- empathise with the child, reassure them that it is not their fault and assist them to problem solve
- ask the child what they think could be done to help, what will make them feel safe
- tell the child what action you are planning to take, including that you will need to talk to the alleged bully
- encourage and support the child who is being bullied to develop other friendships
- moving forward, empower the children to make healthy choices regarding their friendships
- notify the Nominated Supervisor of the allegation
- notify all parents involved of the allegation of bullying (*refer to Confidentiality Policy and Code of Conduct Policy*)
- discuss the situation with the children's parents and work out a plan for management and support if required
- resource allied health professionals if the situation requires
- once the investigation is complete, advise the children, parents and Management of the outcome

INVOLVING FAMILIES

Our Service will seek the cooperation and support from families for bullying prevention initiatives and reinforcement of positive interactions with other children.

We will:

- ensure families are aware of our *Service Philosophy, Behaviour Guidance- Bullying Policy* and *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- provide information to families about the nature and harmful consequences of bullying- e.g., newsletters, parent information sessions
- openly communicate with families of children who use or display bullying behaviours or experience bullying, and work in partnership with them to implement appropriate strategies to support the children involved (*refer to Privacy and Confidentiality Policy and Code of Conduct Policy*)
- if required, seek further strategies from relevant inclusion Support Services (implementation of *Behaviour Guidance Plan*)
- support families to guide their child's behaviour with effective strategies and provide support – such as Kids Helpline
- ensure notification is made to parents/guardians as soon as practicable, but within 24 hours, if their child is involved in a serious incident/situation at the Service. Details of the incident/situation are to be recorded on the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record*.

With above required staff ratios, highly qualified, experienced and compassionate staff; we strive to provide a safe and peaceful environment where “***Relationships are the key***” (Highland Grove Preschool philosophy).

RESOURCES

Bullying- NO WAY! www.bullyingnoway.gov.au

[Eyes on Bullying in Early Childhood](#)

Kids Help line <https://kidshelpline.com.au/kids> (for children/parents)

Raising Children <https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/behaviour/bullying/bullying-signs>

Starting Blocks [*Managing children's challenging behaviour in child care- bullying*](#)

SOURCES:

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). [*Guide to the National Quality Framework*](#)

Australia Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). [*Inappropriate Discipline*](#).

Australian Government Department of Education. [*Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. V2.0, 2022*](#)

Australian Government. Australian Institute of Family Studies. (2014). [*Helping your child stop bullying. A guide for parents*](#)

[*Children \(Education and Care Services\) National Law \(NSW\) \(NSW services only\)*](#)

[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010.](#)

[Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011](#)

[*Education and Care Services National Regulations \(NSW\) \(2025\) \(NSW services only\)*](#)

NSW Department of Education [*Anti-bullying- Parents and carers tips- Fact Sheet*](#) (2020).
[*Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Law \(WA\) Act 2012*](#) (WA
Services only)
[*Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Regulations \(WA\) 2012*](#) (WA
Services only)

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