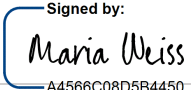


Policy

Early Years Policy – Behaviour Support

Date of Adoption	New Policy		
Adoption Method	<input type="checkbox"/> Council	<input type="checkbox"/> CEO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Director Community
Director Signature	Signed by:  <small>A4566C08D5B4450...</small>		Date 25-11-2024
Responsible Officer and Unit	Samantha Waymouth, Coordinator Early Years Services		
Nominated Review Period	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Every 4 years	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>please specify</i>)
Last Endorsement Date	New policy		
Next Endorsement Date	November 2025		

Macedon Ranges Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and waterways. Council recognises their living cultures and ongoing connection to Country and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. Council also acknowledges local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of Macedon Ranges for their ongoing contribution to the diverse culture of our community.

Contents

Purpose/Objective	3
Values	3
Scope	3
Background/Reasons for Policy	4
Gender Impact Assessment	4
Definitions	4
References	8
Related Policies	9
Related Legislation	9
Responsibilities	10
Evaluation	17
Attachments	18

Purpose/Objective

This policy provides guidelines for Council's Early Years Services to:

- encourage children to achieve success
- develop positive self-esteem
- reduce challenging behaviours and
- provide a safe and healthy work environment.

Values

Council is committed to:

- providing each child with positive guidance and encouragement toward developmentally appropriate behaviour
- encouraging children to express themselves and their opinions
- children undertaking experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem
- maintaining the dignity, agency and rights of each child at the service
- considering the diversity of children at the service, including family and cultural values, age, gender, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child
- encouraging positive, respectful and warm relationships between children, families and educators/staff at the service
- the health, safety and wellbeing of each child and staff, and providing a safe, secure and welcoming environment.

Scope

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Council's Early Years Services, including during offsite excursions and activities.

Background/Reasons for Policy

From infancy, children embark on a journey to comprehend the workings of the social world, involving the intricate process of exploring and managing emotions, behaviour, rights, and responsibilities. Educators, through positive and respectful daily interactions, contribute significantly to supporting children in regulating their behaviour. These interactions serve as a foundation for instilling a sense of interdependence and nurturing considerate citizenship in children. As a result, children acquire the confidence and skills needed to autonomously manage their behaviour, make decisions, and foster positive and effective relationships with others.

Challenging behaviours in children may stem from age-appropriate actions, attempting to meet needs, or expressing unmet desires. Environmental factors play a role, and supportive conditions contribute to children's wellbeing. Positive adult role models help children learn socially acceptable behaviour, and support is crucial for children to express needs appropriately. A positive learning environment minimises challenging behaviours.

To guide children in learning self-regulation, it is imperative for educators to recognise that these skills evolve gradually and exist on a continuum. The application of these developing skills in children can vary based on factors such as mood, health, family circumstances, and challenging situations they encounter.

The approved provider has a duty under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* to eliminate risks to health and safety of workers and other persons so far as is reasonably practicable. If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate risks, they must be minimised so far as is reasonably practicable. This means approved providers must do all that they reasonably can to manage the risk of behaviour aggression (refer to Definitions) occurring at the workplace.

Behaviour aggression can have significant short- and long-term impacts on a person's physical and psychological (mental) health. It's not just violent incidents like physical assault which can cause harm - being exposed to lower level but frequent forms of aggression, like yelling, name calling and challenging behaviours, can also have a lasting effect on a person's health.

Gender Impact Assessment

In accordance with the Gender Equality Act 2020, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in relation to the subject matter of this policy.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Behaviour Aggression	<p>Incidents in which a staff member is physically or verbally abused or assaulted by a child in their care. This covers a broad range of actions and behaviours that can create a risk to the health and safety of employees and other persons in the workplace.</p> <p>Examples can include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • biting, spitting, scratching, hitting, kicking, choking • pushing, shoving, tripping, grabbing, slapping • screaming, punching, swearing • throwing objects.
Behaviour guidance	<p>A means of assisting children in positive and effective ways to help children gain understanding and learn skills that will help them learn to manage their own behaviour.</p>
Behaviour guidance plan	<p>A plan that documents strategies to assist an educator in guiding a child with diagnosed behavioural difficulties or challenging behaviours to self-manage their behaviour. The plan is developed in consultation with the nominated supervisor, early childhood teachers, educators, parents/guardians and families, and other professional support agencies as applicable.</p>
Challenging behaviour	<p>Behaviour that can be described as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • infringing on the rights of others • disrupting others or causing disputes between children • causing harm or risk to the child, other children, adults or living things

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is destructive to the environment and/or equipment • inhibits the child's learning and relationship with others • a child presenting as shy, withdrawn or excessively passive in a way which is inhibiting their learning and/or development • is inappropriate relative to the child's developmental age and background.
Frightening methods of control	<p>Disciplinary or authoritative techniques that instil fear, intimidation, or distress in individuals as a means of regulating their behaviour or actions. These methods often rely on threats, aggression, coercion, or the imposition of negative consequences that evoke fear or anxiety in the individual being controlled. Examples may include yelling, physical punishment, verbal abuse, humiliation, or any other form of coercion that induces fear or distress in order to manipulate behaviour. Such methods are generally considered harmful and ineffective in fostering healthy relationships and promoting positive behaviour development.</p>
Inclusion Support Program (ISP)	<p>Assists children with additional needs to participate in early childhood education and care (ECEC). It does this through tailored support and funding to ECEC services.</p> <p>ISP supports services to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address barriers to inclusion • build capacity and capability to include children with additional needs • implement quality, inclusive and equitable practices. <p>The program aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide children with additional needs the opportunity to learn and develop next to their typically developing peers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ensure all children have genuine opportunities to access, participate and achieve positive learning outcomes.
Program Support Group (PSG)	<p>A program support group brings together key people to support the inclusion of children with disability or developmental delay, or complex medical needs, from the time of enrolment at kindergarten until they move to school. The group may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the early childhood teacher ● the child's parent/guardian(s) ● early childhood intervention professionals ● a preschool field officer ● medical practitioners, therapists or other allied health professionals ● a support person – if the child's parent/guardian(s) chooses to use one.
Approved Learning Framework	<p>There are two national approved learning frameworks in operation under the National Quality Framework. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) V2.0 2022: ● National approved learning framework under the NQF for young children from birth to 5 years of age. <p>Both learning frameworks outline principles, practices and learning outcomes that guide educational leaders and educators in their curriculum decision-making, and assist them in planning, delivering and evaluating quality programs in early childhood and school age settings.</p>

Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) Program	Supports the access and participation of children with additional needs in their kindergarten program.

References

- > Planning and Strategies to Promote Positive Behaviour (Babies - 5 years):
<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-01/PlanningAndStrategiesPosBehavBabiesTo5Years.PDF>
- > Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), Supporting children to regulate their own behaviour: https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-01/QA5_Supporting_children_to_regulate_their_own_behaviour.pdf
- > The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: Belonging, Being, Becoming: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/EYLF-2022-V2.0.pdf>
- > Child Safe Standards: <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/>
- > Victorian Department of Education - Supporting children's behaviour in early childhood services: <https://www.vic.gov.au/supporting-childrens-behaviour-early-childhood-services>
- > Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics: <https://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/>
- > Emerging Minds, Supporting children in families with complex needs: Nine tips for practitioners who feel out of their depth: <https://emergingminds.com.au/resources/supporting-children-in-families-with-complex-needs-nine-tips-for-practitioners-who-feel-out-of-their-depth/>
- > ACECQA, Guide to the National Quality Framework: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about/guide>
- > Victorian Department of Education, Inclusion Support Program: <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/inclusion-support-program>

- > Victorian Department of Education, Kindergarten Funding Guide:
<https://www.vic.gov.au/kindergarten-funding-guide>
- > United Nations, Convention on the Rights of the Child:
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>
- > Victorian Department of Education, Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework:
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/edcare/veyldframework.pdf>
- > Victorian Inclusion Agency: www.viac.com.au

Related Policies

- Early Years Policy - Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- Employee Code of Conduct (Council)
- Complaint and Unreasonable Behaviour Policy (Council)
- Early Years Policy - Educational Program
- Early Years Policy - Inclusion and Equity
- Early Years Policy - Interactions with Children
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy (Council)
- Privacy Policy (Council)
- Early Years Policy - Supervision of Children

Related Legislation

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*

- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations*

The most current listed legislation can be found at:

- > *Victorian Legislation* www.legislation.vic.gov.au
- > *Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation:* www.legislation.gov.au

Responsibilities

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Developing and implementing the Early Years Policy - Behaviour Support in consultation with stakeholders, and ensuring that it reflects the philosophy, beliefs and values of the service	✓	✓	✓		
Ensuring that all staff are aware of the service's expectations for positive, respectful, and appropriate behaviour, including acceptable responses and fostering warm, trusting, and reciprocal interactions when working with children and families (refer to Early Years Policy - Interactions with Children)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensuring children are adequately supervised (refer to Early Years Policy – Supervision of Children definitions) and that educator-to-child ratios are	R	R	✓		✓

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
maintained at all times (refer to Early Years Policy - Supervision of Children)					
Ensuring the environment at the service is safe, secure, free from any hazards (<i>National Law: Section 167</i>) (refer to Early Years Policy - Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing, Council's Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Early Years Policy - Supervision of Children) and promotes active participation of every child	R	☐	✓		✓
Developing and implementing educational programs that are delivered in accordance with an approved learning framework (refer to Definitions), are based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and take into account the individual differences and strengths of each child (refer to Early Years Policy - Educational Program and Early Years Policy - Inclusion and Equity)	R	R	✓		✓
Implementing planned and spontaneous discussions about emotions, feelings and issues of inclusion and exclusion, fair and unfair behaviour, bias and prejudice		✓	✓		✓
Maintaining the dignity and rights of each child at all times	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensuring that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances (<i>National Law: Section 166</i>)	R	R	R		R

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
Ensuring that frightening methods of control (refer to Definitions) and discipline are not used (e.g. timeout)	R	R	R		R
Ensuring the behaviour guidance is not associated with food (never is a child or infant to be 'force fed', or refused food as a form of discipline), rest, toilet training or isolation	R	R	R		R
Applying a trauma informed lens when supporting children to self-regulate and manage behaviours		✓	✓		✓
Providing each child with positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour and encourage children to express themselves and their opinions		✓	✓		✓
Modelling respectful behaviour and providing supportive language to enable children to vocalise their concerns		✓	✓	✓	✓
Talking with children about the consequences of their actions		✓	✓		✓
Planning and implementing strategies to support individual children's behaviour		✓	✓		✓
Discussing with and supporting children to identify their feelings, and providing a safe place for them to explore and build strategies to calm the body and mind		✓	✓		✓
Listening empathetically to children when they express their emotions, acknowledging their feelings and reassuring children that it is normal to		✓	✓		✓

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
experience positive and negative emotions at times					
Supporting children to negotiate their rights in relation to the rights of others and intervening sensitively when children have trouble resolving a disagreement. learn about and support individual children's relationships with other children		✓	✓		✓
Assisting children to understand that others may not always want to engage in play with them		✓	✓		✓
Pre-empting potential conflicts or challenging behaviours by monitoring children's play and supporting interactions		✓	✓		✓
Using knowledge of individual children's personalities and friendship preferences to support children to manage their emotions and behaviour, and develop an understanding of the feelings and needs of others		✓	✓		✓
Supporting children to negotiate and share ownership of responsible and respectful behaviours, and work with families and other professionals to appropriately support each child's emotional and social learning		✓	✓		✓
Working with each child's family and, where applicable, other support services, to ensure an inclusive and consistent approach is used to support		✓	✓	✓	✓

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
all children to regulate their behaviour and communicate effectively					
Managing situations in which families have different views and expectations compared to those of the service about guiding children's behaviour		✓	✓	✓	✓
Managing situations in which a child may benefit from more support in managing their behaviour (refer to Attachment 1)		✓	✓		✓
Collaborating with other professionals or support agencies that work with children who have diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties		✓	✓	✓	✓
Documenting communication with families that shows their views, ideas and preferences have been considered when planning appropriate strategies to support their child's positive inclusion in the program		✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensuring that there is a behaviour guidance plan (refer to Definitions and Attachment 1) developed for a child if educators are concerned that the child's behaviour may put the child, other children, educators/staff and/or others at risk		✓	✓		✓
Developing individual behaviour guidance plans (refer to Definitions and Attachment 1) for children, including evidence of consultation with their families and if appropriate, input and		✓	✓	✓	✓

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
suggestions from other professionals and support agencies					
Developing links with and referral pathways to services and to support children experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and their families	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that parents/guardians and program support groups (refer to Definitions) (as appropriate) are consulted if an individual behaviour guidance plan (refer to Definitions) has not resolved the challenging behaviour	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Setting clear timelines for review and evaluation of the behaviour guidance plan	✓	✓	✓		
Providing information, ideas and practical strategies to families, educators and staff on a regular basis to promote and support health and wellbeing in the service and at home	✓	✓	✓		
Consulting with, and seeking advice from the Victorian Department of Education if a suitable and mutually agreeable behaviour guidance plan (refer to Definitions) cannot be developed	R	✓	✓		

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
Investigating the availability of extra assistance, such as Kindergarten Inclusion Support (refer to Definitions) or training, by contacting the regional Preschool Field Officer (refer to Definitions), specialist children's services officers from the Victorian Department of Education or other agencies working with the child [<i>funded kindergarten specific</i>]	R	✓	✓		
Ensuring that additional resources are sourced, if required, to implement a behaviour guidance plan (refer to Definitions)	R	✓			
Ensuring that educators/staff at the service are provided with appropriate training to guide the actions and their responses to a child/children with challenging behaviour	✓	✓			
Informing educators/staff of concerns, events or incidents that may impact on their child's behaviour at the service (e.g. moving house, relationship issues, a new sibling)				✓	
Building and maintaining a workplace environment and culture that is committed to being free from behaviour aggression (refer to Definitions)	R	✓	✓		✓
Providing and promoting a safe work environment where staff members are not exposed to hazards and can work without risk of injury or harm including behaviour aggression (refer to Definition)	R	R			

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
Identifying, assessing, and controlling environmental risks in each workplace to reduce the potential for harm to staff members, including behaviour aggression (refer to Definition)	R	R			
Promoting a no tolerance approach to any form of harm, including behaviour aggression (refer to Definition) against staff members	R	✓			
Providing training programs specific to the needs of staff, relative to the degree of risk faced within the working environment	R	✓			
Supporting staff members to actively report all incidents and hazards related to behaviour aggression (refer to Definition)	R	✓			
Ensuring all incidents and near misses of behaviour aggression are reported via Lucidity. External reporting to WorkSafe may also be required, in the case of notifiable incidents (refer to Early Years Policy – Incident Injury Trauma and Illness Policy definition)	R	✓	✓		✓
Taking appropriate action after any incidents of behaviour aggression, in terms of support, counselling and follow-up	R	✓			
Maintaining confidentiality (refer to Council's Privacy Policy)	R	✓	✓	✓	✓

Evaluation

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

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders, including parents/guardians, affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (*Regulation 172 (2)*).

Attachments

- [Attachment 1 - Behaviour Support Plan Template \(D24-54868\)](#)
- [Attachment 2 - Behaviour Information Gathering Template \(D24-54869\)](#)