


<b>NQS-QA5 Relationships with Children Policy</b>		 <b>Longreach Regional Council</b>
Policy Number:	12.35	
Policy Category:	Childcare Centre	
Authorised by:	Res-2026-05-137	
Date approved:	21 May 2026	
Review Date:	21 May 2028	

### **SCOPE**

This policy and its associated documents provide a framework to guide all actions for the Approved Provider, nominated supervisor, all team members, children, parents, volunteers, contractors, suppliers and any visitors to the service.

Failure to adhere to this policy, or any of its associated documents, may result in disciplinary action being taken up to and including termination of employment for personnel, refusal of service for clients, and/or the dissolving of contractual agreements with suppliers, contractors, and/or individuals outside of our service.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Supportive relationships and positive interactions literally help build healthy brains, and they provide the all essential buffer against stress and adversity. The relationships children experience in the early years impacts their present, and their future; and the Guide to the National Quality Standards supports this when, on page 120 it talks about how positive, responsive interactions with young children are "...important to both their current wellbeing and future development. Having secure relationships with educators...provides children with a secure base for exploration and learning. As children grow and develop they continue to rely on secure, trusting and respectful relationships with the adults in their lives" (2017, p. 120).

The purpose of this policy is to outline ways in which educators can develop responsive and respectful relationships with children.

This policy relates to:

- Relationships and interactions between educators and children
- Relationships between children
- Children's rights, and
- Children's self-regulation.

This policy relates to the National Quality Standard (NQS) Quality Area 5: Relationships with children.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

### **THE CENTRAL ROLE OF FAMILY**

- We view the child at the centre of an ecological social system.
- We acknowledge the child's relationship with their family as an integral part of this system. This influences our practice as we value all those close relationships important to the child and understand that to build positive relationships with children we must strive to build strong partnerships with families.

### **BUILDING STRONG, RESPONSIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN**

- Our service has a focus on educators developing warm and responsive relationships with children.
- We understand that sometimes children and educators naturally gravitate to each other for a variety of reasons, including personality or temperament, shared cultural background and home language. We respect children's choice to have a deep connection with certain educators and regularly reflect on our relationships with children to make sure these are positive and supported by our staffing systems.
- Our educators view their relationships with children as reciprocal; they are mutually invested in the welfare of the children, act responsively to their needs, and value their perspectives.
- Our caregiving and transition support systems are designed so consistent and familiar educators work with the children.
- The relationships between educators and children contribute to a predictable environment that helps children to feel secure, confident and have a sense of belonging. Emotionally warm and positive interactions in learning situations lead to constructive behaviours in children.
- We never use prohibited or unreasonable discipline (National Law s166).

### **SUPERVISION**

- Our active supervision practices facilitate healthy and supportive interactions and promote engagement with children.
- Educators are responsive and sensitive to children's social cues, using a positive tone of voice, body language, and consequences.
- Our active supervision practices help children to feel empowered and confident to make choices in their environment, to have agency, share ideas and opinions, and be full participants in the educational program.
- Where interactions occur in less visible spaces, educators maintain visibility wherever possible (doors ajar, glass panels, open sightlines) and ensure another educator is aware.

### **INTERACTING WITH INFANTS**

- We are acutely aware that the effectiveness of emotional communication between infants and caregivers contributes to a child's current and future wellbeing.
- Infants appreciate how educators respond to them, and they use these interactions as a cue for self-regulation.
- Our educators respond positively to children's intentions whether it is communicating a need, want or desire.

## PLANNING, MONITORING AND ASSESSING

- Educators plan for, monitor and assess relationships as part of an ongoing cycle of planning and programming, offering children opportunities to learn about themselves and their relationships with others.
- Educators gather information using a wide variety of tools and approaches, including but not limited to observations, anecdotal records, learning stories, time samples, and teacher and parent collaboration to make informed decisions as to how to adapt their practice to deepen their understanding of and relationships with children.
- Our approaches enable educators to engage in conversations and develop learning programs that are responsive, relevant and authentic for each child.
- Educators gain insight into children's strengths, interests and abilities to identify the zone of proximal development and level of scaffolding needed to extend learning. This in turn increases social interactions with educators and peers.

## RESPECT & AGENCY

- We believe children are entitled to respect as human beings, with the right to be involved in decisions that affect them and their education.
- Diversity is celebrated to build a community based on a sense of belonging, solidarity, justice, responsibility, caring, and sensitivity.
- We value a culture of respect for children's rights, for their dignity and citizenship, and for their capacity to contribute significantly towards their own well-being beyond the confines of the educational context.
- The dignity and rights of children are maintained through equity of service access, privacy provisions and opportunities to be active participants in a child-centred learning environment.
- The educators and teachers plan learning opportunities that facilitate self-directed learning in a play-based environment.
- Through active participation children are supported to acquire skills in thinking, analysing, investigating, creating, and applying knowledge to achieve their optimum potential.
- To ensure that children are provided with meaningful opportunities to be heard, it is important that they have access to appropriate information in forms that are consistent with their level of understanding. It is also important that they are offered privacy and confidentiality regarding their personal information, consistent with their right to protection. Furthermore, it is essential that they are informed about how decisions are to be made, and how their views will influence any decisions made about them.
- Children are told in child-friendly ways about their rights and how to speak up; we offer simple ways to raise worries and we give feedback on what we did ('you said / we did').

## POSITIVE PEER RELATIONSHIPS

- Our educators are mindful observers and knowledgeable of ways to facilitate positive peer relations, and if necessary, engage in professional development to increase their repertoire of strategies to effectively facilitate positive peer interactions and relationships.

- We plan environments that allow children to play in small groups providing opportunities to engage in meaningful reciprocal interactions, supported by educators as models for effective communication. Through these opportunities children form bonds, develop strong friendships, and learn collaboratively.

## **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- Social and emotional education is embedded into all facets of the early childhood experience at our service.
- Our educators focus on supporting children's emotional self-regulation through the use of a range of evidence-based co-regulation strategies.
- We acknowledge that children's ability to read emotional cues, and to express emotions appropriately, leads to greater social success.
- We encourage children to draw on their social resources to enable increased participation in the educational program. These beneficial interactions in turn facilitate a positive influence on children's cognitive, emotional, behavioural, and biological responses.
- Educators make intentional decisions in relation to planning for learning experiences and environments that promote children's development of the skills necessary to initiate and maintain positive interactions and relationships. This understanding of self and of others results in an increased ability to self-regulate, enabling the development of positive relationships with educators and other children.
- We promote social understanding involving children's comprehension of their own and others' beliefs, emotions, and intentions, which directly affect their social interactions with others.
- When children work collaboratively, they develop a common understanding of the world as they acquire verbal, cognitive and social skills, all of which influence their learning. In this type of learning environment, children attain a better understanding of their peers' needs, points of view, and a better perception of social problems and how to resolve these.

## **RELATED POLICY DOCUMENTS**

- QA 5 Behaviour guidance procedure
- QA 5 Inclusion procedure
- QA 5 Interactions and relationships procedure
- QA Child support plan tool
- QA 1 Educational program and practice policy & related procedures
- QA 2 Child protection policy & related procedures
- QA 6 Collaborative partnerships with families and communities policies & related procedures
- QA 4 Staff code of conduct procedure

## **DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS**

Agency - being able to make choices and decisions, to influence events and to have an impact on one's world.

Curriculum - all interactions, experiences, activities routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children’s learning and development (DEEWR, 2009).

Ecological social system - how the inherent qualities of a child and his environment interact to influence how he will grow and develop. Through the Bronfenbrenner Ecological Theory, Bronfenbrenner stressed the importance of studying a child in the context of multiple environments, also known as ecological systems in the attempt to understand his development.

Program - the documentation showing children’s educational goals, the learning opportunities that are provided by our educators to achieve these, and the related educator practices to support learning.

Scaffolding - the educators’ decisions and actions that build on children’s existing knowledge and skills to enhance their learning.

Wellbeing - being comfortable, healthy, or happy.

Zone of proximal development - is the difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can do with help.

Authorised by resolution as at 21 May 2026:



Brett Walsh  
Chief Executive Officer

## LINKS TO STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

This policy relates to the National Quality Standard (NQS) Quality Area 5: Relationships with children.

Standard/ Elements	Concept	Descriptor
QA5		Relationships with children
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.

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.
5.2.2	Self-regulation	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviors, respond appropriately to the behavior of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

This policy relates to the following law and national regulations:

Standard/ Elements	Concept	Related law and national regulations
QA5		Relationships with children
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
		Section 166 Offence to use inappropriate discipline Regulation 155 Interactions with children
5.2	Relationships between children	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.
		Section 166 Offence to use inappropriate discipline Regulation 155 Interactions with children Regulation 156 Relationships in groups

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND REFERENCES

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#### DOCUMENT CONTROL

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date Reviewed</b>	<b>Modifications</b>	<b>Next Policy Document Review Date</b>	<b>Role responsible for review</b>
<b>1.1</b>	May 2021	Reviewed, no changes made	Q2, 2023	SPI team
<b>1.2</b>	October 2023	Added line about co-regulation. Updated format to dot points to improve readability. Added related policy documents section.	Q4, 2025	SPI team
<b>1.3</b>	Nov 2025	Reference to s166 added. Links updated.	Q4, 2027	Policy Manager