



Interactions with Children Policy

Aim:

Educators and staff at Maryland Care & Early Education Centre are intentional, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions. They engage in reflective practice as a form of ongoing learning that involves engaging with questions of philosophy, ethics and practice. Educators and staff aim to ensure that all interactions with children are positive and conducive to their wellbeing, which convey mutual respect, equity and recognition of each child's strength and skills. Positive peer interactions are encouraged and observed. This interaction is encouraged between all children who attend our education and care service. The mixing of age groups is accepted and encouraged and configured to provide for each child's comfort and to minimise the risk of overcrowding, while providing adequate supervision as required by the Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011.

Legislative requirements / Sources:

Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
National Quality Standards 2011
Early Years Learning Framework

Implementation:

Educators/Staff to Children interaction:

- Ensure that relationships that are responsive, respectful and promote children's sense of security and belonging, free them to explore the environment and engage in learning.
- Ensure that educators/staff communicate closely with parents/guardians to determine how individual children indicate their needs, such as: hunger, toileting, tiredness, and emotions (happiness, sadness, frustration).
- Tantrums can occur as a way of releasing frustration. Educators/staff must allow a child to calm down and then reassure the child. The Educator/staff member can simply discuss what has happened with the child and then give an alternative behaviour.

- A toddler's need for emerging independence should be encouraged where possible, Educators/staff utilise routine activities to initiate meaningful interactions.
- Most toddlers' have a need for affection and reassurance. Toddlers can often become frustrated, and are affected by separation from family. Educators/staff need to be responsive to this in ways appropriate to each individual family.
- Preschoolers may appear very sure of themselves at times, however, they still need affection. Educators/staff should interact appropriately to each individual child.
- Conversations should be two-sided, and Educators/staff should show children that their ideas and comments are valued.
- Educators/staff should build a rapport with the children and families. This can be achieved with the children by asking them what they did on the weekend, what their pet did last night etc. In return share some of your stories of what you (the Educator) did as well.
- Allow time to talk to parents/guardians as they can provide valuable information about their child's culture, family life, likes/dislikes, and interests.
- Use positive guidance. Tell children what you want them to do – "We walk inside" rather than "No running".
- Give the children something to look forward to: "Today we..." This enables children to feel proud of their learning.
- Be attentive to all children, at all times.
- Educators/staff members should be honest in showing their feelings. If educators/staff members are feeling frustrated, ill or getting impatient, they should be able to discuss these feelings with the children in a non-threatening way. Use "I" messages to explain your concerns and enlist the children's help.

Children to Children interaction:

Educators/staff will support and encourage children to:

- Build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults.
- Verbalise feelings and ideas.
- Listen to other children.
- Show respect for others.
- Develop good social skills.
- Accept others of different culture, race and religion.
- Be co-operative.
- Have good relationships with each other.
- Share experiences.
- Show acceptance of routines.
- Seek help when frustrated.
- Interact with other children.
- Be relaxed and happy with each other.
- Contribute to activities and participate.
- Respond to positive discipline practice.
- Feel comfortable with themselves.
- Respect other children's space and privacy.

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that this policy is maintained and implemented at all times

Review:

This policy is the intellectual property of Maryland Care & Early Education Centre and is created with consultation of staff and families attending the service. This policy will be reviewed annually. This policy is available in other languages upon request.

Last review: October 2016

Next Review: October 2018