



INTERACTION WITH CHILDREN POLICY (ELC)

1 PURPOSE

Minaret College is committed to providing a safe, secure and caring environment that is supportive, stimulating and enriching for all children; allowing them to learn and grow into confident and creative learners.

This policy will provide guidelines to ensure children have opportunities to interact, develop respect and positive relationships with each other and educators.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Persons with Management or Control, Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Minaret College Early Learning Centres.

3 PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- a) ensuring the Nominated Supervisor, educators and all staff are aware of the Minaret College's expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and interactions when working with children and families (refer to Child Safe Code of Conduct)
- b) ensuring that the service 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 (Regulation 155)
- c) ensuring children are adequately supervised and that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times
- d) ensuring the size and composition of groups is considered to ensure all children are provided with the best opportunities for quality interactions and relationships with each other and with adults at the service (Regulation 156(2))
- e) 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

- f) 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.
- g) ensuring educators are positively interacting with children at all times
- h) ensuring the environment provides opportunities for children to play in both small and large groups
- i) ensuring the environment at the service is safe, secure and free from hazards for children (refer to *Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy*)
- j) ensuring that the Nominated Supervisor, educators and all staff members at the service 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 (National Law: Section 166)
- k) promoting collaborative relationships between children/families and educators, staff and other professionals, to improve the quality of children's education and care experiences
- l) notifying the authority (DET), in writing, within 24 hours of a serious incident occurring at the service (Section 174(4), Regulation 176)
- m) informing DET, in writing, within 24 hours of receiving a notifiable complaint
- n) ensuring that where the service has been notified of a court order prohibiting an adult from contacting an enrolled child, such contact does not occur while the child is on the service premises
- o) ensuring educators 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
- p) ensuring that strategies are developed for children with diagnosed behavioural difficulties, in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor, educators, parents/guardians and families, and other professionals and support agencies
- q) maintaining confidentiality at all times.

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- a) implementing the Interactions with Children Policy at the service
- b) ensuring all staff and parents/guardians have access to the Interactions with Children Policy and comply with its requirements
- c) ensuring all staff are aware of the service's expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and reactions when working with children and families (refer to Code of Conduct for Staff Members)
- d) ensuring the educational program contributes to the development of children to have a strong sense of wellbeing and identity, and to be connected, confident, involved and effective learners and communicators
- e) ensuring clear and straightforward documentation of the assessment and evaluation of each child's:
 - a. developmental needs, interests, experiences and program participation
 - b. progress against the outcomes of the educational program (Regulation 74)
- f) organising appropriate training for all staff to assist with the implementation of this policy

- g) ensuring all staff members at the service 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 (National Law: Section 166)
- h) ensuring that procedures are in place for effective daily communication with parents/guardians to share information about children's learning, development, interactions, behaviour and relationships
- i) informing the Approved Provider of any notifiable complaints or serious incidents at the service
- j) ensuring that where the service has been notified of a court order prohibiting an adult from contacting an enrolled child, such contact does not occur while the child is on the service premises
- k) ensuring educators 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
- l) developing the behaviour guidance plan in consultation with the Approved Provider, educators and the parents/guardian of the child, and other professionals and services as appropriate
- m) supporting educators by assessing skills and identifying additional training needs in the area of behaviour guidance
- n) co-operating with other services and/or professionals to support children and their families, where required

To encourage respectful and positive relationships between children and their peers and educators, educators will adhere to the following practices:

- a) encourage children to participate in enjoyable interactions with their peers, respond positively to ideas, negotiate roles and relationships, contribute to shared play, and develop friendships
- b) engage children in ongoing group projects that involve research, planning, problem solving and shared decision making
- c) role-model strategies for children to initiate interactions with each other and participate in group play and social activities
- d) assist children when they are having trouble understanding or communicating with each other
- e) ensure that the children have many opportunities for peer scaffolding
- f) coordinate educators and grouping arrangements to support positive relationships between children
- g) support and promote children's interpersonal relationships and support the inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds and capabilities in group play, projects and experiences
- h) learn about children's shared interests and use this information to plan further experiences that provide collaborative learning opportunities
- i) pre-empt potential conflicts or challenging behaviours by monitoring children's play and supporting interactions where there is conflict
- j) ensure that the educational program and routines of the ELC will include regular opportunities for children to engage in social play and group experiences

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- a) engaging in open communication with educators about their child
- b) 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)
- c) informing educators/staff of any concerns regarding their child's behaviour or the impact of other children's behaviour
- d) working collaboratively with educators/staff and other professionals/support agencies to develop or review an individual behaviour guidance plan for their child, where appropriate.

4 EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, Minaret College will:

- a) regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- b) monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- c) keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- d) revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required

Approved Provider PR-00002074

Early Learning Centres: Officer (SE-00011878) and Springvale (SE-40013883)

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