



Interactions with Children Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The aim of this policy is to provide clear guidelines to help maintain and develop positive and relationship with each child at services administered by Annie's Nannys and Babysitting Agency. As well as ensuring that each child at services administered by Annie's Nannys and Babysitting Agency is supported to learn and develop in a secure and empowering environment.

Annie's Nannys and Babysitting Agency is committed to:

- Maintaining the dignity and rights of each child under the care of the agency
- Encouraging children to express themselves and their opinion, and to undertake experiences that develop self-esteem and self-reliance
- Considering the health, safety and wellbeing of each child, and providing a safe, secure and welcoming environment in which they can develop and learn.
- Maintaining a duty of care towards all children at the service.
- Considering the diversity of individual children under the care of the agency, including family and cultural values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child.
- Building collaborative relationships with families to improve learning and development outcomes for children.
- Encouraging positive, respectful and warm relationships between children and educators and staff at the service.

This policy applies to the Agency Director (Approved Provider), educators, nannies, volunteers, parents or guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities or services provided by Annie's Nannys and Babysitting Agency.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each individual, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, wealth, birth status or ability. Developing responsive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships with children promotes their wellbeing, self-esteem and sense of security. Positive interactions between educators/adults and children can empower children to feel valued, competent and capable.

Actively engaging in children's learning and decision-making during play, daily routines and ongoing activities can stimulate children's thinking, enrich their learning and encourage them to explore and manage their feelings and behaviour.

"Having supportive relationships with the nominated supervisor, educators, co-ordinators and staff members enables children to develop confidence in their ability to express themselves, work through differences, learn new things and take calculated risks" (Guide to the National Quality Standard).

Regulation 155 of the National Regulations requires an Approved Provider of children's services to take reasonable steps to ensure that the service provides education and care to children in a way that encourages them to express themselves, and develop self-reliance and self-esteem, maintains their dignity and rights, provides positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour, and respects their cultural and family values.

Regulation 156 requires the Approved Provider to ensure that the service provides children with opportunities to interact and develop positive relationships with each other, and with the staff and volunteers at the service. To meet these

requirements, the Approved Provider is expected to consider the size and composition of the groups in which the children are educated and cared for.

In developing an Interactions with Children Policy, early childhood education and care services must review and reflect on the philosophy, beliefs and values of the service, particularly with regard to the relationships with children. The development of this policy should also be informed by the service's Code of Conduct Policy

RELATED LEGISLATION

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 166, 167
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 73, 74, 155, 156, 157, 168(2)(j)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children
 - Standard 5.1: Respectful and equitable relationships are developed and maintained with each child
 - Standard 5.2: Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults

DEFINITIONS

Adequate supervision: Supervision entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service being in sight and/or hearing of the educator/nanny at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play including hazards created by the equipment used.

Behaviour guidance: A means of assisting children to self-manage their behaviour. It differs from traditional 'behaviour management' or 'discipline' which generally implies that an adult is 'managing' children's behaviour or using punishment to control children. Behaviour guidance applies to all forms of behaviour, not just behaviours labelled as 'negative'.

Behaviour guidance plan: A plan that documents strategies to assist an educator in guiding a child with diagnosed behavioural difficulties to self-manage his/her behaviour. The plan is developed in consultation with the educators, nannies, parents/guardians and families, and other professional support agencies as applicable.^{pop[]i}

Challenging behaviour: Behaviour that:

- disrupts others or causes disputes between children, but which is part of normal social development
- infringes on the rights of others
- causes harm or risk to the child, other children, adults or living things
- is destructive to the environment and/or equipment
- inhibits the child's learning and relationship with others
- is inappropriate relative to the child's developmental age and background.

Notifiable complaint: A complaint that alleges a breach of the Act or Regulation, or alleges that the health, safety or wellbeing of a child at the service may have been compromised. Any complaint of this nature must be reported within 24 hours of the complaint being made. If the Approved Provider is unsure whether the matter is a notifiable complaint, it is good practice to contact DET for confirmation. Written reports to DET must include:

- details of the event or incident
- the name of the person who initially made the complaint
- if appropriate, the name of the child concerned and the condition of the child, including a medical or incident report (where relevant)
- contact details of a nominated member of the Grievances Subcommittee/investigator
- any other relevant information.

Written notification of complaints must be submitted using the appropriate forms

Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) Program: Early intervention outreach services that are universally available within state-funded preschools for any child with developmental concerns. The primary role of the PSFO Program is to support the access and participation of children with additional needs in preschool.

Serious incident: An incident resulting in the death of a child, or an injury, trauma or illness for which the attention of a registered medical practitioner, emergency services or hospital is sought or should have been sought. This also includes an incident in which a child appears to be missing, cannot be accounted for, is removed from the service in contravention of the Regulations or is mistakenly locked in/out of the service premises. A serious incident should be documented in an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the incident. The Regulatory Authority (DET) must be notified within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring at the service.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Approved Provider (Annie's Nannies and Babysitting Agency) is responsible for:

- Developing and implementing the Interactions with Children Policy in consultation with the Certified Supervisor, educators, nannies, staff and parents/guardians, and ensuring that it reflects the philosophy, beliefs and values of the agency.
- Ensuring parents/guardians and all staff are provided with a copy of the Interactions with Children Policy and comply with its requirements.
- Ensuring the Nominated Supervisor, educators and all staff are aware of the service's expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and interactions when working with children and families.
- Ensuring children are adequately supervised
- Ensuring educational programs are delivered in accordance with an approved learning framework, are based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and take into account the individual differences of each child.
- Ensuring the educational program contributes to the development of children who have a strong sense of wellbeing and identity, and are connected, confident, involved and effective learners and communicators.
- Ensuring that the agency provides education and care to children in a way that:
 - encourages children to express themselves and their opinions
 - allows children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem
 - maintains the dignity and the rights of each child at all times
 - offers positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour
 - has regard to the cultural and family values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for
- Ensuring clear documentation of the assessment and evaluation of each child's:
 - developmental needs, interests, experiences and program participation
 - progress against the outcomes of the educational program
- Supporting educators/nannies to gain appropriate training, knowledge and skills for the implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring the environment at the service is safe, secure and free from hazards for children.
- Ensuring that the educators, nannies and all staff members at the agency who work with children are aware that it is an offence to subject a child to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive in the circumstances.
- Promoting collaborative relationships between children/families and educators, staff and other professionals, to improve the quality of children's education and care experiences.
- Referring notifiable complaints, grievances or complaints that are unable to be resolved appropriately and in a timely manner to the Grievances Subcommittee/investigator.
- Informing DET, in writing, within 24 hours of receiving a notifiable complaint.
- Notifying DET, in writing, within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring at the service.
- Ensuring that where the agency has been notified of a court order prohibiting an adult from contacting an enrolled child, such contact does not occur while the child is under the care of the agency.
- Ensuring educators, nannies and staff use positive and respectful strategies to assist children to manage their own behaviour, and to respond appropriately to conflict and the behaviour of others.
- Ensuring that individual behaviour guidance plans are developed for children with diagnosed behavioural difficulties, in consultation with the educators, nannies, parents/guardians and families, and other professionals and support agencies.
- Developing links with other services and/or professionals to support children and their families, where required.
- Maintaining confidentiality at all times.

Educators and nannies are responsible for:

- Assisting with the development and implementation of the *Interactions with Children Policy*, in consultation with the Approved Provider, parents/guardians and families.
- Ensuring access to the *Interactions with Children Policy* for parents/guardians and families.
- Complying with the requirements of the *Interactions with Children Policy*.
- Being aware of agency expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and reactions when working with children and families.

- Providing adequate supervision of children at all times
- Communicating and working collaboratively with parents/guardians and families in relation to their child's learning, development, interactions, behaviour and relationships.
- Delivering educational programs, in accordance with an approved learning framework, that are based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and take into account the individual differences of each child.
- Delivering programs that develop a sense of wellbeing and identity, connection to community, and provide skills for lifelong learning in all children.
- Providing education and care to children in a way that:
 - encourages children to express themselves and their opinions
 - allows children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem
 - maintains the dignity and the rights of each child at all times
 - offers positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour
 - has regard to the cultural and family values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for
- Developing warm, responsive and trusting relationships with children that promote a sense of security, confidence and inclusion.
- Supporting each child to develop responsive relationships, and to work and learn in collaboration with others.
- Using positive and respectful strategies to assist children to manage their own behaviour, and to respond appropriately to conflict and the behaviour of others.
- Developing individual behaviour guidance plans for children with diagnosed behavioural difficulties, in consultation with parents/guardians and families, and other professionals and support agencies.
- Documenting assessments and evaluations for each child to inform the educational program.
- Being aware that it is an offence to subject a child to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive in the circumstances.
- Maintaining confidentiality at all times

Parents and guardians are responsible for:

- Reading and complying with the Interactions with Children Policy.
- Engaging in open communication with educators about their child.
- Informing educators/staff of events or incidents that may impact on their child's behaviour at the service (e.g. moving house, relationship issues, a new sibling).
- Informing educators/staff of any concerns regarding their child's behaviour or the impact of other children's behaviour.
- Working collaboratively with educators/staff and other professionals/support agencies to develop or review an individual behaviour guidance plan for their child, where appropriate.