

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 a 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 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 REGULATIONS	
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups

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, and management of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our service does not tolerate bullying of any kind.

The priority of our Service is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child being bullied.

Although there may be underlying reasons causing a child to bully others, it is essential that the child being bullied receives the adult attention and support in the first instance. It is important that the needs of the child who bullies does 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 the 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 role-plays, stories, puppets and games.

Educators will guide children to practice how to interact with others positively and respectfully when talking about bullying.

PROCEDURE WHEN A CHILD DISCLOSES ALLEGED BULLYING

Educators will:

- 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 child’s parents and work out a plan to manage the situation
- once the investigation is complete, advise the children, parents and Management of the outcome

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](#)

SOURCE

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2009) *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*.

Early Childhood Australia- Dealing with bullying together: prevention and resolution. (2009).

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

NSW Department of Education *Anti-bullying- Parents and carers tips- Fact Sheet* (2020).

Starting Blocks *Managing children’s challenging behaviour in child care- bullying*

US Education Development Centre- Preventing Bullying in Early Childhood

<http://preventingbullying.promoteprevent.org/preventing-bullying-in-early-childhood>

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