

Procedure related to interactions with children

| Associated National Quality Standard | Education and Care Services National Law or Regulation | Associated department policy, procedure or guideline |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| 5.1 | 155 | Interactions with children- preschool |
| 5.2 | 156 | Values in NSW public schools |
| | S.166 | Student Welfare Policy |
| | | Student Discipline in Government Schools Policy |
| | | Bullying of Students- Prevention and Response Policy |
| | | Anti - Racism Policy |
| | | Aboriginal Education Policy |

The preschool experience is often the child's first experience away from the family and is the beginning of their school career. In order to make it a positive experience this procedure governs the manner in which staff will interact with preschool children.

Relationships with children that are responsive and respectful promote children's sense of security and wellbeing. Relationships of this kind support children to explore the environment and engage in play and learning. [Regulation 155](#) requires staff to:

- maintain the dignity and rights of each child when interacting with them
- support each child to develop warm, trusting, respectful relationships with other children and with adults
- encourage each child to express themselves and their opinions, engaging them in sustained conversations about things that interest them
- respond to each child's strengths, abilities, interests and play to support curriculum decision making

The preschool program and routines must:

- provide guidance for every child to manage their own behaviour and to respect individual differences
- have regard for each family's cultural values

Fostering a sense of security

Quality Area 5 of the National Quality Standard (NQS) refers to relationships, 'being responsive and respectful and promoting children's sense of security and belonging'. Educators who are meaningful, thoughtful and deliberate in their interactions with children understand that strong relationships support children to develop their sense of identity, security and belonging.

Attachment theory supports educators to understand the nature and quality of those relationships. Children who have a strong attachment to the adults in their world have a sense of security and are more willing to take risks and engage in new learning experiences.

Educators who understand attachment are equitable, empathetic and judgement free in their decisions about behaviour and recognise the emotional needs of young child. They adapt their approach to reach children who are difficult to connect with and are intuitive in their understanding of when to move in and out of play situations with children. Educators can support children to build trusting relationships by:

- supporting children to initiate their own play experiences and join in group experiences
- providing flexible environments, programs and routines that allow children the time and resources needed for positive interactions with their peers
- planning for and facilitating the development of a range of social skills such as negotiation and group entry skills
- acknowledging children's feelings and what might be happening in their world
- ensuring equity in interactions with all children
- interacting with children at their level in a warm and respectful manner
- not expecting all children to do the same thing at the same time.

A commitment to the wellbeing of all children

The department is committed to the wellbeing of all children to ensure each individual child can connect, succeed and thrive at each stage of their development. [The Wellbeing Framework for schools](#) recognises the importance of positive relationships which foster connectedness and feelings of belonging by experiencing, 'a sense of connection, inclusion, respect for individuality and difference, resilience, empowerment, capacity to contribute to their school and wider community, and confidence to positively shape their own futures' (The Wellbeing Framework for schools, NSW Department of Education and Communities 2015, p9).

The Wellbeing Framework for schools



Dignity and Rights of the child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a universally agreed set of non-negotiable standards and obligations founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each child, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth status or ability.

[\(appendix to the NQF, 2018, p233\)](#)

Article 19 of the convention states that anyone who looks after children must ensure they are well cared for and protected from any form of neglect or abuse. Australia has agreed to undertake these obligations and the departments Code of Conduct affirms these obligations, stating all employees are expected to behave in a manner which ensures the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all children. The Wellbeing Framework for schools states:

Children and young people in public education in NSW will experience a sense of connection, inclusion, respect for individuality and difference, resilience, empowerment, capacity to contribute to their school and wider community, and confidence to positively shape their own futures.

The advocacy of children's dignity and their rights is the responsibility of all educators. Educators will:

- provide children with play and relaxation opportunities and experiences based on individual strengths, interests and needs
- value and support the importance of a child's culture, race, religion, and language to support belonging and identity
- respect and promote children's choices and agency and fostering individuality
- discuss issues with children and caregivers in a confidential manner
- ensure the dignity and rights of each child during personal care such as toileting, choice of clothing and dietary requirements
- support children to interact with each other respectfully and handle conflict and behaviour management in a manner which maintains the dignity of all involved
- support families to make informed choices and access support from local agencies and organisations
- celebrate children's cultural and religious values and upholding their beliefs and values.

Supporting children's relationships

At Punchbowl Public School Preschool educators consider how they support children to form and maintain positive relationships with each other, as well as learn to balance their own needs and wants with those of other children. Strategies to support this development include:

- a play-based pedagogy which provides a range of opportunities for children to engage in social play
- supportive environments that enable children to collaborate, learn from and help each other
- opportunities for children to explore different identities and points of view through dramatic play
- opportunities for children to assume leadership roles
- educators:
 - nurturing respectful and reciprocal relationships among children
 - scaffolding and encouraging children to initiate interactions, communicate with each other and join in play and social experiences
 - engaging thoughtfully in children's group play in ways that promote social inclusion
 - leading planned and spontaneous discussions around issues of inclusion and exclusion, fair and unfair behaviour.

Supporting children to regulate their own behaviour

The development of the ability to regulate one's own emotions and behaviour is critical to wellbeing, the development of friendships, and a smooth transition into school. Of equal importance, is the development of understanding how one's actions affect the way others feel and behave. Some children require additional support to regulate their behaviour and interact with others.

At Punchbowl Public School Preschool educators play a significant role in supporting the development of these skills through these strategies:

- a consistent educator approach to behaviour guidance which positively supports each child
- provision of a safe place to support children to explore self-calming strategies
- educators discussing with children the outcomes of their actions and alternative behaviours
- utilising intrinsic rewards, rather than extrinsic systems
- intentional teaching and positive reinforcement of:
 - routines
 - behaviour expectations
 - cooperative behaviour
- planned and spontaneous discussions around emotions and feelings
- educators using their knowledge of individual children to tailor their responses and interactions
- the development of individual behaviour plans, when required, in consultation with a child's family
- seeking input and suggestions from other professionals and support agencies, when required, to support individual children.

Punchbowl Public School Preschool Behaviour Support Guidelines

Punchbowl Public School Preschool educators will:

- maintain the rights and dignity of each child when interacting with them
- encourage preschool children to express themselves and their opinions
- plan activities that encourage children to become self-reliant and develop self-esteem and independence
- treat all children equally and give each child the same opportunities to contribute to the program through interest-based learning
- make modifications to resources or the environment to ensure children have equal opportunities
- ensure appropriate behaviour management strategies are carried out in a positive manner. Interactions that include physical, verbal or emotional punishments resulting in the child feeling threatened, humiliated or frightened will not be tolerated. Our procedure is TIME WITH or TIME AWAY!
 - Time With- is bringing the child close to you, keeping them with you and talking to them about what happened and guiding their behaviour.
 - Time Away- is when the **child chooses** to remove themselves to a quiet place to calm down. You cannot put them there. When the child has calmed down and is ready to re-join the group then talk to them about their behaviour.
- ensure children who display regular inappropriate behaviours will be redirected away from an experience and guided by an educator in another activity
- engage children in short discussions about feelings, and alternative behaviours before having an educator role-model more appropriate behaviour.
- model strategies to deal with aggressive or unwanted behaviour from others during group times,

to ensure children feel confident and have better control of their emotions and reactions

- ensure students only perform tasks that are appropriate to their cultural values, age and stage of intellectual and physical development
- ensure a child is not isolated for any reason other than illness, behaviour, accident or a pre-arranged appointment with parental consent
- ensure physical restraint of a child is the last resort and only used if necessary to protect the child from injury to themselves or others
- notify the principal or other executive staff that a child's behaviour has escalated to this level
- develop a risk management and or behaviour plan if a child displays persistent violent or disruptive behaviour in consultation with family and colleagues.

Suspension

The Department's [Suspension and Exclusion of Students Procedures](#) apply to all schools, but explicitly **exclude** preschool children. Situations where a child is a risk to the safety and wellbeing of themselves, other children and/or staff need to be handled carefully.

The principal should meet with the family to sensitively raise and discuss concerns relating to the child, with a focus on outcomes for the child. If required, the family should be offered a translation service for this meeting and/or to be accompanied by a support person. Where a risk exists, a partial enrolment may be negotiated with a child's family during a period in which behaviour or other concerns are addressed through actions such as:

- development of an individual behaviour management plan
- development of a risk assessment relating to the child
- implementation of adjustments and/or modifications to the environment or curriculum
- a paediatric assessment of the child's needs.

The family should feel confident that as concerns are addressed over time, there is the flexibility to increase the child's attendance hours.

In some situations, it may be necessary for a child to commence preschool on a partial enrolment to support a smooth transition. This may be applicable for a child with a diagnosed disability or high support needs. This should be done with the intention that the child's hours would gradually be increased as the child settled and adjustments were put in place.

Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)

Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) is a whole school approach for creating a positive, safe and supportive school climate in which children can learn and develop. It is implemented to improve the learning and wellbeing of all children in all school settings.

PBL in the preschool is implemented as part of the whole school approach. It aligns with the EYLF and NQS to address key features of preschool learning environments. Preschool and school teams collaborate to develop a shared understanding of how to implement PBL to support children from preschool through to school, in an age-appropriate way.

Outcomes of PBL in early childhood settings revolve around four key areas:

- supporting children to have positive social behaviour experiences
- building staff capacity and knowledge about behaviour guidance
- building connections between the school and preschool that support positive learning environments
- developing shared understandings of behaviour expectations.

Connections between PBL and the EYLF

| Positive behaviour for learning | Early Years Learning Framework |
|---|--|
| Teach expected behaviours for children to be successful socially and academically | Intentional teaching; providing children with strategies to make informed choices about their behaviours |
| Encourage and support appropriate behaviour through visual cues, prompting, positive verbal feedback | Responding to children's learning dispositions by giving acknowledgement, encouragement and additional ideas |
| Respond to problem behaviour as a learning opportunity using strategies to prompt, redirect, re-teach, reinforce and correct consequences | Planning for a time and safe place where children can reflect on their learning and behaviour |
| Provide extra teaching support for individual students to meet social/emotional and communication needs | Talking to children about their emotions; emotional regulation and self-control |
| Plan a quality teaching environment to support all students' learning needs | Providing opportunities and support for children to engage in meaningful and engaging learning |

By learning positive social behaviour, children develop the skills to regulate their actions independently and engage in positive interactions with their peers. While the behaviour expectations matrix will differ from that of the rest of the school, the preschool should use the same behaviour rules and language around PBL as in the rest of the school. This will ensure there is a consistent approach to supporting children to develop the skills, dispositions and understandings they need to interact sensitively and empathetically with others.

Educators with the children develop the Preschool PBL Teaching Matrix each year.



Punchbowl Public School Preschool PBL Teaching Matrix



| I am | Classroom | Playground | Mealtimes | Bathroom | Transitions/groups |
|-------------------|---|--|--|---|---|
| Safe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pick up what you drop -Cover cough or sneeze with your elbow -Use a tissue (Catch it, Bin it, Wash it) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use equipment correctly -Keep sand low -Climb tree safely -Put on sunscreen -Wear hat | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pick up what you drop -Put rubbish in correct bowl -Push chair in | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Flush toilet -Turn off tap -Paper towel in bin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Look in front -Line up with your class -Walk inside |
| Respectful | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Be kind -Use manners -Be a good helper -Make good choices -Pack up after play | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Hands off -Share toys -Use nice words -Look after our gardens | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Eat your own food -Drink from your own bottle -Sit on mat, legs crossed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Flush toilet | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Follow instructions -Use inside voice -Keep hands to self -Show the SLs |
| Learner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use your "words" -Ask for help -Tell the teacher how you are feeling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Go down slide feet first -Rocks and sticks stay on the ground -Ride bike on track, follow arrows | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Keep food on your lunchbox -Pick up what you drop | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Wash hands -Use one paper towel -Only 4 children in the bathroom at a time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Stay with your teachers -Wait for your turn |

Key Resources

Preschool: Interactions with children (attached)

Leading and Operating Department Preschool Guidelines [Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics](#)

ACECQA National Quality Standard Information sheet: [Supporting children to regulate their own behaviour](#)

PBL [Positive Behaviour for Learning](#)

Circle of security – circleofsecurityinternational.com/

Interactions with children – preschool

Relationships with children that are responsive and respectful will promote children's sense of security and wellbeing. Relationships of this kind free children to explore the environment and engage in play and learning.

Each child is supported to work with, learn from and help others through collaborative learning opportunities.

Interactions with children

Staff will:

- Maintain the dignity and rights of each child when interacting with them
- Support each child to develop warm, trusting, respectful relationships with other children and with adults
- Encourage each child to express themselves and their opinions, engaging them in sustained conversations about things that interest them
- Respond to each child's strengths, abilities, interests and play, to support curriculum decision making

Preschool programs

Routines will:

- Provide regular opportunities for children to engage in meaningful play experiences
- Provide guidance for every child to manage their own behaviour and to respect individual differences
- Have regard for each family's cultural values

Department preschools are required to comply with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 regulations 155 and 156. These regulations align with the National Quality Standard Quality Area 5: Relationships with children.

Preschool staff interaction with children is supported by the following department policies:

- Aboriginal Education and Training Policy PD/2008/0385/V02
- Anti Racism Policy PD/2005/0235/V05
- Code of Conduct PD/2004/0020/V06
- Multicultural Education Policy in Schools PD/2005/0234/V01
- People with Disabilities - Statement of Commitment PD/2005/0243/V01
- Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy PD/2010/0415/V01
- Student Discipline in Government Schools PD/2006/0316/V03
- Student Welfare Policy PD/2002/0052/V001
- Teachers Handbook 2003 Professional and Legal Responsibilities of Teachers, Care and Supervision of Students page 5-5
- Values in NSW public schools PD/2005/0131/V01