Early Childhood Management Services

Positive Guidance

Purpose

ECMS is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children, staff and volunteers in attendance. Educators will set limits which allow the group or individual child to operate in a safe and stimulating environment, according to each child's level of development. All limits are explained to each child. Where there are any behavioural concerns, educators will document, observe and report this behaviour to their line manager.

Educators will be vigilant in observing behaviours or changes to behaviours in children and report these immediately to their line manager. Educators should also refer to Operations 2.1 The protection of children policy and procedure.

At no time is emotional or physical punishment used as a form of discipline. Educators who engage in these behaviours will face disciplinary action and will be reported to the police.

Roles & Responsibilities

General Managers	Accountable for:
	• Promoting awareness • Ensuring implementation
Area Managers	Responsible for: • Ensuring implementation in the services they manage • Monitoring and supporting their teams with challenges they may face in relation to a child's behaviour of concern • Supporting their teams to access specialist interventions
Centre Directors & Nominated Supervisors	Responsible for: • Developing or ensuring that the development of a current behavioural program in place in accordance with legislation, regulations and frameworks • Ensuring documentation is recorded in relation to behavioural programs
Educators	Responsible for:

	- Implementing behavioural programs - Documenting children's progress against these programs - Seeking clarification, guidance, resources or support as required

Principles

Children are encouraged to develop self-reliance, socially acceptable behaviour and awareness of themselves as part of a group of people. They are encouraged to resolve conflicts and have their needs met without the use of aggressive or destructive behaviour.

Behaviour limits are used for the protection of the children's physical and emotional development. If further strategies are required, parents/guardians will be involved in assisting educators in guiding a child's behaviour.

- All children need a safe and secure environment and positive interaction with adults and other children

- Encourage positive behaviour in all children ensuring that they are respected and valued as individuals, paying attention to their social, cultural and developmental influences

- Role modelling and setting positive limits for behaviour is important for the safety and protection of children, others and the environment

- Help children learn the outcomes of their behaviour and thus develop an understanding of how their actions affect others

Procedures

When guiding children's behaviour, educators aim to provide each child with clear explanations as to why a particular behaviour is unacceptable and redirect the child to support them to find alternative acceptable behaviours. Limits are set with a gentle, firm and consistent approach. Redirection in a positive manner, to deter unacceptable behaviour as opposed to negative or physical direction, is of greater value to children. Children's feelings and emotions are acknowledged and they are encouraged to use words to resolve their problems with one another.

- Different strategies will be developed for different children to help them to work co-operatively and collaboratively with others, taking into account their temperament, age and understanding

- Children are given opportunities to take on responsibilities and develop the ability to do things for themselves.

- Children's self-esteem is developed through encouraging self-help skills

- Children are included in decision-making and the setting of limits and the deciding of consequences for behaviour. Natural and logical consequences are used to help children understand the reality of a situation

- Ensure children are not put in a position where they feel frightened, ashamed, embarrassed, insecure, or isolated. For example, NEVER TIME OUT, instead, distract and redirect by moving to different environment and prompting engagement in activity and experiences

- Acknowledge that it is the behaviour that is inappropriate and not the child;

- Develop relationships with children that will help inform what the triggers might be

- Children are encouraged to develop social skills that allow them to resolve conflicts without the use of aggressive or destructive behaviours.

- In situations that require adult intervention and support, educators will provide the children with clear explanations as to why a particular behaviour is not respecting

the rights of others. Children and educators work together to find alternative solutions.

- Collaboration is encouraged between children, parents and educators to develop strategies to support age-appropriate social skills within each group of children.

When managing behaviours of concern staff will:

- Discuss with the family/guardian the behaviour displayed by the child

- Consult with other services such as Preschool Field Officers, Inclusion Support Facilitator and Development Officer Etc.

- Discuss with parents referral for specialist assessment, additional adult support

- Assess any training or support required for the staff or family/guardian, which could include advice from the Preschool Field Officer

- Develop a behaviour guidance plan in consultation with the family/guardian that is clear and easy to follow by all staff, children family/guardian and/or volunteers working with the child

- Refer the situation to the ECMS Area Manager if at any time additional support is required

Procedures for managing behaviours of concern

Educators will:

1. Collect information about the incident - observations of children to learn more about the behaviour and the possible 'triggers';

2. Discuss with the family/guardian the challenging behaviour displayed by the child;

3. Discuss possible strategies with colleagues within the service, family and children that could be implemented;

4. Consult available resources such as:

   - Preschool Field Officers

   - Inclusion Support Facilitator and Development Officer

5. Ask referral for specialist assessment, additional adult support (consent from families/guardians must be given before any intervention/assessment is obtained.)

6. Assess any training or support required for the staff or family/guardian, which could include advice from the Preschool Field Officer.

7. Develop a behaviour guidance plan which is:

   - Developed in consultation with the family/guardian on the strategies to be used

   - Clearly and easily followed by all staff, children family/guardian and/or volunteers working with the child

   - Developed with specifically written strategies

   - Discussed in detail with other staff

   a. Reviewed weekly/fortnightly in an ongoing way

8. Refer the situation to the ECMS Area Manager if:

   a. At any time they feel they require additional support.

9. ECMS Management will become involved when:

   - Requested by staff

   - A family/guardian lodges a complaint concerning a child's behaviour that is threatening the safety of other children

- They have concerns about the behaviour of a child and the effect of this on other children, staff etc.

- There is an occupational health and safety issue involved for staff at the service.

ECMS management will attempt to resolve the issue as soon as possible if the child's ongoing behaviour is putting themselves and/or other children and adults in danger.

In the event that ECMS management becomes involved, the staff member should:

- Not divulge confidential information provided by the family/guardian without first obtaining their consent.

- Provide only relevant information to ECMS management in order to assist with the resolution of the issue.

Sexually concerning behaviours in children[1]

The practice definition of a child exhibiting sexually concerning behaviour is:

"…..when they have engaged another party in sexual activity that is either unwanted or where, due to the nature of the situation, the other party is not capable of giving consent. (eg: children who are younger or who have a cognitive impairment).

This includes:

- Physical force or threats
- Sexual exposure, peeping
- Fondling, masturbation
- Oral sex, penetration of the vagina or anus using a penis, finger or object and/or
- Exposure to pornography.

Problem sexual behaviour for children under 14 is defined as:

- Excessive self-stimulation
- Sexual approaches to adults
- Obsessive interest in pornography
- Sexual overtures to other children that are excessive to developmental bounds.

For some children these PSBs can be highly coercive and can involve force – acts that would be considered abusive if not for the child's age.

In the event a child is displaying behaviours that are classified as problem sexual behaviours, Educators will document these behaviours and report this immediately to their line manager.

Where educators are requiring assistance they can contact the ECMS Child Safety Advisors in relation to problem sexual behaviours or call the National Abuse and Prevention Helpline on: 1800 99 10 99

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[1] Child Wise train the trainer package, July 2016

Policy Created Date	July 2014, September 2016
Policy Review Date	September 2018
Sources and Further Reading	Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au Sexual development in children the Traffic light model The DEECD Practice Notes 6 - 11 (Sourced August 2010). Early Years Learning and Development frameworks www.acega.gov.au , www.earlychildhoodaustralia.com.au
Related to NQS Q.A	1.13, 2.3.2, 2.3.3