

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. Policy Statement

St Nicholas is committed to fostering respectful, responsive and positive interactions that uphold the dignity, rights and agency of every child. Through warm, nurturing relationships and a consistent, strengths-based approach to behaviour guidance, educators support children to develop self-regulation, social competence and a strong sense of belonging. All interactions reflect our commitment to child safety, inclusion, and partnership with families.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy and Procedure is to:

- Outline the practices St Nicholas Services and employees will implement regarding interactions with children.
- Ensure families are informed of, and have access to, the Service's procedures relating to interactions with children.
- Support compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations, which require Services to have policies and procedures in place regarding interactions with children.

3. Procedure Direction

Step	Detail
Interactions with children	St Nicholas educators recognise that interactions are central to children's learning, development and wellbeing. Educators engage in warm, respectful and responsive interactions that promote each child's sense of belonging, being and becoming. Educators will: • uphold the dignity, rights and agency of every child, valuing their voices, ideas and contributions • be responsive to children's strengths, interests, abilities, culture and identity • promote self-esteem, independence and opportunities for decision-making • communicate with intent, using active listening and being fully present to children's verbal and non-verbal communication • support children to express their thoughts, feelings and preferences and encourage them to speak up and seek help • model empathy, respect, consent and effective communication • provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment that supports engagement and wellbeing

	• respect family values, cultural practices and home languages to foster belonging • maintain appropriate professional boundaries, ensuring all interactions and physical contact are respectful and responsive to children's cues • promote body autonomy and ensure all children feel safe and respected
Relationships in groups	Educators foster inclusive, respectful group environments where all children feel valued, connected and supported. Relationships in groups promote a strong sense of belonging and encourage positive social interactions. Educators will: • create environments that support participation in small and large group experiences • encourage children to build positive peer relationships through cooperation, turn-taking and shared experiences • support children to communicate effectively and engage in collaborative problem-solving • incorporate children's ideas, interests and contributions into the program • promote respect for diversity and inclusion across all interactions • structure environments to minimise conflict and support successful engagement and self-regulation • actively engage with children to guide social interactions and extend learning • reflect on group dynamics and adapt practices to support positive relationships and inclusion
Guiding children's behaviour	Behaviour guidance at St Nicholas is positive, proactive and focused on teaching children the skills required for self-regulation, communication and respectful relationships. Behaviour is understood as a form of communication and a learning opportunity. Educators will: • guide behaviour in a calm, consistent and respectful manner, ensuring children feel safe and supported • establish clear, fair and age-appropriate expectations and boundaries • support children to recognise and regulate emotions and develop problem-solving skills • use positive strategies such as modelling, redirection, discussion and encouragement • apply logical and respectful consequences that support children's understanding of choices and outcomes • respond to challenging behaviour by considering the child's development, experiences and individual needs • ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children at all times • only use physical intervention in emergency situations to prevent immediate harm, in line with policy and regulatory requirements

	- work in partnership with families to support consistent approaches to behaviour guidance - develop Individual Support Plans where required, in consultation with families and relevant professionals - document, monitor and review behaviour to inform ongoing strategies - prohibit any form of corporal punishment, humiliation or inappropriate discipline - remain vigilant to and report any inappropriate interactions, including grooming behaviours, in line with child protection and safeguarding policies - engage in ongoing reflection and professional learning to continuously improve practice
Responding to behaviours of concern	Incident reporting - Ensure all incidents are accurately reported at the time of the incident or as soon as possible after. - Incidents will be reported in OWNA. - Ensure Nominated Supervisor is notified on who will debrief with relevant team members after incidents Identify pattern of concerns and triggers - Based on the frequency and similarity in the nature of reported incidents, as well as documented child observations, the Centre Director and educators may identify a pattern of ongoing behaviours of concerns. - If any concerns for a child's wellbeing and safety are identified, complete MRG decision tree and follow the outcome. - Report any concerns to the Centre Director Development of Individual Support and Risk Minimisation Plans - Centre Director and educators will commence the development of an Individual Support and Risk Minimisation plan (ISP) in collaboration with the child's parents / guardians. - Where allied health professionals are already working with the child, their input will also be sought by the parents / guardians. - Where additional support is required in the development of the ISP, the Centre Director will reach out to the Operations Manager Collaborative meeting to be conducted - Organise and document ISP meeting(s) with parents / guardians to discuss the final ISP draft, along with any concerns, possible factors contributing to the identified behaviour, and finalise the plan together to support the child/ren involved. - In collaboration with child's parents / guardians, a communication record may be utilised to communicate any changes or concerns.

- Observation tools may also be given to the parents / guardians to support them to identify concerns or behaviours in their home environment.
- The ISP should clearly outline strategies and steps to be followed when behaviours of concern present.

Engage with Inclusion Professionals

- Where possible, organise a visit from the allocated KU Inclusion Professional and follow through with relevant strategies and suggestions, ensuring these are documented within the ISP.
- Work with inclusion professionals to seek relevant funding where appropriate

Implementation of ISP

- Implementation of the ISP at the service will be ongoing, with observation tools used and incident reports recorded that relate to the effectiveness of the strategies in managing the behaviours.
- Where the ISP strategies are effective, and behaviours of concerns reduced, a review meeting should be scheduled at least quarterly with the family to ensure the child is continually supported and the plan remains current.
- Where ISP strategies are ineffective, a review meeting is to be set by the Centre Director with the family, key educators working with the child, and any further Allied Health Support Professionals.
- Where additional support is required, the Centre Director will liaise with the Operations Manager.
- Meeting participants will reflect on the environment, routines / rituals, relationships and interactions with children.
- Any aspects identified as a concern will be documented and planned modifications are to be implemented, where reasonable.
- Any additional adaptations will be made to the ISP and will be communicated to the broader staff team.

On going behaviours of concern resulting in child or educator harm, or property damage

- The parent / guardian will be called to collect the child where behaviours cannot be de-escalated or in accordance with the strategies identified with in the ISP.
- The Centre Director will debrief with relevant team members after incidents and discuss suitable next steps.
- Where the revised ISP and strategies are ineffective, the Centre Director will escalate to the Operations Manager for further review.
- If no solution can be found and all reasonable steps have been taken, and the complex behaviours are still occurring, the Operations Manager and Centre Director will discuss the matter, and make a recommendation to the Head of Early Education and executive Director of St Nicholas to make a decision

	collaboratively regarding the child's attendance pattern and enrolment which may include an enrolment pause. Strategies remain ineffective, behaviours of concern continue and / or escalate If behaviours of concern continue after adaptations are made to the ISP, attendance pattern changes or an enrolment pause, the child's enrolment will be cancelled with approval from the Executive Director of St Nicholas
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4. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Approved Provider	- Ensure that the obligations under the <i>Education and Care Services National Law</i> and <i>National Regulations</i> are met. - Take reasonable steps to ensure that St Nicholas staff members, educators and visitors follow the policy and procedures
Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person	- Take reasonable steps to ensure that the policy and procedures are current, reviewed regularly, and communicated to educators, staff and stakeholders - Take reasonable steps to inform and support educators and staff of their responsibilities in implementing the policy and procedures at all times - Guide and mentor educators and staff to be able to follow the policy and procedures
Educators / Staff	Adhere to St Nicholas policies and procedures
Parents / Guardians	Be aware of, support and follow the service's policies and procedures.

5. Related Documents

Policies and Procedures

- Supervision Policy and Procedure
- CDMN Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Resolution Policy and Procedure
- CDMN Confidentiality Policy

Legislation

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations \(2011 SI 653\) - NSW Legislation](#)
Regulations: 73, 74, 75, 76, 155, 156, 157, 168(2)(j)
- [Children \(Education and Care Services\) National Law \(NSW\) No 104a of 2010 - NSW Legislation](#)
Sections: 166

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Other References

United Nations Rights of the Child

National Quality Standard

QA 1 Educational Program and Practice

QA 2.2 Safety

QA 5 Relationships with children

QA 6.1.3 Families are supported

QA 6.2.2 Access and participation

6. Definitions

Role	Responsibility
CDMN	Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle
Serious Incident	As per Regulation 12 in the National Regulations
ACECQA	Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority) is the independent national authority guiding the implementation of the National Quality Framework (NQF) for early childhood education and care across Australia. It works with state governments to ensure national consistency in quality standards, compliance, and qualification assessments
Approved Provider	The legal entity with ultimate responsibility for the service under the National Law
Nominated Supervisor	A person with management or control of an education and care service, responsible for its day-to-day management.
Responsible Person	A Responsible Person is present at an education and care service to ensure compliance, safety, and wellbeing when the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor is not.
Service	Education and care service providing, or intended to provide, education and care on a regular basis to children under 13 years of age
Educator	A St Nicholas team member whose primary role is working directly with children
Staff	A St Nicholas team member whose primary role is not working directly with children, including cooks, support office team members, administration team members, support workers, volunteers
Early Education	St Nicholas service providing education and care to children aged 0 – 5 years
OOSH	St Nicholas service providing education and care to school aged children

7. Document Review

- 7.1. This Policy will be reviewed when there is a legislative change, organisational change, delegations change, technology change or at least every 1 - 2 years to ensure it continues to be current and effective.

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