



Behaviour Guidance Policy

POLICY STATEMENT:

Lake Mac Newy OOSH believes children always have the right to feel physically and psychologically safe. We aim to provide an environment where all children and educators feel safe, cared for and relaxed, encouraging cooperation and positive interactions between all persons (My Time, Our Place Outcome 1). The right for children to receive positive guidance in a supportive and respectful environment is promoted within the Education and Care Services National Regulations. Children learn to face a variety of challenges throughout their lives. Learning the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour assists children in regulating their behaviours in different social and emotional environments and when interacting with peers and adults.

We aim to create positive relationships with children, making them feel safe, secure, and supported within our OSHC Service. We will ensure children are treated with respect, consistency, and fairness as they are supported to develop the skills and knowledge required to behave socially and culturally acceptable.

Educators and families aim to support children in developing socially acceptable behaviour. This goal is embedded in fundamental documents, including the My Time Our Place (MTOP), The Education and Care Services National Regulations, and the National Quality Standard (NQS).

DEFINITIONS

Behaviour guidance reflects current thinking about the most positive and effective ways to help children gain understanding and learn skills that will help them manage their own behaviour. Using appropriate behaviour guidance, educators aim to support each child in regulating their behaviour, responding appropriately to the behaviour of others, and communicating effectively to resolve conflicts.

Cool down- this is an example of appropriate discipline or behaviour guidance. A cool-down period is when a child is having a difficult moment; they are encouraged to find a space near an educator to 'cool down' and regain self-control. This strategy can allow educators to support children to regulate their behaviour. [ACEQA, 2020]

Restraint- in situations where a child becomes a risk to themselves or others, they may need to be physically removed from the situation or physically restrained by an educator to prevent harm to themselves or others. For instance- attempting to scale a fence, running in front of a vehicle. ACECQA advises that children should only be restrained in emergency situations. (ACECQA, 2023, P.2)

Self-regulation- The ability to manage energy states, emotions, behaviour, and attention and to return to a balanced, calm, and constant state of being. Self-regulation is vital to mental health, well-being, and learning (KidsMatter, Early Childhood, 2014).

Inclusion- considering all children and young people's social, cultural, and linguistic diversity (including learning styles, capabilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstance and geographic location) in program decision-making processes. (MTOP V2.0).



IMPLEMENTATION

The behaviour and guidance strategies used by staff and educators at our OSHC Service are designed to provide children with the opportunity to expand their experiences of life in a productive, safe environment that allows individuals the right to safety, tolerance, self-expression, cultural identity, dignity and the worth of the individual. Educators understand that as children grow and develop, self-regulation becomes an essential aspect of social and emotional development, and they begin to understand how their actions affect others.

We believe in providing clear, consistent guidelines for children's behaviour as part of a caring and trusting relationship with children and families to help them feel secure and self-confident. Children benefit from knowing that their environment is stable and that a competent adult cares for them.

There are three critical aspects to promoting positive behaviour:

1. Creating a quality learning environment that is positive and supportive and provides developmentally appropriate experiences and resources.
2. Implementing guidance strategies for building skills and strengthening positive behaviour based on age-appropriate behaviour expectations.
3. Employing strategies for guiding children's behaviour, resulting in decreasing undesired behaviours.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE STRATEGIES

Guiding children's behaviour is essential to caring for and educating children. Positive strategies need to be developed to assist children to learn appropriate ways of behaving. Corporal punishment and unreasonable discipline are not permitted at any time in children's services, not only because the child may be physically harmed but also because it nearly always has detrimental effects on the child's self-esteem and feelings of security. All educators and staff at our OSHC Service will role model appropriate behaviour and language, encouraging children to socialise with other children, including children of different cultural backgrounds, ages, and genders.

Behaviour guidance strategies implemented within our OSHC service are appropriate to the child's age and developmental capacity. Children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves and are provided with opportunities for independence and self-regulation. Children are allowed to make choices and experience the consequences of these choices when there is no risk of physical or emotional harm to the child or anyone else. They are acknowledged when they make positive choices in managing their behaviour.

Strategies may include using visual cues, prompting, redirection, re-teaching strategies, developing logical consequences, and providing a 'cooling down' period and conferences with children. If adverse behaviour is persistently observed, educators will evaluate their program, room set-up, supervision, etc., to identify triggers and sources of inappropriate or challenging behaviour.

Physically restraining a child will only be used in emergencies if a child is:

- In an unsafe situation – e.g., attempting to scale a fence or run onto a road.
- Physically threatening other children or adults
- Behaving in destructive ways to themselves, other people, or the environment. [ACECQA, 2020]

Regular routines and consistency in implementing behaviour guidance strategies are critical to supporting children's well-being and promoting children's agency. All staff implement an active and positive approach to guiding children's behaviour within our service.



INAPPROPRIATE DISCIPLINE

All staff play an important role in embedding child-safe practices within our OSHC Service. Any form of corporal punishment or any discipline that is unreasonable or inappropriate is not permitted when children are being educated and cared for by an education and care service. Staff are made aware of interactions and practices with children that are classified as unreasonable or inappropriate discipline.

Staff and educators will be notified of the service Child Protection Policy and undertake current child protection legislation training, including mandatory reporting requirements and obligations. Staff must report all alleged or witnessed instances of child abuse or child-related misconduct by any staff member, volunteer or contractor immediately to the Child Protection Helpline on **132 111**, or Police on **000** if a child is in immediate danger. The allegation involving reportable conduct must also be reported to the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian. The approved provider will notify the regulatory authority of any incident where there is a reasonable belief or any allegation that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at the Service.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE:

- Obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met
- Educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and procedure
- All new employees, students and volunteers are provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction process
- Families are aware of this Behaviour Guidance Policy
- No child being educated and cared for by the OSHC Service is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or unreasonable discipline (Sec. 166 National Law)
- Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.
- Each nominated supervisor and person in day-to-day charge of the service has completed child protection training (Section 162A of the National Law)
- Staff records include evidence of the approved training completed by staff members (Reg.147)
- Connections are built between our service and local primary schools to support positive learning environments.
- Behaviour guidance does not involve making judgments about children or their families.
- Information is gathered from families about their children's family and cultural values and diagnosed/undiagnosed behaviours, which will be recorded in the child's file.
- Educators will use this information to engage children in experiences that support their social and decision-making skills development.
- Positive and respectful relationships with children are established and maintained.
- Children are empowered to use language and other forms of non-hurtful communication to communicate their emotions.
- Positive, empathetic relationships are promoted among children, assisting them in developing respectful relationships.
- The dignity and rights of each child are always maintained.



- Positive and inclusive strategies are implemented to enable educators to encourage positive behaviour in children to minimise adverse behaviour.
- General information about behaviour guidance is provided to families through the OWNA app, service policies and newsletters.
- A partnership is developed with other professionals or support agencies that work with children diagnosed with behavioural or social difficulties to formulate plans for including these children. The families and staff will use this information to create any risk minimisation plans and will keep it confidential.
- Excessive or challenging behaviour is managed and communicated with families.
- Strategies are implemented to re-direct a child who may be causing or about to cause harm to themselves, another child, or an adult. Incidents may include a child who is kicking, spitting, biting, throwing furniture or toys, punching or hitting, or being disruptive. Redirection may also include an incident where a child places themselves in a dangerous situation, for example, climbing a fence or hiding in a potentially dangerous position. Safety is a priority, which may mean physical redirection, in which an educator removes the child from the harmful situation if required. Removing other children from the area may be necessary while the child calms down.
- Families are notified, and the incident/behaviour is addressed sensitively. Parents must sign the Behaviour Incident Report when a child or children's safety has been jeopardised.
- Should the behaviour continue, the child's behaviour should be observed and carefully documented. Additional information related to the context and behaviour guidance strategies implemented is collated.
- A meeting with the child's parents/carers and educator may be arranged to discuss any behaviours or concerns that have been observed. A *Behaviour Guidance Plan* may be developed in consultation with families and other health professionals as required.
- *Behaviour Guidance Plans* are to be reviewed periodically, reflecting changes that have been applied through the implementation of the plan in consultation with the child's family.
- The child's primary school is contacted to learn about behaviour guidance strategies implemented within the school context to ensure consistency between environments.
- Families, the child's primary school, and professional agencies are consulted to ensure a consistent approach to supporting children with diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties.
- Application for additional support for educators to build their capacity and capabilities to include children with additional needs will be made through the Inclusion Support Program.
- A Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) is developed and guided by local support agencies as required for individual groups of children.
- The SIP is reviewed periodically, reflecting changes in the plan's implementation.
- Professional development is provided for educators to be informed, trained, and supervised to implement the SIP created, ensuring that information is composed and recorded for reflection on its effectiveness for the individual child.
- Professional development will be sought for educators to learn about Trauma Informed Practices to help educators understand challenging behaviours through a 'trauma lens'.
- Notification is made to parents/guardians as soon as practicable, but within 24 hours, if their child is involved in a serious incident/situation at the Service. Details of the incident/situation are to be recorded on the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record*.
- Notification is made to the regulatory authority, via the NQAITS within the legislated time frames of any circumstance that poses a risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of a child or children or of any complaint alleging that a serious incident has occurred at the OSHC Service



- Notification is made to the regulatory authority and the children's commissioner, child protection agencies or the police of any incident of inappropriate discipline.
- A review of practices is conducted following a serious incident, including an assessment of areas for improvement (ensure any review or investigation does not interfere with outside agency investigations).

EDUCATORS WILL:

- Encourage and support each child's social and emotional development, striving to develop children's self-regulation and understanding of others' feelings.
- Actively work with younger children to promote and role-model positive ways to interact with others.
- Teach behavioural expectations.
- Support appropriate behaviour- visual cues, prompting, positive verbal feedback and quality learning environments.
- Ensure children are provided with positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour.
- Promote children's initiative and agency.
- Actively work with all children to support them in constructing and conveying ways of expressing needs, resolving conflict, and responding to the behaviour of others
- Always provide positive role modelling in their dealings with children, other educators, and families
- Discuss guidelines, rules, limits, and what is fair with children, and use their contributions in setting boundaries and guidelines.
- Talk calmly with children about the consequences of their actions and the reason for the rules.
- Use corrective consequences: prompt, redirect, re-teach, provide choice, logical consequence, and conference with child and educator.
- Guide children's behaviour, teaching them how to be considerate of others and think about the effects of their actions on others. Children must understand acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and how to manage their emotions.
- Provide positive feedback, focus on children's strengths and achievements, and build on their abilities.
- Take into consideration the child's past experiences, as their behaviour could be a result of past trauma such as changes in routine, changes or losses within the family, placement in care, or more serious circumstances involving abuse, neglect, or family violence.
- Be responsive to these former experiences and contribute to designing and implementing behaviour plans with the individual child, including strategies to assist alternative and positive behaviour.
- Provide age-appropriate, challenging, and exciting activities, experiences, and equipment for children to use and become engaged with
- Ensure sufficient materials and equipment for individual, small and large group activities.
- Provide the environment (indoor and outdoor) for children to engage in activities and experiences based on their abilities and interests.
- Adopt a positive approach, excluding cruel, harsh, humiliating, or demeaning actions.
- Commit to professional development and keep up to date with industry information regarding behaviour guidance strategies.
- Support children in exploring different identities and points of view and communicating effectively when resolving disagreements with others.



- Participate in planned and spontaneous conversations with children about emotions, feelings, issues of inclusion and fairness, bias and prejudice, the consequences of their actions, and the appropriate rules and the reasons for the rules.
- Provide children with the language and vocabulary needed to express their emotions and feelings and verbalise their concerns.
- Encourage children to listen to other people's ideas, consider pro-social and altruistic behaviour and collaborate and negotiate in problem-solving situations.
- Listen empathetically to children when they communicate their emotions and provide encouragement as they reassure the child it is expected to experience positive and negative emotions.
- Guide children to remove themselves from situations where they are experiencing frustration, anger, or fear.
- Support children in negotiating their rights and the rights of others and mediate perceptively when children have trouble resolving dissimilarity.
- Learn about children's relationships with others and their relationship preferences. Use this knowledge to encourage children to manage their behaviour and expand their empathy skills.
- Use positive language, gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice when redirecting or discussing children's behaviour with them.
- Remain calm, respectful, and tolerant as they strongly encourage children to express distress, frustration, or anger.
- Guide children's behaviour, focusing on preserving and promoting their self-esteem as they learn to self-regulate.
- Implement '*time with*' or '*cool down time*' with an educator, which will be used when all other strategies (above) have been exhausted. '*Time with*' or '*cool down time*' allows educators to offer reassurance and support so the child can settle and regain self-control, develop self-calming behaviours, and gain composure. Once calm, educators can assist the child in identifying what happened, reflecting on their actions, and considering how they may have done something differently. '*Time with*' or '*cool down time*' will always occur under the supervision of other educators.
- Contribute to and ensure Individual Support Plans are followed in consultation with the Services' SIP.

FAMILIES WILL:

- Provide consent for the OSHC Service to consult with their child's primary school and other professional agencies to assist with implementing a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP)
- Disclose any school suspensions to the Service. During the period of suspension, the child's care at the Service will be withdrawn
- Work collaboratively with educators and professional agencies to develop a broader understanding of the child's developmental level and share any recent events that may influence the child's behaviour.
- Consult with educators and provide consent when the Service is applying for Inclusion Support Funding
- Work in partnership with educators and health professionals to develop a behaviour guidance plan or Individual Support Plan to assist with identifying challenging behaviour, developing supportive strategies, and reviewing strategies implemented within a behaviour guidance plan where required.
- Create consistency in behaviour guidance strategies used at the Service and home.



Correction Steps:

- When a child's behaviour is deemed inappropriate to either themselves or others, or if a child's behaviour is intrusive to another person's enjoyment or results in the damage of property, educators will actively intervene and attempt to resolve the situation.
- Inappropriate behaviour can include bullying, being uncooperative, not listening to reasonable requests from educators, consistently disregarding instructions, ongoing swearing, threatening or demeaning others, damage to property or others, Physical Violence, absconding or failure to follow the rules of the Service. This list is not exhaustive.

In these or other instances of inappropriate behaviour as determined by Educators, the following steps may be taken:

- ✓ The educator will explain to the child that this behaviour is inappropriate.
- ✓ The educator may redirect the child to a different activity within the room (or outdoors).
- ✓ If the aggressive or inappropriate behaviour continues, an Educator may, at their discretion, redirect the child to another activity, discuss the behaviour with the child to find a resolution or provide the child with an opportunity and space to cool down or reflect. This list is suggestive- an Educator, at their discretion, may employ other reasonable tactics to resolve the behaviour, such as phoning the parent to collect the child.
- ✓ Where 'cooldown time' or 'time with' is required, the child will be positioned with an educator or in a space away from the group where an educator can check in with them periodically as appropriate for the circumstances and in line with Supervision policy. After a short period, the educator will discuss their actions with the child, and then the child may return to play. All incidents will be addressed with carers on pick up.
- ✓ If a child engages in aggressive, threatening, or interferes with the well-being of another person, the Educator may use their discretion to protect their well-being, that of themselves, the child, and others.
- ✓ An educator will complete a behavioural incident report outlining the situation. A discussion will be held with the child's family when the child is collected, and at the end of the conversation, the parent is to sign the Behaviour Incident Form.



Persistent inappropriate behaviour:

- If inappropriate behaviour is ongoing, there is an escalation in repeat behaviours or any event that presents a concern for any person's health or well-being, a meeting will be arranged between relevant staff or persons in Management and the family. Where appropriate, the child may be included.

The Meeting Agenda may cover:

- ✓ Discuss the current individual behaviour guidance support plan or create a plan if one is not in place.
 - ✓ The child's life outside the school/OOSH environment
 - ✓ Any problems that may be causing the behaviour.
 - ✓ The safety of all persons in the care environment.
 - ✓ The Service's obligations to children, employees, and the organisation.
 - ✓ The enrolment of the family at the Service.
- A mutual strategy for improving behaviour may be established. If deemed appropriate by the staff or persons in Management, Educators, the Nominated Supervisor, and the child's family will create and closely monitor a behaviour guidance plan. Should it be necessary by the Service, and with the family's consent, advice and assistance will be sought from relevant external specialists to address the matter.
 - If the Service and family cannot agree on a Behaviour Guidance Plan or other course of action, the Service may seek external assistance to resolve the dispute. The Service retains this right but is not obliged to seek external advice.
 - If the Service and family cannot agree, or if the Service determines that they cannot safely care for the child or meet the family's needs, the Service retains the right to suspend or terminate that child/family's enrolment.

Extreme Behaviours

If a child behaves in a way that endangers the child or another person, Educators retain the right to restrain the child and notify parents immediately and reasonably.

In this event, the Service may be put into a 'lockdown', and emergency procedures will be followed. A parent or other authorised contact will be asked to remove the child from the Service immediately. If the parent or contact person does not pick up the child, the police may be notified.

In the event of dangerous behaviour as above, the Manager, Coordinator or Responsible Person reserves the right to exclude the child until a resolution is reached between the family and the Service.

Management is ultimately responsible for excluding any child or family from the Service.

Management may seek guidance from educators when making decisions regarding exclusions.

The Service is not obliged to re-enrol a child after the exclusion but may do so at its discretion.

Establishing a clear behaviour guidance plan is recommended to re-enrol a child who has been excluded. A behaviour guidance plan may be implemented in collaboration with the child and carers, with appropriate oversight from the Manager, Coordinator, or Management.



Exclusions

- Exclusion may be temporary or permanent at the discretion of Management. For reasons of safety and practicality, the Centre Coordinator and Responsible Person are delegated the authority to exclude families from the Service until a Management meeting is called to resolve an issue of exclusion. In circumstances where ongoing enrolment cannot be maintained, Management reserves the right to progress to **cancellation of enrolment** following consultation with the family.
- Suspensions and exclusions will be carefully considered. They may be enforced in situations where there is serious misbehaviour, an ongoing dispute between the family and Service, or an incident putting themselves or others at risk.
- Suspensions and exclusions will be communicated verbally or in writing. Where a verbal notice is given, a written confirmation should follow within 24 hours. Failure to provide written confirmation within this timeframe does not make the suspension or exclusion invalid. All suspensions and exclusions will be managed per the Service's Suspension and Exclusion Procedure.
- During any period of suspension or exclusion, **fees will continue to apply, and sessions will be recorded as absences for Child Care Subsidy (CCS) purposes** in order to retain the child's enrolment position. Payment of fees up to and including the care session where the suspension or exclusion commenced will still be required.
- Children currently supported under an individual Behaviour Guidance Plan **will not be able to attend excursions during Vacation Care**. Any exceptions will be carefully considered in consultation with the Service to ensure your child's and others' safety, given that excursions occur in less controlled environments.

The Steps In Alignment With Additional Measures for Serious or Ongoing Behaviour:

While the Service promotes positive behaviour guidance at all times, there are circumstances where a staged response is required to ensure the safety and well-being of all children and staff. In cases of violent, aggressive, or repeated unsafe behaviour, the following escalation process may apply in addition to the standard correction steps:

1. **Verbal Reminder** – calm reminder of expectations and redirection.
2. **Reflection and Parent Notification** – quiet time or reflection break, with parents verbally informed.
3. **Written Warning** – written communication outlining concerns and strategies attempted; meeting with family if required.
4. **Behaviour Guidance Plan** – developed with family and staff to provide structured support.
5. **Suspension of Care** – short-term suspension may occur if behaviour places children or staff at risk or if agreed strategies are unsuccessful.
6. **Cessation of Care** – in extreme cases, enrolment may be terminated if behaviour remains unsafe despite all interventions.



Discretion

This policy recognises its limitations in anticipating all types of events and behaviour. It allows for discretion on the part of Educators, Staff, and Management to develop strategies to handle individual situations. The Service may vary or bypass steps depending on the severity, frequency, or risk associated with the behaviour. If we feel we cannot ensure the child's safety or the safety of others, we will exclude the child from the service.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE FOR CHILDREN NEEDING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Due to the varying nature of children's developmental capabilities, different behaviour management strategies may need to be implemented. Refer to the strategies provided if a behaviour guidance plan has been provided. If the family is still in the process of seeking professional assistance, discuss successful strategies used at home or school that may be implemented.

ABSCONDING CHILDREN

- The Service defines absconding as when a child deliberately leaves, or attempts to leave, the designated supervised areas without permission or by choice. These boundaries are communicated to all children at the start of each session.
- If a child attempts to abscond and there are immediate concerns for their safety, educators may use reasonable physical intervention to prevent them from leaving, in line with the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* and the Service's duty of care.
- If a child does abscond, educators' duty of care remains with the supervision of all children. For this reason, educators will not leave the group to pursue the child, as this would compromise the safety of others.
- If a child leaves the school grounds, the police and parents/guardians will be notified immediately. Families and the Police will be kept informed of progress or until the child is safely located by at least one party.
- A service incident report will be completed within 24 hours and provided to families for review and signature.
- A serious incident report will also be lodged with the NSW Department of Education within 24 hours, or as soon as practicable, if the child leaves school grounds.
- Following any absconding event, the Service will consider the circumstances of each case and, where appropriate, meet with the family to develop an Individual Guidance Plan and/or Risk Management Plan.
- Where absconding behaviour is repeated, or where a single incident places children and staff at immediate serious risk, the Service will apply temporary suspension, restriction from excursions, or cancellation of enrolment.
- Enrolment may also be reviewed or terminated where parents/guardians fail to disclose known behaviours such as absconding or violent conduct at the time of enrolment.



CONSIDERATIONS:

Education and Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other Service policies/documentation	Other
S162A, S166, S167, S174 R73, 74, 76, 100-102, 155, 156, 157,168, 274(a)	Standards 2.1.1, 2.2.1. 5.1, 5.1.1, 5.1.2,5.2, 5.2.2, 6.1, 7.1, 7.1.2 Elements 1.1.2, 2.2.3, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.2, 6.2.2 Child Safe Standards 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 10	- Confidentiality - Enrolment & Orientation - Providing a child-safe environment - Interactions with Children - Management of Incident, Injury and Trauma - Child Protection - Safe Use of Digital Technologies & Online Environments - Excursion & Transport - Confidentiality - Inclusion	- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 - Children's Guardian Act 2019 (NSW) - Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW) - Family Assistance Law (Child Care Subsidy Compliance) - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - My Time, Our Place V2. - Incident Report

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

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