

# INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN POLICY



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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Catholic Early EdCare is committed to fostering positive, respectful, and supportive interactions with children, recognising that every engagement forms the basis for promoting children’s well-being, learning and development. Catholic Early EdCare is a Child Safe Organisation and recognises that interactions between adults and children are critical safeguarding mechanism. We take a proactive and preventative approach to child safety by ensuring all interactions are respectful, professional, transparent and designed to prevent harm, abuse, grooming and boundary violations.

## **BACKGROUND**

In alignment with the Education and Care Services National Regulations, National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (Edition 2) and applicable child protection and child safe legislation, our approach to interactions with children is guided by principles of respect, equity and recognition of the child’s voice. We understand that the quality of interactions between educators and children significantly influences the child’s learning and development outcomes, their sense of belonging, and their overall well-being.

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# LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

## Education and Care Services National Regulations

<b>Section 165</b>	Offence to inadequately supervise children.
<b>Section 166</b>	Offence to use inappropriate discipline.
<b>Section 168</b>	Offence related to required programs.
<b>Section 169</b>	Offence relating to staffing arrangements.
<b>Reg 73</b>	Educational program.
<b>Reg 84</b>	Awareness of child protection law.
<b>Reg 115</b>	Premises designed to facilitate supervision.
<b>Reg 117A</b>	Placing a person in day-to-day charge.
<b>Reg 118</b>	Educational leader.
<b>Reg 123</b>	Educator to child ratios — centre-based services.
<b>Reg 126</b>	Centre-based services — general educator qualifications.
<b>Reg 145</b>	Staff record.
<b>Reg 155</b>	Interactions with children.
<b>Reg 156</b>	Relationships in groups.
<b>Reg 168</b>	Education and care service must have policies and procedures.
<b>Reg 170</b>	Policies and procedures to be followed.
<b>Reg 171</b>	Policies and procedures to be kept available.
<b>Reg 172</b>	Notification of change to policies or procedures.

## Work Health and Safety Act 2011

## Work Health and Safety - Codes of Practice: How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks (2021)

<b>National Quality Standard</b>		
<b>Quality Area 2</b>	<b>Children’s Health and Safety</b>	
Standard 2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
Element 2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
Element 2.2.3	Child Protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.
<b>Quality Area 4</b>	<b>Staffing Arrangements</b>	
Standard 4.1	Staffing Arrangements	Staffing arrangements enhance children’s learning and development.
Element 4.1.1	Organisation of Educators	The organisation of educators across the service supports children’s learning and development.
Standard 5.2	Relationships Between Children	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.
<b>Quality Area 7</b>	<b>Governance and Leadership</b>	
Standard 7.1	Governance	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service’s operations.
Element 7.1.1	Service Philosophy and Purpose	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service’s operations.
Element 7.1.3	Roles and Responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service.
Standard 7.2	Leadership	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.
Element 7.2.2	Educational Leadership	The educational leader is supported and leads the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle.

## **Child Safe Standards Legislation (QLD)**

### **Standard 2 - Voice of Children**

Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting and are taken seriously

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| 2.1 | Children have access to resources and tools that enable them to understand all of their rights, including to safety, information and participation.                                   |
| 2.2 | The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children feel safe and be less isolated.  |
| 2.3 | Where relevant to the setting or context, children are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age-appropriate way.              |
| 2.4 | Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate to child-friendly ways for children to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns. |

### **Standard 5 - People**

People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

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| 5.1 | Recruitment (including advertising, referee checks and staff volunteer pre-employment screening) prioritises child safety as a pre-requisites for employment.                     |
| 5.2 | Relevant staff and volunteers have current Working with Children Checks and background checks, and this is continuously monitored   |
| 5.3 | All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to child safety, record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations. |
| 5.4 | The induction and onboarding processes include cultural safety training and trauma-informed care training.  |
| 5.5 | Ongoing supervision and people management is focused on child-safety, wellbeing and cultural safety.  |

### **Standard 6 - Complaints Management**

Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused

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| 6.1 | An accessible, child focused complaint handling policy exists, which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of individuals at each level of the organisation and their approach to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct and their obligation to act and report. |
| 6.2 | Policies and Procedures are in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with authorities who have a responsibility to investigate  |

6.3	Where appropriate, ensure there are First Nations-led complaints handling and reporting mechanisms (e.g. involving First Nations Liaison Officers and trusted community elders in the process)
6.4	Ensure investigations into complaints do not retraumatise children.
6.5	Effective complaint handling processes are understood by children, families, staff and volunteers and are culturally safe
6.6	Complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly
<p><b>Standard 7 - Knowledge and Skills</b>            Staff and volunteers of the entity are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training.</p>	
7.1	Staff and Volunteers are trained and supported to effectively implement the organisation’s Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
7.2	Staff and volunteers receive training and information to recognise indicators of child harm including grooming
7.3	Staff and volunteers receive training and information to respond effectively to issues of children’s safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm.
7.4	Staff and Volunteers receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children.
7.5	Staff have adequate access to educational opportunities for truth-telling about Australia’s history.
<p><b>Standard 10 - Policies and Procedures</b>            Policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children.</p>	
10.1	Policies and procedures embed all Child Safe Standards and the Universal Principle.
10.2	Polices and procedures are well-documented, accessible, and easy to understand.
10.3	Best practice models and stakeholder consultation informs the development of policies and procedures. This includes First Nations-led practice models and consultation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities.
10.4	Leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.
10.5	Staff and volunteers understand and implement policies and procedures.

## PRINCIPLES

### **Safety and Wellbeing:**

- We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and educators, at all times: practices that demean, humiliate, frighten, or threaten, or the use of physical, verbal, or emotional punishment are not tolerated within our services.

### **Respectful Engagements:**

- We treat all children with respect and dignity, acknowledge their feelings and give them the opportunity to express, manage and learn to regulate their emotions.

### **Inclusivity and Equity:**

- We ensure that every child feels included, valued, and supported, regardless of their background, ability or needs.

### **Promoting Autonomy:**

- We encourage children to be active participants in their learning and decision-making processes, fostering development of the life skills and self-confidence.

### **Positive Guidance:**

- We guide children's behaviour positively, focusing on teaching and learning moments that build their social and emotional capacity.

### **Responsive Relationships:**

- We build warm, trusting, and responsive relationships with children, providing them with a secure base for exploration and learning.

### **Partnering With Families:**

- We partner with families to share information about children's needs, to develop expectations and strategies for children's learning, engagement and development, and where required collaboratively develop Individual Support Plans from a holistic perspective.

### **Safeguarding Through Interactions:**

- Positive, consistent, and respectful interactions are a key strategy for preventing abuse, neglect, grooming and emotional harm. All interactions must uphold professional boundaries and prioritise children's safety, dignity and wellbeing.

### **Professional Boundaries:**

- Educators, staff, volunteers and students maintain clear professional boundaries in all interactions with children. Behaviours that create secrecy, favouritism, dependency, isolation or discomfort are not permitted and will be addressed as safeguarding concerns in line with CEEC's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.

### **Child Safety Voice:**

- Children are supported to understand appropriate and inappropriate interactions, to recognise when something feels unsafe or uncomfortable and to speak up. Educators actively listen to children's concerns and respond in ways that prioritise safety and wellbeing.
- We ensure we meet all legislative requirements and obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations in regards to interactions with children.
- We prioritise good governance and quality management by supporting Service Leaders and staff with policies, procedures, and guidelines which clearly outline their roles and responsibilities, focusing on quality outcomes for children.
- We embrace the learnings from Catholic Social Teachings and support families in kind and respectful ways when resolving understandings and compliance with our policies and procedures.

# KEY TERMS

Term	Meaning	Source
Approved Provider	A provider of child care that has been approved under Family Assistance Law to receive and pass on Child Care Subsidy on behalf of the Australian Government.	<a href="#">Child Care Provider Handbook</a>
Child’s Sense of Agency	Being able to make choices and decisions to influence events and to have an impact on one’s world.	<a href="#">Guide to the NQF</a>
Dignity and Rights of the Child	Element 5.1.2 of the National Quality Standard (‘Dignity and rights of the child’) aims to achieve the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a universally agreed set of non-negotiable standards and obligations founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each child, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth status or ability. Article 19 of the convention states that children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally.	
Duty of Care	<p>A requirement is that a person act toward others and the public with the watchfulness, attention, caution and prudence that a reasonable person in the circumstances would use (Common Law Dictionary).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No employee associated with a school-age care, kindergarten or long day care service is exempt from fulfilling their duty of care.</li> <li>Fulfilling your duty of care means doing what is reasonable and in the best interests of children. That is, taking reasonable care to protect them from foreseeable risk of harm or injury.</li> </ul> <p>Workers have a duty of care to ensure all areas accessible to children are safe, free from hazards and there are sufficient carers to oversee the children’s activities.</p>	
Educator	An individual who provides education and care for children as part of an education and care service.	

Term	Meaning	Source
Effective Supervision	<p>Supervision is constantly observing and relating to the individual children and groups of children to contribute to their safety, health and wellbeing. Supervision involves more than preventing or responding to potential or actual harm and hazards. It requires the educator (worker) to be actively involved with children and to have knowledge of what each child is doing at any given time of the day. Through supervision workers will get to know each child and develop essential understandings about them in the social setting of an education and care service.</p> <p>Effective Supervision also requires educators to be actively involved with children. It is not the intention of this requirement that educators merely “stand back and watch.”</p>	<a href="#">Guide to the NQF</a>
Guidance (Behaviour Guidance)	<p>The current thinking about the most positive and effective way to help children gain understanding and learn skills that will help them to learn to manage their own behaviour.</p>	
Inappropriate conduct with a child (legislative context)	<p>Inappropriate conduct with a child recognised under the Child Safe Organisation Act 2024 (QLD) as conduct that places a child at risk of harm and may constitute an offence. Amendments to Queensland child safety legislation establish inappropriate conduct with a child as a reportable and regulated form of conduct, with relevant provisions commencing on 27th February 2026. Any concern relating to inappropriate conduct with a child must be treated as a safeguarding concern and responded to in accordance with the this policy and the Safeguarding Children Procedure.</p>	<a href="#">Child Safety Bill 2025</a>
Nominated Supervisor	<p>A person who is nominated by the approved provider of the service to be a nominated supervisor of that service and, unless the individual is the approved provider, has provided written consent to that nomination.</p>	<a href="#">Guide to the NQF</a>
Positive Interactions Between Educators and Children	<p>Involves educators viewing each child as capable and competent, with a right to a voice and able to contribute to decisions that affect them. This enables educators to focus their practices on children’s strengths and inclusion in the group environment.</p> <p>Educators who are responsive to children’s thoughts and feelings are supporting them to develop a strong sense of wellbeing. By interacting positively and meaningfully with children, educators help each child to feel accepted and to develop a sense of attachment and trust.</p> <p>Children who are supported to understand themselves experience a sense of belonging that fosters self-esteem, which contributes to the development of identity and is critical to children’s capacity to understand their own strengths, abilities and interests. When children feel safe, secure and supported, they develop confidence to explore and learn.</p>	<a href="#">Guide to the NQF</a>  <a href="#">Early Years Learning Framework</a>  <a href="#">Framework for School Age Care</a>

Term	Meaning	Source
<p>Relationships Between Children</p>	<p>When educators create supportive environments in which children experience mutually enjoyable, caring and respectful relationships, children respond accordingly.</p> <p>Positive relationships provide children with the confidence and agency to explore and learn about their world.</p> <p>As their relationships become more complex and far-reaching over time, children’s interactions with others also help them to extend their knowledge, thinking and ability to apply what they already know in new and unfamiliar contexts.</p> <p>Developing effective relationships with others is a key part of children’s social development and these relationships also provide a base for children’s learning.</p>	<p><a href="#">Guide to the NQF</a></p> <p><a href="#">Early Years Learning Framework</a></p> <p><a href="#">Framework for School Age Care</a></p>
<p>Relationships Between Educators and Children</p>	<p>When children experience nurturing and respectful reciprocal relationships with educators, they develop an understanding of themselves as competent, capable and respected. Consistent emotional support contributes to children developing a strong sense of wellbeing and belonging.</p> <p>Relationships are the foundation for the construction of identity, and help shape children’s thinking about who they are, how they belong and what influences them.</p>	<p><a href="#">Guide to the NQF</a></p>
<p>Responsible Person</p>	<p>An individual who is physically present and is responsible for the operation of a centre-based service for an agreed period of time. A responsible person must be present at all times that the approved service operates and can be:</p>	<p><a href="#">Guide to the NQF</a></p>
<p>Self-Regulation</p>	<p>Learning about your own feelings and emotions, understanding how and why they happen, recognising them (and those of others), and developing effective ways of managing them.</p> <p>When children and young people learn to self-manage their emotions, they feel more confident, capable and in control. They have stronger relationships, are more able to pay attention, learn new things and can cope better with the normal stresses and disappointments of daily life</p>	<p><a href="#">Be You</a></p>
<p>Staff Member</p>	<p>Any individual (other than a nominated supervisor or a volunteer) employed, appointed or engaged to work in or as part of an education and care service.</p>	<p><a href="#">Guide to the NQF</a></p>

# LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

- CEEC GOV PRO Interactions with Children Procedure
- CEEC PP FORM Behaviour Observations Record
- CEEC PP FORM Individual Support Plan
- [CEEC CH POL Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy](#)
- [CEEC CH PRO Providing a Child Safe Environment Procedure](#)
- [CEEC CH PRO Safeguarding Children Procedure](#)
- [CEEC GOV POL Enrolment, Orientation and Booking Policy](#)
- [CEEC GOV PRO Enrolment, Orientation and Booking Procedure](#)
- CEEC SV APPENDIX Performance Standards
- CEEC GOV POL Responsible Person Policy
- CEEC Safe Conduct Agreement
- [QA5: Relationships with Children](#)

## INDUCTION AND ONGOING TRAINING

This policy will be available on the Archdiocesan Intranet (AI) and the Catholic Early EdCare website. Service Leaders and Managers are responsible for ensuring staff are able to access policies and supporting documents.

This policy will be introduced during the induction of new staff and incorporated into ongoing professional development programs. Training will focus on strategies for effective and positive interactions, understanding child development, and implementing inclusive practices.

Please contact the Policy Sponsor for further interpretation of this policy.

## MONITORING EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Compliance with this policy will be monitored through regular observation and feedback from children, families, educators, and staff. The policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure it continues to reflect best practice, legislative changes, and the needs of service provision.

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with under Centacare's misconduct provisions, as stated in the Employment Guidelines Code of Conduct.

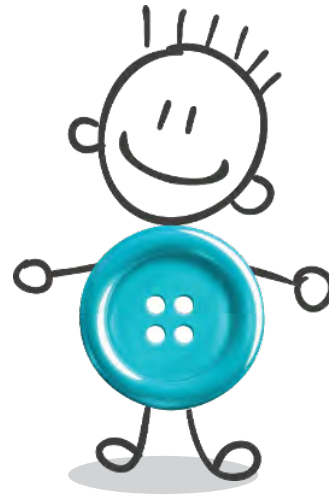
Concerns, incidents and trends related to interactions with children are reviewed to identify safeguarding risks, inform training priorities and strengthen child safe practices through governance oversight and continuous improvement processes.

# OUR VALUES



## BE BRAVE

Encouraging educators to innovate and explore new strategies for positive interactions.



## BE THOUGHTFUL

Demonstrating empathy and understanding in all interactions with children.



## BE AUTHENTIC

Building genuine and caring relationships with children.



## BE PROFESSIONAL

Upholding high standards of conduct in interactions with children.

