

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN POLICY

Policy Statement

Highgate School Outside School Hours Care (Highgate OSHC) aims to create an environment in which children feel that they are valued members of their community, and in which their sense of belonging and wellbeing is supported. Educators will achieve this through providing consistent emotional support that will nurture the development of children's self-esteem and assist them to acquire the skills and understandings they need to interact positively with others.

Educators at Highgate OSHC are genuinely interested in each child's own interests and needs, and take the time to fully understand what children are doing or saying, listening to their responses and asking open ended questions. Educators also respect children's desire not to engage in conversations at certain times or for particular reasons.

Highgate OSHC is committed to:

- ensuring that children and families are provided with educators with whom they can develop warm relationships, respecting their opinions and maintaining their dignity and rights
- providing educators who are responsive to children's strengths, interests, abilities and backgrounds, and provide opportunities to become self-reliant and develop self-esteem
- maintaining the dignity and rights of children, families, educators, colleagues and the community at all times
- positive guidance and support towards acceptable behaviour.

Procedures

- As each child and family arrives at Highgate OSHC, they will be greeted by the Responsible Person on duty, Director or Assistant Director.
- Educators will be supportive, encouraging and engage in small group communications with children in a friendly, positive and respectful manner. They will form warm relationships with each child in their care.
- Educators will use children's names and get down to the child's eye level when communicating with them and ensure that their interactions are both meaningful and personal.
- Educators will create a relaxed and happy atmosphere ensuring children experience equitable, friendly, and genuine interactions with all educators at Highgate OSHC.
- Educators will respect each child's uniqueness and will be attuned to and respond sensitively and appropriately to a child's efforts to communicate.
- Educators will assist children to learn to communicate and interact positively and cooperatively with their peers through modelling appropriate communication and always responding positively to children.
- Educators will encourage children to communicate their own ideas in a respectful and courteous way, and will respond appropriately to a child's non-verbal cues.
- Educators will show empathy, respect and understanding when communicating with children. This will allow the children to model this in their interactions with adults.
- Children will never be singled out or made to feel inadequate at any time.
- Educators will comfort children when they are upset, or are showing signs of distress, and help them to feel safe, secure, and understood.

- Educators will interact with children at meal and snack times in a relaxed, unhurried manner, in which the enjoyment of food and the social aspect of meal and snack times is promoted.
- Educators will genuinely seek children's input, respect their ideas, and take their program suggestions on board.

Equity and Diversity

Educators at Highgate OSHC will relate to the children, their families, and to each other in a friendly, caring and sensitive manner valuing each individual and the unique contribution they make.

- Both boys and girls will be equally encouraged to participate in all activities with due consideration for individual needs and interests.
- Non-sexist behaviour by children will be supported and expected from educators.
- Children will be encouraged to express emotions and display appropriate affection.
- All language used within Highgate OSHC, both verbal and written, will be gender inclusive.
- Materials that portray females and males in roles, situations and jobs that are not stereotyped will be utilised.
- Both female and male educators will be employed, and in practice jobs carried out by educators will not be related to gender.
- Highgate OSHC will encourage professional development activities of educators to support challenging stereotypes in curriculum decision making.

Approved by Highgate School Governing Council 10th August 2021

DATE OF EFFECT: 18th August 2021

REVIEWED: 2nd November 2022

TO BE REVIEWED: 2nd November 2023

Related Documents

<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/national-law-and-regulations/national-regulations>

Education & Care Services National Regulations (2011) – Regulations 155, 156 & 168

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care & School Age Care (2010) – Standards 1.1, 2.1, 2.3, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1 & 7.1

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-us/out-school-hours-care-oshc>

Tansey, S 2009, Fostering children's relationships, extract from Putting Children First, the Newsletter of the National Childcare Accreditation Council, no. 29.

UNICEF (n.d). Fact sheet: A summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf