

Interactions with Children Policy

Purpose

Peak Sports and Learning strives to provide the highest level of education and care for each child in a warm, nurturing and safe environment. Our philosophy is based on the concepts of FITNESS, EDUCATION & FUN. The three ingredients to getting children actively involved in sports, literacy and numeracy and most of all, having rewarding, fun experiences. We provide an environment that reflects this philosophy, and along with the principles of “My Time, Our Place”; the development of secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships with children are fostered and encouraged. Interactions between educators and children promote an environment of collaboration, that enables building meaningful relationships with each individual child, all families and members of the community.

We will endeavor throughout all interactions with children to nurture their optimism, happiness and sense of fun and we will aim to recognise and respond to barriers which may impact on children achieving a positive sense of self identify. Genuine respect for diversity and a commitment to equity is reflected in all our interactions with children. Educators involve children in the negotiation of clear boundaries regarding safety, respect for others and procedures for creating a caring environment.

Considerations

Education and Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard/s	Other Service policies/documentation	Other
Regulations: 73, 74, 76, 155, 156, 168 Child Safe Standards	Quality Areas 1, 5 and 6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parent Handbook - Staff Handbook - Staff Code of Conduct - Programming and Evaluation records - Behaviour Support and Management Policy - Supervision of Children Policy - Inclusion Policy - Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My Time, Our Place. - Appropriate Physical contact in OOSH, Network of Community Activities publication -

Procedures

The educators will:

- Maintain a positive attitude in all interactions with children.
- Listen carefully to children’s experiences and perspectives and show interest in their ideas and perspectives.
- Respect children as individuals and encourage each child to voice their opinions, concerns and ideas in a supportive forum that is free from stigmatism.
- Support children in feeling confident in the environment by never using strategies such as shouting, threats of corporal punishment or the refusal of food or other basic needs. Educators will always treat children with respect, courtesy and understanding.

- Treat children equally regardless of race, cultural background, religion, sex or ability and ensure interactions between children and educators exhibit this.
- Sensitively manage children who are having difficulty conveying their message or managing their emotions.
- Ensure children understand what is being communicated to them during interactions and allow them time to question or respond.
- Speak to children at their level and use voice intonations, facial expressions and body language to assist in conveying messages.
- Engage in one on one conversations with all children and develop an understanding of their likes, dislikes and interests.
- Collaborate with children regarding the daily routines and practices within the service including programming of experiences in order to meet their individual needs, interests and abilities.
- Organise environments and spaces that promote small and large group interactions and meaningful play and leisure.
- Collaborate with children to develop a set of rules or boundaries to guide their behaviour in the service and discuss clear expectations and consequences of inappropriate behaviours.
- Keep rules simple and only have a small number of concise rules that children understand, focusing on appreciating and caring for each other and the environment. All staff, families and children will be made aware of the rules and the expected consequences. The rules will be clearly displayed.
- Ensure that all educators enforce the rules and consequences consistently at all times. Consequences will be relevant to the situation and never demeaning.
- Follow up all issues that arise by discussing the situation with the child and strategising for better solutions in future issues.
- Collaborate with family members and schools regarding appropriate behaviour management practices to ensure there is a consistent approach.
- Access professional development and resources related to positive behaviour management and include this in professional development planning.
- Act as a positive role model for appropriate and expected behaviours in the service being mindful of respectful language and tone.
- Encourage and reward acceptable behaviour by giving praise and positive feedback to children as often as possible.
- Focus on the behaviours being displayed and not the child displaying them.
- Assist children in developing self-discipline skills and regulating their own behaviours by using simple conflict resolution skills, building self-reliance and self-esteem, role modelling and positive direction.
- Provide children with opportunities to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other, educators and visitors to the service.
- Ensure that appropriate physical contact is maintained in regards to comforting children, application of first aid, safety provisions such as holding hands and maintaining respectful bodily space.
- Identify when interactions with a child are not appropriate and refer to the services 'Providing a Child Safe Environment' policy to address these concerns.
- Maintain defined boundaries in regard to appropriate behaviour with children and engagement with their families.
- Ensure all 10 Child Safe Standards are considered in interactions with children to reduce and eliminate any risk of harm or abuse.

The children will:

- Be treated with respect, courtesy and understanding regardless of race, cultural background, religion, sex or ability.
- Be encouraged to listen to others with respect, courtesy and understanding regardless of race, cultural background, religion, sex or ability.
- Be encouraged to share humour and express themselves in a variety of ways.
- Practice strategies for problem solving, debating, negotiating and interacting with others in an appropriate way with the guidance of educators.
- Have opportunities to use and share their home language with other children and educators
- Collaborate with staff in developing service routines and procedures including rules and boundaries and the consequences they should expect if these are not followed.
- Encourage their peers to adhere to the rules and expectations.
- Participate in experiences that will build relationships and promote interactions between each other, educators and visitors to the service.
- Assist educators in developing programs and routines for the service that reflect their individual needs, interests and abilities.
- Have their need for solitude or quiet time supported and respected by educators and children
- Develop an understanding of the choices they make and the responsibility they have to manage their own behaviours in conjunction with educators.

Physical contact with children and child protection considerations

Peak educators will, upon employment and as part of their induction training, be issued with a Code of Conduct and accompanying document entitled **Appropriate Physical Contact in OOSH**. This document provides a series of guidelines for all educators to follow and also forms part of Peak's Interactions with Children and Child Safe policies. Educators are expected to follow these guidelines in all interactions with children.

Particular consideration is given to situations where educators need to assist children with changing, toileting or in times where a child needs to be moved away from the main supervised play areas due to behavioural considerations. In these circumstances the following procedures will be followed:

- Wherever a child is capable of toileting or changing themselves independently they will do so without physical assistance from educators.
- Where a child soils themselves as a one-off occurrence, parents will be contacted as soon as possible to inform them of the incident.
- Children should be toilet trained to attend the service. Where children including children with additional needs require further assistance with toileting, the service will consider if a toileting plan is able to be developed in collaboration with the family. This will only be put in place where the centre is equipped to provide an adequate space for changing, toileting assistance and adequate staffing levels to ensure Child Protection standards are met. Parents will be informed of toileting occurrences on collection of their child. This plan will consider privacy for the child, health and hygiene and convenience of access.
- When a child, due to behaviour or emotional distress, requires time away from the main areas of the centre, the child may be moved to an area that is not visible. This may be the canteen, a quiet

area or hiding spot. In this circumstance the educator accompanying the child should remain visible to other educators.

- All efforts will be made to ensure that two staff members will accompany a single child on a bus run. If this is unavoidable, in rare circumstances, parents will be informed that it is necessary to transport a child alone with an educator.

Version Control Table

Version Control	Date Released	Next Review	Approved by	Amendment
1	Jan 2017	March 2018	Directors	Nil – small amendments to procedures
2	September 2018	September 2019	Directors	Rewritten and edited to reflect 2018 updated Quality Standards. Paragraphs added from centre philosophies Links added to the new Supervision of Children Policy, Links to updated policies including Child Safe Environment, Inclusion and Behaviour Support and Management Policies. Section added to include Appropriate Physical Contact
3	Sept 2019	Sept 2020	Directors	Nil amendments
4	March 2020	August 2020	Directors	Amendment to Physical contact with introduction of new toileting plan. Moved to new document review timeline.
5	August 2020	August 2022	Directors	Nil amendments
6	August 2022	August 2024	Directors	Addition of Child Safe Standards in Educators considerations.