

Background

Social cognition or how children come to understand their multifaceted social world begins as early as the first few months of life. Their interest is in the characteristics of the self and other people and the experiences they receive are as individual and varied as the child. Relationships form the basis of our personal and professional lives. The early childhood education and care environment provides an opportunity for children to mix with a peer group and observe and practice how people interact outside the family environment.

For some children, the early childhood education and care environment is challenging and confronting; some children will need specific interventions and support to address emerging social interactions that are not acceptable to peers or adults.

Sunkids will regularly inform families about the development of their child and will work cooperatively to address the needs of the child.

Policy statement

This policy details the steps in a process that may ultimately lead to the Service provider discontinuing care to a child if the child's ongoing behaviour threatens the safety and wellbeing of other children and Educators. Such behaviours would include, but not limited to; physical violence, throwing things, running away, verbal abuse, inappropriate behaviour and posing a risk to themselves.

The concerns for the Service provider would be:

1. The behaviour causes Educators to spend a disproportionate amount of time with one child (Educator to child ratios compromised)
2. The behaviour poses a health and safety risk to Educators and children (Workplace Health and Safety issue)

Strategies and practices

- The best interests of all children are always the paramount concern.
- Care is provided in a way that respects and protects all children and educators from harm.
- Parents have primary responsibility for the upbringing, development and protection of their child and will be supported in that role.
- The placement of a child with a known challenging behaviour will be carefully considered. Determining factors will include the educator's experience, number of children in the group and the needs of children already in the group.
- The employer holds an obligation to provide a safe environment/workplace for workers, children, and others.

During the Onset of Concerning Behaviours

- Educators maintain objective, written observations of the child to identify key behaviours and the context in which they occur. Different strategies are used to address negative behaviour.
- Educators discuss observations with the Nominated Supervisor and considers other strategies. Observations are continued and behaviour monitored.
- Be certain that expectation and strategies are developmentally appropriate.

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- Educators will never label a child with a particular condition (e.g., ADHD, Autism). Educators are not qualified to diagnose such conditions and families may be caused unnecessary distress by such comments.
- Management of a challenging child is whole-of-educator issue. A multi-age grouping approach could be considered.

Managing Concerning Behaviours

- Educators always ensure that the child and their family are treated with dignity and their privacy is respected.
- Arrangements are made to discuss observations and strategies with the family and to seek information about social skills, behaviours observed at home and any other impacting factors the family can identify.
- A written action plan is devised in consultation with the family and signed by the family and the service. Agree on a timeframe for regular feedback.
- Inform the family that their cooperation is vital if care is to be continued.
- Inform Sunkids Management of the issues.
- Educators are provided with additional training, if appropriate, to work more effectively with and offer appropriate support for the child.
- If negative behaviour persists, consult with the family, and consider appropriate specialist support. Review the action plan and amend to include any new strategies. Both parties to sign off. Keep Sunkids Management informed.
- If there is no modification in behaviour, arrange a meeting with key educators, the Nominated Supervisor, and Sunkids Management to determine action. Continue to support educators and keep the family informed.
- Arrange for another educator to observe the child. Often the onlooker can identify issues. Use a variety of observational techniques – anecdotal, running record, video etc.
- Determine whether another educator can work in the room to support educators as strategies are introduced.
- Determine whether the child's days of attendance can be varied to better support their involvement in the educational program. A smaller group or more time at home can sometimes meet the need for attention. Days can be gradually increased later. A shared care arrangement may also be considered (e.g., Family Day Care, SEDU).
- The child's family plays a vital role in consistently reinforcing the agreed strategies at home. The family's level of cooperation will be a determining factor when deciding if care is to be discontinued.
- Changes in behaviour generally require a long-term view with small gains and frequent setbacks. Timeframes for the process should be determined by the attendance pattern of the child. Consistency is the key.
- Educators should provide positive feedback too. Having to face negative comments about a child places considerable pressure on families.
- All information, feedback and interactions with the family and support agencies must be detailed in writing.
- Educators may require personal and professional support and opportunities to debrief with an appropriate support person.
- All matters are to be kept confidential.
- Educators will never discuss the family or child outside the Service or in front of other children.

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Issuing Discontinuation of Care

- If negative behaviours are continuing to place others at risk, advise Sunkids Management so a determination can be made in consultation with the operational team of Sunkids, about discontinuing care.
- The Nominated Supervisor will draft a letter clearly documenting reasons why a decision has been made to discontinue care. The letter should provide a date by which the family can provide a written response and the date that will be the last day of care. Forward the draft to Sunkids Management for approval. Any written response will be considered and responded to in writing.
- The Nominated Supervisor is to inform the Australian Children's Education and care Quality Authority of action, should a complaint be directed to their office.

Additional safe practices for babies

- No additional practices are required.

Responsibilities of parents

- To work in cooperation with the Service to provide their child with the required level of support and implement strategies.
- To provide the Service with any up-to-date information on their child and on any external circumstances affecting the child.
- To seek professional help for their child when recommended by the Service.
- To provide the Service with all relevant required documentation.

Procedure and forms

- Behaviour Management Plan

Links to other policies

- Educator Professionalism and Ethics Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Educational Program Policy
- Interactions with Families Policy
- Positive Behaviour Guidance Policy
- Staffing Policy

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Regs	86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
	155	Interactions with children
	156	Relationships in groups
	168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
	181	Confidentiality of records kept by provider

QA	1.1.1	Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators
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1.2.3	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world
1.3.1	Each child's learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection
2.1.1	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation
2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
2.2.3	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect
5.1.1	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included
5.1.2	The dignity and the rights of every child are maintained
5.2.1	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other
5.2.2	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts
6.1.2	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing
6.2.2	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program
7.1.1	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations

Sources

- Abbey, B. (2007). Behaviour management of children in long day care centres: The effects of training on carers' practices. PhD thesis <https://espace.library.uq.edu.au/item/uq:158467> accessed 23 June 2025
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Gartrell, D. (1995). Misbehaviour or mistaken behaviour. *Young Children*. 50(5) 27-34 accessed 23 June 2025
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2018

Further reading and useful websites

- 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 accessed 23 June 2025
- Early Childhood Australia: <http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/> accessed 23 June 2025
- Department of Education <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood> accessed 23 June 2025

Policy review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur, and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

Version Control

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Version	Date Reviewed	Approved By	Comments/Amendments	Next Review Date
1	8 January 2018	Kaylene Harper	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 February 2018.	January 2019
2	6 February 2019	Kaylene Harper	Accessed and updated sources and further reading/useful websites.	February 2020
3	29 January 2020	Kaylene Harper	Accessed and updated sources and further reading/useful websites.	January 2021
4	25 September 2020	Kaylene Harper	Reviewed policy. Accessed sources and further reading/useful websites.	September 2021
5	28 September 2021	Kaylene Harper	Reviewed policy	September 2022
6	6 October 2022	Linda Hollard	Reviewed policy Accessed sources and added further information	October 2023
7	22 August 2023	Grace McKinstry	Reviewed Policy Accessed sources.	August 2024
8	1 July 2024	Tiffany Boeske	Reviewed policy Accessed sources.	July 2025
9	23 June 2025	Gen Mahaki	Annual review. Updated sources and further reading section.	June 2026