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## developing social competencies

Enquiries to: Manager, Team Leaders, All teachers

Applies to: All children, parents, guardians, teachers and relievers.

Date Reviewed: April 2022

Next Review Date: April 2023

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Management consulted Yes/No Staff consulted Yes/No

Parents consulted Yes/No

Approved by Jenni Mason Designation: Centre Manager Date

**RATIONALE:**

The aim of this policy is to promote social competence and positive behaviour. This policy applies to children, teachers, parents and other adults while on the Gracefield Early Childhood Centre premises or involved in trips/excursions and other centre-related activities.

**POLICY:**

All children will be treated with respect and dignity at all times and each child will be recognised as an individual learner at their own stage of development.

#### We aim to:

* Model appropriate behaviour and relationships with other adults as well as with children.
* Foster harmonious working relationships with other adults including parents, caregivers, and colleagues.
* Demonstrate feelings of empathy with children.
* Help children to recognise their feelings and express them in appropriate ways.
* Have realistic expectations of what children at different ages are capable of doing and understanding.
* Provide consistent and clear rules and boundaries around behaviours.
* Use clear simple positive language.

**PRINCIPLES**

This policy is based on the following principles:

* Children learn from reciprocal and responsive relationships with people – *Te Whāriki*
* Every child will be respected and treated with dignity.
* Every child has a right not to be hurt.
* Every child is given positive guidance, using praise and encouragement, and avoiding blame, harsh language, and belittling or degrading responses.
* All children will be supported in the resolution of conflict (in ways appropriate to their age and maturity) regardless of their role in the conflict.
* All adult expectations of children shall be consistent.

**At Gracefield Early Childhood Centre the teachers believe it is important to:**

1. Support children to build positive relationships with others.
2. Support children to take responsibility for their own actions.
3. Support children to learn to make good choices.

# We support children to:

* To respect other children and people
* To respect each other's work
* To respect equipment.
* To sit down when eating and drinking
* To walk inside
* Not to throw things inside
* Not to physically harm another child.

**What we expect of teachers:**

* To listen to children and respond sensitively to their feelings.
* Be consistent and reliable in the behaviour with children.
* State expectations of behaviour in a positive manner
* Give appropriate/acceptable choices and encourage responsibility for consequences.
* Support strategies for all children involved in any conflict.
* Value mistakes as learning opportunities.
* Role model appropriate behaviour
* Avoid the use of ‘NO’ and ‘DON’T’, (Asking children “is that safe, is that kind?”).
* Discuss the behaviour not the children and give positive guidance that does not blame.

A few consistent rules will be discussed with the children frequently to encourage their ownership of the limits.

**PROCEDURE:**

**When intervention is required, teachers’ will:**

1. Act promptly.
2. Ensure everyone is safe.
3. Give attention to the hurt child first if working alone, if the assistance of another teacher is available both children will be given attention at the same time.
4. Recognise and support children and their feelings, show them that feelings and emotions are real.
5. Have a variety of skills to set appropriate consequences for inappropriate behaviour.
6. Remove a child who is causing hurt, pain or discomfort to others and sit them next to the teacher (or another teacher) for a short period of time (1 minute per year of their life e.g. a two year old is removed for a maximum of two minutes.

The teacher will then support the child to re-integrate into the group or activity in an appropriate manner.

1. Diffuse situations by suggesting children work in a different area of the centre.
2. Clearly but simply explain the feelings of each child involved in conflict. This will help children to verbalise feelings.
3. In consultation with parents, set in place a behaviour management programme if necessary.

All children will be supported to develop assertive skills to work with conflict and disruptive behaviour.

Other children at the centre impacted by the behaviour of others will be supported by teachers to develop strategies to deal with conflict or inappropriate behaviour of other children.

* Seek adult support.

1. Say "stop it - I don't like it when you...”
2. Move away to a safe place.
3. Have their feelings and/or worries acknowledged.

Teachers will, while maintaining the confidentiality of the child needing support, share with the parents of affected children the strategies being used and the ways in which their child is being supported to deal with the situation.

If teachers can clearly identify a child is dealing with anger, they will support the child by:

1. Suggesting that children ask (a teacher or adult) for help.
2. Verbalising the issue
3. Strategise on ways of dealing with the issue.

It is important to remember that the way that behaviour is managed **now** will impact on a child's entire life!

**Process for managing behaviour changes causing on-going concern.**

It is important that the situation surrounding the behaviour is observed and recorded. Pinpoint what is really happening and remember that all behaviour has a meaning. It may be that something else is not working for the child. Staff will (in consultation with parents) begin a behaviour modification programme for the child.

* Teachers will observe the child’s behaviour for at least two weeks.
* Arrange a meeting with the child’s parents or guardians.
* Offer strategies from publications from MOE, Incredible Years workshop/folder.
* With the permission of the parents/guardians arrange support from outside agencies if applicable
* The behaviour will be discussed at a staff meeting where strategies will be decided and put into place consistently.
* If appropriate the centre will suggest (and possibly arrange) support for parents such as parenting workshops.
* The behaviour and progress will be assessed and reviewed fortnightly at staff meetings, documentation will be shared with parents and any outside agencies engaged in the process.
* The centre will maintain confidentiality and respect the child’s and family’s rights to dignity and protection at all times.

**Preventative Strategies:**

* To praise and encourage positive behaviour, teacher’s role model positive and respectful interactions.
* Use diversion from conflict situations when necessary and developmentally appropriate.
* Ensure appropriate equipment, including quantity, is available for the children to reduce the possibility of conflict over sharing.
* Have as few rules as possible but stick to them.
* Inform children when their behaviour is becoming unacceptable and possible consequences.
* Empower children, support, and allow children where possible to resolve their own conflict.
* Using a calm voice, and not raised

**Unacceptable practices:**

* There will be no physical punishment, ill-treatment, shame, solitary confinement, or deprivation of food or care.
* Blame, harsh language and belittling or degrading children is not to be practiced.
* Corporal punishment is prohibited.
* Verbal abuse is prohibited.
* Children will not be excluded from the programme.
* Physically restraining a child is not acceptable.

***Reference:*** *Education (ECC) Regulations, Licensing Criteria for ECE Centres, 2008, 9, Providing Positive Guidance booklet, ERO – Positive foundations for learning: Confident and Competent Children in ECE Services. Incredible years programme, (MOE 2013) Vulnerable Children’s Act 2014*