

2.1 INTERACTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

Policy Statement

Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care will ensure all educators build positive, supportive relationships with children that make them feel safe, secure and included in Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care's community. Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care encourages interactions with children to be authentic and responsive and be based on fairness, equity, acceptance, empathy and respect for the child's culture, rights and community.

The rights of the child will be paramount when interacting and building relationships. Children will be encouraged, where possible to enhance their sense of agency through empowered decision-making. Children's dignity will be upheld at all times, to feel valued and supported.

Practices to support behaviour will be consistent with positive guidance; recognising the goal of self-regulation and pro-social behaviours are enhanced through learning, a supportive environment, secure relationships and positive self-regard.

The service, through its program and the practices of educators provide experiences and opportunities for children to interact and immerse themselves in play with their peers. Through experiences and activities fostering group interaction children will enhance their capacity to interact and develop respectful and positive relationship with each other.

The Approved Provider also recognises their duty to comply with *Education and Care Services National Regulations 168 (2)(j), and 155-156.*

Related Policies

- 1.1 – Philosophy Statement
- 2.2 - Statement of Commitment to the Safety and Wellbeing of Children
- 2.9 – Inclusion and Anti-bias/Anti-discrimination
- 2.11 - Supporting Additional Needs with Inclusive Practices
- 2.24 – Children's Participation and Decision Making
- 2.25 Statement of Intent for Children's Play
- 3.1 - Education Program Design and Implementation
- 3.3 – Educators Practice
- 3.14 – Valuing Diversity, Culture and Reconciliation
- 8.1 – Role and Expectations of Educators
- 8.3 – Employee Orientation and Induction
- 8.4 – Educator Professional Development and Learning
- 8.9 – Applying the Code of Conduct
- 8.9.1 – Code of Conduct
- 8.9.2 Code of Conduct for Interacting with Children and Young People
- 8.10 Children of Employees
- 8.19 Employee Counselling and Disciplinary Procedures
- 9.2 Enrolment

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the collective practices of the service are supported by a Service Philosophy. • Ensure staff are equipped and suitable to positively guide and support children who attend the service. • Support decision-making, program design and environment and resourcing considerations that are consistent with empowering children and establishing nurturing relationships
Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model and encourage positive interactions which lead to supportive, trusting and respectful relationships. • Establish practice guidelines that ensure interactions with children are given priority and those interactions are authentic, just and inclusive irrespective of difference. • Ensure staff are equipped and suitable to positively guide and support children who attend the service.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address conduct and behaviours that are not consistent with policy and procedures. • Ensure parents and relevant others receive communication of the service’s policy and procedures to support relationships. • Address behaviour that requires additional support with responsiveness and dignity. • Appropriately action any cultural or linguistic requests for consideration to further support cultural inclusion.
Educational Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure children are provided with opportunities to participate in decision making processes. • Ensure children’s views are actively sought and discussed with their responses and perspectives planned into the program with respect and authenticity. • Guide educator’s professional development and practice to promote interactions with children that are positive and respectful.
All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure child-initiated, shared-decision making happens across all aspects of the service. • Empower children to access and learn from their own life experiences as well as those of their peers and adults around them. • Be active listeners, observers, scribes and advocates for children. • Respond to behaviour with positive guidance, re-direction and encouragement. • Seek additional support from the Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care Leadership Team where children’s behaviour continues to pose a risk of harm to safety or wellbeing.

Procedures

A positive atmosphere and the wellbeing of children attending Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care is promoted through attentive and nurturing care and quality interactions between educators and children. Children’s emotional development and social relationships are supported by role-modelling and enhanced by educators through conversation, discussion and promotion of children’s language and effective communication.

Central to the interaction and engagement between children and educators is the delivery of Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care’s program. Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care’s program will reflect (*3.1 Educational Program Design and Implementation*):

- Opportunities for children to engage in diverse experiences.
- Exploring and engagement with culture, having regard to the community of families.
- Support for a range of ages, physical and intellectual developmental stages.
- The choice, agency and decision making of children, including contributing to the aesthetics and physical environment.

In designing the program and activities for Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care, educators will consult children about how their input will be used and advised of the outcomes of the decisions made, ensuring children have a voice in their level of participation including:

- areas of interest they would like to explore;
- where and how they would like to play, with others, or alone;
- what resources they would like to use;
- the adults with whom they feel comfortable and secure;
- when they would like to eat within prescribed eating times and what they would like to eat; and
- how they prefer to sleep or rest.

Resources and activities will be sourced as to encourage:

- Expression and creativity.
- Participation and collaboration.
- Reflect and cater to the interests and abilities of children.

- Satisfy for the range of ages and developmental abilities.
- Accessibility to children allowing for independence, and the conscious effort from the Educational Leader to provide opportunity to develop mastery across the Educational Program.

Behaviour Support and Guidance

Educators will receive suitable instruction, support and training to respond to various developmental stages of the differing ages of the children who attend Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care. Educators will apply appropriate behaviour support and guidance techniques (*see 2.6 Positive Behaviour Support Practices*) which will be consistent with the Philosophy Statement of Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care.

Educators will involve the children as far as reasonably possible in developing behaviour expectations for Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care. These behaviour expectations will be clear, child focused, based on supporting the safety and wellbeing of children and others, easy to understand and will be on display throughout Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care. This information is also provided in the *Family Handbook* issued to all parents/guardians upon enrolment.

Educators are required to:

- Model appropriate behaviour, including use of positive language, and tone of voice;
- Monitor children's play, pre-empting potential conflicts or challenging situations and directing children to consider alternative behaviours;
- Use positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour when prompting Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care behaviour expectations;
- Support children to make choices, accept challenges, manage change, cope with frustration and to experience the consequences of their actions;
- Consider how the environment is impacting on a child.

Educators are not permitted at any time to use physical force/restraint or physical, verbal or emotional punishment and practices that demean, humiliate, frighten or threaten a child.

Where exceptional support is required for children to behave in a manner to uphold the safety or wellbeing of themselves or others, the Nominated Supervisor will follow the procedures outlined in *2.7 Supporting Complex Behaviours*.

Cultural Inclusion

Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care will collect information about the diversity of culture and linguistics of the family attending Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care at enrolment. The Nominated Supervisor will follow up on any request for considerations and ensure these matters are actioned in the appropriate way.

Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care's program will celebrate a wide variety of cultures, paying particular attention to the cultures identified in the local community. The educators of Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care will be supported to enhance their cultural competency through shared learning and a respectful workplace environment.

Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care recognise the unique contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make to our Australian communities. Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care is committed to acknowledging and respecting the rich history our first nations people give to our country. In doing so, Middle Park State School Outside School Hours Care looks to provide opportunities for children to experience and develop their understanding of the customs, traditions, and respect for the land Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture upholds.

Relevant Laws and Provisions

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act, 2010 and Regulations 2011*
- *National Quality Framework – My Time, Our Place*

- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 1 – Educational program and practice; 5 - Relationships with children; and 6 - Collaborative partnerships with families and communities.*

ECEC Regulation Compliance

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 168 (2)(j), and 155-156.*

Policy Controls			
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