

Interactions with Children Families and Staff Policy		 Longreach Regional Council Ilfracombe Isisford Longreach Yarakka
Policy Number:	12.21	
Policy Category:	Childcare Centre	
Authorised by:	Res-2025-07-209	
Date approved:	17/07/2025	
Review Date:	17/07/2026	

AIM

Staff aim to build positive and respectful relationships with children, families, and educators through collaboration and interactions, which is reflective of our Service philosophy and the *Early Years Learning Framework*. Educators will encourage positive relationships between children and their peers as well as with educators and families at the Service, ensuring children feel safe and supported.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, approved provider, nominated supervisor, management, and visitors of the Service.

LEGISLATION

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2024)

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2025)

DEFINITIONS

Department of Education - Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) – Regulatory Authority responsible for the approval, monitoring and quality assessment of services in their jurisdiction in accordance with the national legislative framework and in relation to the National Quality Standard.

Educator – early childhood or school age practitioner who works directly with children in early childhood or school age care settings.

National Quality Framework (NQF) – provides a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services across Australia.

National Quality Standard (NQS) – sets a high national benchmark for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services in Australia. The NQS includes seven quality areas that are important outcomes for children. Services are assessed and rated by their regulatory authority against the NQS, and given a rating for each of the 7 quality areas and an overall rating based on these results.

Parents/Guardians – a person who has parental responsibility for the child.

Staff – employee of Longreach Regional Council based at the Longreach Childcare Centre.

Nominated Supervisor – a person with responsibility for the day to day management of an approved service.

Approved Provider – Longreach Regional Council

Leadership Team – an internal group of leaders within the Childcare Centre comprising of the Childcare Services Director, the Childcare Services Assistant Director and the Staff Engagement and Development Officer.

OWNA – the digital platform utilised by the Longreach Childcare Services for the recording of information.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) identifies secure, respectful, and reciprocal relationships with children as one of the principles that underpin practice. Within an 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 early childhood 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.

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for interactions with children (Regulation 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed.

In order to build and maintain positive and respectful relationships with children, families and educators of our Service will adhere to our statement of philosophy and the ACA Code of Ethics. We aim to provide a child safe culture where our values and practices that guide the attitudes and behaviour of all staff are guided by the implementation of the Child Safe Standards and related National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Interactions With Children

Children need positive relationships and interactions with educators that are trusting and responsive to their individual needs. Through these experiences and interactions children will develop a positive understanding of themselves and feel a sense of belonging. We promote a respectful, child safe culture where children concerns are always responded to, and children feel empowered to participate in decisions and provide feedback to educators and staff. All educators and staff play a vital role in protecting children from harm by responding to and reporting any incidents, disclosures or suspicions of abuse, harm, neglect or ill-treatment. Our Service upholds a strong reporting culture to safeguard children in our care.

The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor Will:

- 1) create a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere in which children experience equitable, friendly and genuine interactions with all educators
- 2) ensure environments are created to ensure children feel safe, valued, understood and supported to learn
- 3) ensure the Service complies with educator to child ratio and qualification requirements
- 4) ensure all educators and staff have undertaken current child protection legislation training including mandatory reporting requirements and obligations

- 5) ensure all educators and staff are aware of the procedure of reporting allegations of abuse, neglect, harm or ill-treatment
- 6) ensure that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or any discipline that is unreasonable or inappropriate in the circumstances (S. 166 National Law)
- 7) support educators to use trauma-informed practices to recognise and respond to the emotional needs of children (see *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*).

Educators Will:

- 1) role-model appropriate language and behaviour
- 2) support and encourage children to be aware of their own feelings as well as the feelings of others
- 3) encourage children to treat all other children with respect
- 4) provide children with the opportunity to explore their dispositions for learning by expressing themselves and their opinions
- 5) ensure children are aware of how to raise concerns or provide feedback-(child focused complaint handling system – *Dealing with Complaints Policy*)
- 6) respond or report to children about how their feedback has been acted upon
- 7) assist the children to build resilience and self-assurance through positive interactions
- 8) guide children's behaviour positively (see *Behaviour Guidance Policy*)
- 9) respect the rights, dignity and agency of children (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)
- 10) support children in the early childhood environment
- 11) provide appropriate supervision so children feel safe in their interactions with other children
- 12) speak to children in a positive manner at all times, promoting respect, tolerance and empathy, including the use of non-verbal cues and communication
- 13) engage in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning of children
- 14) respect each child's uniqueness, be attuned to, and respond sensitively and appropriately to children's efforts to communicate and use the child's own language, communication styles, and culture to enhance interactions
- 15) listen to children and take them seriously; support and encourage children to use appropriate language in their interactions with adults and peers. Educators will extend upon children's interests and ideas through questions and discussions, supported and made visible in observations, reflections, and programming.
- 16) understand their mandatory reporting requirements and respond to any incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse, harm, neglect or ill-treatment they witness or suspect immediately
- 17) communicate with children by getting down to their level, using eye contact, and showing respect to the child whilst engaging in and promoting effective communication
- 18) show empathy to children
- 19) ensure that the values, beliefs, and cultural practices of the child and family are considered and respected (Reg. 155)
- 20) ensure that no child is ever isolated for any reason other than illness, accident or pre-arranged appointment with parental consent. During this time, they will be under adult supervision.
- 21) regularly reflect on their relationships and interactions with children and how these can be improved to benefit each child
- 22) facilitate children's individual development extending upon their strengths, interests and abilities
- 23) use the *Early Childhood Australia's 'Code of Ethics'* to guide their educational practice and professionalism within our Service.

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor/ Educators Will Ensure:

- 1) all families are treated equitably without bias or judgement, recognising that each family is unique
- 2) families are provided with information and resources in their first language
- 3) families are asked to identify a preferred method of regular communication with the Service (this may include utilising a translator service)
- 4) families and children are greeted upon arrival in a respectful manner
- 5) they learn the names of family members and use these names when they greet them
- 6) two-way communication is established through leading by example and asking questions and a willingness to offer information about ourselves
- 7) common terminology (not jargon) is used when talking to parents regarding their child's development
- 8) privacy and confidentiality are respected at all times
- 9) information about another child or family information is never discussed with a parent or visitor
- 10) they remain sensitive to cultural differences amongst families and encourage families to share cultural aspects with the children and educators at the service
- 11) the advice and opinion from other professional experts are requested, with parental permission, to assist educators develop and implement strategies to support the inclusion of children with additional needs
- 12) they seek additional resources and professional support for families through a range of organisations such as Inclusion Support, Allied Health teams and other specific health professional networks
- 13) verbal communication is always open, respectful and honest
- 14) families are provided with up-to-date service information and notices through Daily updates on OWNA, communal notice boards, emails and sign-in sheets
- 15) they regularly reflect on parent input into the program and make changes where necessary that will best benefit the service and children
- 16) connections between families are promoted and enhanced through inviting families to participate in routines and events at the service
- 17) families are aware of our complaint handling process- (*Dealing with Complaints Policy*)

To Maintain Professionalism at all Times, Educators Will:

- 1) engage in professional communication in order to create an effective work environment and to build a positive relationship with educators, children and families. Communication amongst colleagues creates a positive atmosphere and a professional image for families. Communication between staff and families ensures that important information is being passed on consistently.
- 2) embed a child safe culture through their attitudes, behaviours and actions
- 3) collaborate together as a team sharing roles and responsibilities through the use of a roster where necessary
- 4) be respectful when listening to each other's point of view and ideas
- 5) maintain effective communication to ensure that teamwork occurs
- 6) use staff meetings to communicate their professional reflections and ideas for continuous improvement as a team
- 7) keep up to date with current legislation to child protection including mandatory reporting requirements – (*Child Protection, Reportable Conduct Scheme*)
- 8) refer to the *Dealing with Complaints Policy (Staff) /Procedure* if they feel a situation with another educator is not being handled with professionalism, respect, and fairness
- 9) recognise each other's strengths and value the contribution each person makes to different work roles

- 10) work collaboratively to reach decisions which will enhance the quality of the education and care offered at the Service
- 11) welcome diverse views and perspectives
- 12) work together as a team and engage in open and honest communication at all times
- 13) respect each other's positions and opinions
- 14) develop and share networks and links with other agencies
- 15) resolve differences promptly and positively and use the experience to develop more effective methods of working together.

To Enhance Communication and Teamwork, Management Will:

- 1) provide new educators with relevant information about the Service and program through a Staff Handbook, induction program, and daily communication
- 2) treat educators with respect
- 3) be sensitive to the feelings and needs of educators
- 4) provide constructive feedback to educators as part of their professional learning plan support
- 5) value the role and contribution of each educator
- 6) demonstrate commitment to ongoing collaboration and engagement to support staff wellness
- 7) provide opportunities for all educators to have input into the program development and evaluation
- 8) appreciate and utilise educator skills and interests
- 9) provide support, assistance and mentoring to educators
- 10) hold regular educator meetings to encourage and support professional growth and reflective practice
- 11) use appropriate conflict resolution techniques to solve problems
- 12) ensure policies and procedures are up to date regarding communication, expected behaviour and grievances
- 13) provide opportunities for professional development.

To Enhance Communication and Teamwork, Educators Will:

- 1) maintain privacy and confidentiality
- 2) be respectful, caring and inclusive of all colleagues
- 3) be sensitive to the feelings and needs of other team members
- 4) support colleagues during difficult situations
- 5) provide constructive feedback to each other
- 6) trust each other
- 7) value the role and contribution of colleagues
- 8) appreciate and utilise colleague skills, strengths and interests regardless of qualification and experience
- 9) provide support and assistance to each other
- 10) share responsibilities
- 11) have a flexible attitude towards team roles and responsibilities
- 12) greet each other by name
- 13) show genuine interest in the other person by using active and reflective listening
- 14) communicate ideas and opinions clearly and professionally
- 15) use a communication book or daily diary to pass on messages and record relevant information
- 16) use appropriate conflict resolution techniques to solve problems
- 17) engage in opportunities for professional development.

RELATED RESOURCES

Behaviour Guidance Policy Child Protection Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Code of Conduct Policy Dealing with Complaints Policy Delivery of Children to, and Collection from and Education and Care Service Premises Educational Program Policy Enrolment Policy Family Communication Policy Governance Policy	Management Committee Policy Open Door Policy Orientation of Families Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Relief Staff Policy Respect for Children Policy Social Media Policy Staffing Arrangement Policy Student and Volunteer Policy Supervision Policy Transition to School Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
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CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Interaction with Children, Families and Staff Policy* will be reviewed on a regular basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators and management.

Authorised by resolution as at 17/07/2025:



Brett Walsh
Chief Executive Officer