

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN, FAMILIES & STAFF POLICY

My Time, Our Place (MTO) identifies secure, respectful, and reciprocal relationships with children as one of the principles that underpin practice. Within our Out of School Hours Care community many different relationships are negotiated with and between children, educators, and families. The way in which these relationships are established and maintained, and the way in which they remain visible impacts on how our community functions as a whole. Relationships directly affect how children form their own identity, whether or not they feel safe and supported, and ultimately, their sense of belonging.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
5.2	Relationships between children	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.
5.2.1	Collaborative learning	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	Parents views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS

73	Educational program
84	Awareness of child protection law
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
118	Educational leader
126	Centre-based services- general educator qualifications
145	Staff record
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
157	Access for parents
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed

PURPOSE

We aim to build positive relationships with children, families, and educators through collaboration and interactions, which is reflective of our Out of School Hours Care Service philosophy and the *My Time, Our Place Framework*. Educators will encourage positive relationships between children and their peers as well as with educators and families at the Service, ensuring children feel safe and supported.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

To build and maintain positive and respectful relationships with children, families, and educators our OSHC Service will adhere to our statement of philosophy. We aim to provide a child safe culture where our values and practices that guide the attitudes and behaviour of all staff are guided by the implementation of the Child Safe Standards and related National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Children need positive relationships with educators that are trusting and responsive to their individual needs. Through these experiences and interactions children will develop a positive understanding of

themselves and feel a sense of belonging. We promote a respectful, child safe culture where children concerns are always responded to, and children feel empowered to participate in decisions and provide feedback to educators and staff.

Management and educators will:

- create a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere in which children experience equitable, friendly and genuine interactions with all educators
- meet educator to child ratio and qualification requirements
- role-model appropriate language and behaviour
- support children to be aware of their own feelings as well as the feelings of others
- encourage children to treat all other children with respect
- provide children with the opportunity to explore their dispositions for learning by expressing themselves and their opinions
- assist the children to build resilience and self-assurance through positive interactions
- guide children's behaviour positively
- respect the rights, dignity and agency of children
- engage in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning of children
- Educators will extend upon children's interests and ideas through questions and discussions, supported and made visible in observations, reflections, and programming.
- understand their reporting requirements and respond to any incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse or harm
- ensure that the values, beliefs, and cultural practices of the child and family are considered and respected

INTERACTIONS WITH FAMILIES

Effective communication is the key to developing and maintaining positive interactions and relationships with others and helps to build trusting and respectful partnerships with families. Educators use positive and open communication with families and siblings in order to create a responsive and inclusive environment for children, staff and families. Interactions with families help to inform educators' knowledge of each child's distinctive interests, skills cultures and abilities. This helps to build a positive experience and a safe learning environment that encourages children to expand their knowledge and understandings.

Management and educators will ensure:

- all families are treated equitably without bias or judgement, recognising that each family is unique
- families and children are greeted upon arrival in a respectful manner
- they learn the names of family members and use these names when they greet them
- privacy and confidentiality are respected at all times
- information about another child or family information is never discussed with a parent or visitor
- they remain sensitive to cultural differences amongst families and encourage families to share cultural aspects with the children and educators at the service
- the advice and opinion from other professional experts is requested, with parental permission, to assist educators develop and implement strategies to support the inclusion of children with additional needs
- they seek additional resources and professional support for families through a range of organisations such as KU Inclusion Support, Area Health and other specific health professional networks
- verbal communication is always open, respectful and honest
- families are provided with up-to-date service information and notices through Daily Reports, newsletters, emails and sign-in sheets.

INTERACTIONS WITH STAFF AND EDUCATORS

The OSHC Service recognises that the way educators interact with each other has an effect on the interactions they have with children and families. Educators working within our OSHC Service are required to demonstrate mutual respect towards each other and value the contributions made by each educator. This enables our OSHC Service to maintain positive relations and model the type of communication they want children to develop.

To maintain professionalism at all times, educators will:

- engage in professional communication in order to create an effective work environment and to build a positive relationship with educators, children and families. Communication amongst colleagues creates a positive atmosphere and a professional image for families. Communication between staff and families ensures that important information is being passed on consistently.
- be respectful when listening to each other's point of view and ideas
- maintain effective communication to ensure that teamwork occurs
- use staff meetings to communicate their professional reflections and ideas for continuous improvement as a team
- work collaboratively to reach decisions which will enhance the quality of the education and care offered at the OSHC Service

- welcome diverse views and perspectives

To maintain professionalism at all times, Management will:

- provide new educators with relevant information about the OSHC Service and program through a staff handbook, induction, and daily communication
- treat educators with respect
- be sensitive to the feelings and needs of educators
- provide constructive feedback to educators as part of their professional learning plan support
- provide opportunities for all educators to have input into the program development and evaluation
- appreciate and utilise educator skills and interests
- provide support, assistance and mentoring to educators
- hold regular educator meetings to encourage and support professional growth and reflective practice

To enhance communication and teamwork, educators will:

- maintain privacy and confidentiality
- be respectful, caring and inclusive of all colleagues
- be sensitive to the feelings and needs of other team members
- support colleagues during difficult situations
- provide constructive feedback to each other
- appreciate and utilise colleague skills, strengths and interests regardless of qualification and experience
- provide support and assistance to each other
- share responsibilities
- have a flexible attitude towards team roles and responsibilities
- communicate ideas and opinions clearly and professionally
- use appropriate conflict resolution techniques to solve problem

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Charmayne Nathan	Director	12/1/2022
POLICY REVIEWED BY			
POLICY REVIEWED	January 2022	NEXT REVIEW DATE	January 2023
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
JANUARY 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review of policy/sources checked for currency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rearrangement of some points for better flow • addition of information • Additional information added to points. • sources/references updated and alphabetised. 		January 2023