

## BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

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### *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children*

- Standard 5.1: Respectful and equitable relationships are developed and maintained with each child
- Standard 5.2: Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults

### PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines and/or procedures:

- to encourage acceptable forms of behaviour by using strategies that build children's confidence and self-esteem;
- to provide children with support, guidance, and opportunities to manage their own behaviour and;
- to promote collaborative approaches to behaviour guidance between Wimble Street's parents/guardians, staff and other adults.

### POLICY STATEMENT

#### 1. VALUES

Wimble Street is committed to a Behaviour Guidance Policy that:

- emphasises that children have the same rights as adults;
- reflects the values, attitudes and current recommended strategies that promote positive play behaviours and patterns;
- respects the importance of interactions and relationships between children, families, staff and adults.
- understands why children behave in certain ways in specific circumstances;
- promotes realistic play and behaviour limits that guide children's safety and security rather than curb their play experiences, curiosity, or creativity;
- defines clear and transparent caregiving strategies that communicate how behaviour guidance is implemented.
- informs Wimble Street's stakeholders about the procedures involved in behaviour guidance management plans; and
- explains the Wimble Street's commitment to professional development and the utilisation of external agencies.

Wimble Street recognises and understands that a child's behaviour may be affected by:

- age and development, special or additional needs;
- general health, well-being, and disability;
- relationships with their family
- play and learning environments, which include which includes the physical indoor/outdoor settings, the weather, the time of year, the time of day;

- relationship with other children and stakeholders, such as students, volunteers, and visitors; and
- external factors, such as family, home life, school or peer group experiences, or media coverage of traumatic events.

While staff are aware and respect individual children's and families' backgrounds and beliefs, it may be necessary to balance an individual's needs with industry knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices and current best practice recommendations from recognised authorities.

## 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisors, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Wimble Street.

## PROCEDURES

### **The Wimble Street coordinator is responsible for:**

- ensuring that there is a behaviour guidance plan developed for a child if educators are concerned that the child's behaviour may put the child themselves, other children, educators/staff and/or others at risk
- ensuring that parents/guardians and other professionals (as appropriate) are consulted if an individual behaviour guidance plan has not resolved the challenging behaviour
- consulting with, and seeking advice from, DET if a suitable and mutually agreeable behaviour guidance plan cannot be developed
- ensuring that they are notified if a complaint is received about a child's interactions or behaviour e.g. when the safety of other children is in question
- ensuring that, if a complaint is received, every attempt is made to resolve the issue by consultation and investigation as soon as possible
- ensuring that additional resources are sourced, if required, to implement a behaviour guidance plan
- ensuring that educators/staff at the service are provided with appropriate training to guide the actions and responses of a child/children with challenging behaviour.
- developing the behaviour guidance plan in consultation with the Certified Supervisor, educators and the parents/guardian of the child, and other professionals and services as appropriate
- consulting the *Complaints and Grievances Policy* to ensure compliance with service procedures, and regulatory and legislative requirements
- consulting educators for their professional evaluation of the situation, and drawing on their expertise in relation to developing strategies and identifying resources required
- meeting with the parents/guardians of the child concerned to develop and implement a behaviour guidance plan
- supporting educators by assessing skills and identifying additional training needs in the area of behaviour guidance
- investigating the availability of extra assistance, financial support or training, by contacting the regional Preschool Field Officer (refer to *Definitions*), specialist children's services officers from DET or other agencies working with the child
- setting clear timelines for review and evaluation of the behaviour guidance plan.

### **The Wimble Street employees are responsible for:**

- observing children's challenging behaviour and identifying the need to develop a behaviour guidance plan to support a child in self-managing their own behaviour
- assisting the Nominated Supervisor to develop a behaviour guidance plan in consultation with parents/guardians and other professionals as appropriate

- implementing a behaviour guidance plan and incorporating identified strategies and resources into the service program
- undertaking relevant training that will enable them to guide children who exhibit challenging behaviour
- maintaining ongoing communication and consultation with parents/guardians
- providing regular progress reports to the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor on the implementation and effectiveness of the agreed strategies contained in an individual behaviour guidance plan
- maintaining the confidentiality of information provided by parents/guardians unless written consent is provided to disclose information to relevant parties
- providing their observations, professional evaluation and expertise in reviewing individual behaviour guidance plans
- providing other information, as relevant, to the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor to assist with the resolution of any issues.

### 3. STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES

As opposed to teaching compliance, Wimble Street adheres to the guidance approach to raising children that believes we must teach them how to be considerate of others – to think about the effects of their own actions on others. (Porter, 2011) This involves:

- developing in children a **sense of helpful and unhelpful behaviours** so that even in the absence of supervision, they can act considerately – not because they might be punished for doing otherwise, but because it is the right thing to do.
- teaching children to **manage their emotions** so they themselves learn to cope with setbacks in life.
- teaching children to **co-operate** so they all can have their needs met.
- giving children a **sense of potency** so that in a sense, they can make a difference to themselves and their world and can act on their values. (Porter, 2006)

Wimble Street follow a simple and effective form of behaviour guidance which allows the child to learn from their inappropriate behaviour without the use of punishment.

*In general, when an incident occurs, the staff lets the baby/child/pre-schooler know that the behaviour is not OK as explained in detail below. They:*

1. *acknowledge the act (what action has occurred)*
2. *acknowledge the feeling or hurt the behaviour has caused their peer*
3. *move the child away from the situation,*
4. *suggest an alternative way of behaving before returning to play, and*
5. *if the child continues to display unhelpful behaviour, a Behaviour Guidance Plan is employed.*

## Babies – Developmentally Appropriate Behaviours and Consequences

- **Sharing and taking turns** Even though the concept of sharing and taking turns does not develop until the babies are older (> 18 months), staff supervise and encourage by modelling, at the babies' level, the passing backwards and forwards of toys, musical instruments, and turn-taking with gross motor equipment.
- **Negotiating with peers** Staff give and encourage use of words for older conjunction with actions to help them in situations. For example, the words "Stop", "Mine" or "Sage's turn" as the staff member passes the toy to the other child.
- **Identifying a problem and attempting to solve it** Staff assist babies and show them how to overcome the problem. For example, a baby gets stuck on the climbing frame and needs to get off or needs assistance to retrieve a toy that had been taken by another baby.
- **Displaying empathy for others** Staff explain feelings such as "Taking that toy had made Sage sad" When returning the toy to the other baby, staff would say "Look, Sage is happy now". Staff are encouraged to always acknowledge the happy with the sad.
- **Managing emotions and behaviours appropriately** Staff let the babies know what behaviour is OK and what is not OK and the effects of their behaviour.

## Babies – Inappropriate behaviours and their consequences

- **Biting** Biting is a normal behaviour and can be caused by many factors such as teething, sensory exploration, frustration in communication etc. Even though it is a normal part of a child's development, it is socially unacceptable and strongly discouraged at Wimble Street.
  - Staff will use words and actions to let the baby that bit know that this is not OK and that their actions have made another child sad (cry).
  - The baby that is bit is then moved away from the affected child where they can watch the affected child receive care and concern. This is immediate as babies generally have short attention spans. The baby that bit is returned to play quickly after the incident and closely supervised.
  - An incident report is recorded.

If the behaviour continues, a **Behaviour Guidance Plan** will be put into place. For example, one staff shadows the child and the child is at no time left unsupervised. The staff will help identify situations in which the baby that bit may have frustrations or feel the need to bite and suggest strategies to alleviate the need to bite e.g. teething rings, acknowledgement of anger and re-direction, one-on-one attention etc.

- **Physical aggression** As above.
- **Pushing and Shoving** As above.

## Toddlers – Developmentally Appropriate Behaviours and Consequences

- **Sharing and taking turns** Staff supervise and encourage by modelling, at the toddler level, the passing backwards and forwards of toys, musical instruments, and turn taking with gross motor equipment. Staff make greater use of words to talk a child through a situation.

Should a situation occur, the staff member would:

- acknowledge what the child has done: "Penny, I can see that you want the ball and it is ??? turn with the ball."
- acknowledge how the other child feels, that is, the consequences of the child's action: "Taking the ball away has made ??? sad."

- waiting for a response: The staff will wait response from either child. For example, Penny might return the ball to ??? or ??? could decide that the ball is not worth the struggle and find a different activity. The pair might decide to share the ball and start a game. The staff will relate out aloud what the response is. For example, “Penny, has given the ball to ???and ??? is happy.” If a struggle persist, staff member ensures proximity to prevent physical aggression.
- a last resort: “Penny, can you give the ball back to ??? on your own or would you like help?” If the child is unable to do so independently, staff will assist them to return the toy to the other child.
- offer an alternative while the child is waiting: “Would you like to play with this other ball (or toy) until ??? is finished with the ball?”

If the need arises, staff can encourage the child to repeat what has been said.

- **Identifying a problem and attempting to solve it** As above
- **Displaying empathy for others** Toddlers are encouraged to identify their feelings and the feelings of others. That can be done with visual aids (emotions chart) and talked about when incidences occur.

### **Toddlers – Inappropriate behaviours and their consequences**

- **Biting**
  - Staff acknowledges what the toddler has done: “Jim, you have bitten Sam.”
  - Staff acknowledges how the other child feels, that is the consequence of the toddler’s action: “Sam is very sad – he is crying” For a short time, Jim will observe as Sam is comforted and helped. Jim can witness the consequences of his action.
  - Staff suggests and models an alternative for Jim. “Next time, Jim, you could use your words and you can say “Sam, can I have a turn of the truck?””
  - An incident report is completed.

If the behaviour continues, a Behaviour Guidance Plan will be put into place. For example, one staff is assigned to shadow the toddler and the child is at no time left unsupervised. The staff will help identify situations in which the toddler that bit may have frustrations or feel the need to bite and suggest strategies to alleviate the need to bite e.g. teething rings, acknowledgement of anger and re-direction, one-on-one attention.

- **Physical aggression**
  - Staff acknowledges what the toddler has done: “Jo, you have hit Moe.”
  - Staff acknowledge how the other child feels and the consequences of the action: “Moe is sad, she is crying.” For a short time, Jo will observe as Moe is comforted and helped. Jo can witness the consequences of her action.
  - Staff suggests and models an alternative: “Next time, Jo, you could use your words and ask Moe to move away from the doorway when you want to walk through”
  - If the situation calls for it, Jo can be asked to move away from the scene of the incident and is encouraged by staff to knowledge the outcome of her actions before play. For example, “Jo, you will need to move away until your hands are ready to be soft and gentle”
  - An incident report is completed.

## Preschool – Developmentally Appropriate Behaviours and Consequences

- **Sharing and taking turns** Children aged 3-5 are encouraged to use their language skills in interactions. Staff encourage this through discussion either when an incident occurs or in class group times.
  - acknowledge what the child has done: “Forrest, Apple is playing with the magnetic polydron shapes and you have taken a piece from her construction. It was Apple’s turn.”
  - Acknowledge how the other child feels, because of the child’s action: “Apple is upset. Her face tells me that she is sad.” Using visual cues is helpful to help the child acknowledge the feelings of hurt.
  - And “I Wonder” question “I wonder what could be done to make both of you happy rather just one of you, happy?”
  - Make things right: “Forrest, can you return the shapes to Apple? If you are not able to do so on your own, I can help you with doing so”
- **Negotiating with peers** Preschoolers are encouraged to use their words over actions or sound in negotiating with others. This may require assistance from a staff member. See above example with turn taking and sharing. Refer to above example about sharing and turn taking.
- **Active listening to adults** Staff encourage the children to:
  - **“Stop!”** – Staff make a visual hand signal of a stop sign
  - **“Look”** – Staff make eye contact at the child’s level
  - **“Listen”** – Staff touch hands to their own ears.

This is especially encouraged at group time activities where children get to practice their listening skills. Staff also respect a child’s right to be heard.

- **Identifying a problem and attempting to solve it** Staff members help the child to see that there is a problem and to identify what it is. They then talk through possible solutions or a better way of handling a situation such as difficulty with sharing. Staff teach the preschooler to problem solve with assistance.
- **Displaying empathy for others** Staff members assist the child by talking through the consequences of their action and how it makes the other child/ren feel. They will then give the child the opportunity to rectify the situation, that is, how can they make the child happy again.
- **Managing emotions and behaviour appropriately** Preschoolers are beginning to learn how to manage their emotions such as anger and frustration. In situations where a loss of emotional control e.g. tantrums occurs, staff members would:
  - Give the child space to let their feelings out.
  - Identify the cause of the tantrum and address it.
  - Assist the child to follow through with the correct behaviour.

For example, a child refuses to put their hat on and loses emotional control by yelling and throwing themselves to the floor. A staff member would make sure they are in a safe space to let go or move them to an appropriately safe place. They would stay with the child until he/she calms down or if they cannot calm down, assist them to do so. They would then discuss calmly the issue with the child and the child would be expected to follow through with wearing their hat. If they continue to refuse then the child would be

made aware of the consequences of their action: "You will need to sit out of play until you are ready to put your hat on."

### **Preschool – Inappropriate behaviours and their consequences**

- **Biting** Should a biting situation arise with preschoolers, it is essentially the same teaching method as for babies and toddlers, however staff will use and encourage the use of words for the child to express what they are feeling rather than use actions such as biting. The staff member would:
  - immediately move away the child who bit from the other child/ren for a short time. They would sit apart from the other children for a maximum of 5 minutes and at all times supervised.
  - get the child to acknowledge the hurt they have inflicted on another child: "Bernie, I can see you are frustrated but it is not OK to bite. Madeline is very sad now. You've hurt her arm."
  - suggest a more helpful way of doing things using problem solving skills: "What would be a more helpful choice for you to make? How could you do it a more helpful next time?"
  - make things right: "Perhaps you might want to say sorry when you are ready." The child needs to offer some sort of acknowledgement to the child that was hurt either in words (saying sorry) or actions (hug, gesture of friendliness). If the child is unable to do this alone, then the staff member will assist them.
  - The child is then helped back into play with the other children.

Should the child continue the behaviour, then a Behaviour Guidance Plan similar to those outlined for the Baby and Toddler groups would be used.

- **Physically aggressive and bullying:** As above.

#### **Important:**

- The use of physical punishment by staff, relief staff, students and/or visitors as a behaviour guidance strategy is not acceptable under any circumstances.
- The use of isolation, humiliation, intimidation or negative labelling by staff, relief staff, students, and/or visitors as a behaviour guidance strategy is not acceptable under any circumstances.
- Wimble Street adheres to a Code of Ethics based on the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics (2006), which assists in governing our policy and procedures.

### **The Role of the Family in Behaviour Guidance**

Critical to the success of behaviour guidance is the role families play, especially parents and guardians. Families are provided with regular opportunities to contribute to the development and review of their child's behaviour guidance strategies and plans where appropriate, along with Wimble Street's overall strategies to promote positive outcomes for the child.

Wimble Street informs families about the Behaviour Guidance Policy on enrolment and seeks information from families about the behaviour guidance strategies used at home. When joining Wimble Street, parents/carers agree to respect and adhere to the policy and procedures set out by Wimble Street.

Please refer to Wimble Street's Enrolment and Orientation Checklist.

#### 4. OPEN COMMUNICATION AND EXPECTATIONS

Families have the opportunity to express their thoughts, expectations and feelings openly with staff/carers. At any time, parents can discuss their child/ren with room staff for brief periods (10 minutes maximum). For an in-depth discussion, Wimble Street asks that parents/carers make an appointment with the co-ordinators.

In addition, Wimble Street staff conduct detailed Parent Interviews twice a year.

Families should recognise that some behaviour guidance strategies or practices established in the home cannot be enforced in Heritage's environment.

##### Staff Guidelines

The following guidelines can assist staff/carers when recognising and implementing behaviour guidance strategies and practices:

- Educators respond to, and acknowledge children's emotions, such as happiness, anger, pleasure, fear, anxiety, frustration, sadness, and pride.
- Educators acknowledge that the emotions experienced by children are significant. For example, an adult who is not scared of thunder will not trivialise the fear or anxiety expressed by a child.
- Educators understand that children may not have developed the appropriate strategies to express emotions due to their age and/or stage of development. Staff are professionally qualified and know what is appropriate behaviour for varying age groups. Staff are provided with regular training days to revise and update their professional knowledge. On a needs basis, extra training is schedule to cover behaviour management issues with outside professionals.
- Educators attitudes and care giving strategies demonstrate an understanding and empathy towards children who display behaviours that are not always consistent with their development and/or general disposition.
- Educators follow the Code of Ethics when dealing with parents, children and other staff members.

#### 5. RESOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

##### Resources

- *Behaviour guidance practice note series*  
[https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/understand\\_child\\_behaviour.aspx](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/understand_child_behaviour.aspx)
- *Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia:*  
[https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-02/belonging\\_being\\_and\\_becoming\\_the\\_early\\_years\\_learning\\_framework\\_for\\_australia.pdf](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-02/belonging_being_and_becoming_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia.pdf)
- Early Childhood Australia (ECA) *Code of Ethics* (2006):  
<https://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/>
- *Guide to the National Quality Standard*, ACECQA: [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- *Guiding Children's Responsible Behaviour – Louise Porter:*  
[http://federalccc.com.au/new/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Louise-Porter-developing\\_responsible\\_behaviour.pdf](http://federalccc.com.au/new/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Louise-Porter-developing_responsible_behaviour.pdf)
- Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP), Department of Education, Australian Government: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/help/inclusion-support-program>
- *The Kindergarten Guide*  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx>
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: [www.unicef.org/crc](http://www.unicef.org/crc)
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework:  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Childhood/professionals/learning/Pages/veylf.aspx>



## **Service policies**

- *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- *Code of Conduct Policy*
- *Complaints and Grievances Policy*
- *Curriculum Development Policy*
- *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*
- *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

## **EVALUATION**

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1: Procedures recommended for the development of a behaviour guidance plan

## **AUTHORISATION**

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Wimble Street Childcare Co-operative in March 2015

**LAST REVIEW DATE: AUGUST 2021**

**NEXT REVIEW DATE: AUGUST 2022**

## **ATTACHMENT 1**

### **Procedures recommended for the development of a behaviour guidance plan**

**These procedures recommend steps that services can follow to develop a behaviour guidance plan for a child exhibiting challenging behaviour. These procedures should be adapted to suit individual services. For further information see DETs Behaviour guidance practice note series (refer to Sources).**

A caring relationship with an adult, who can provide the learning and emotional support required, is pivotal to dealing with a child's challenging behaviour. Challenging behaviour is best managed through a collaborative strategy developed between service staff and parents/guardians.

Excluding a child from the service should only be a last resort. This decision should be made as part of the collaborative management of a child's behaviour, and based on a joint decision by the parents/guardians and family, and the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators and other professionals involved in the education and care of the child (refer to *Inclusion and Equity Policy*).

#### **Procedures**

##### **Step 1 – Observe and Respond**

- Observe children exhibiting challenging behaviour, including in the broader context of their environment, the culture of the service, and the interactions of the whole group and other educators working with the child.
- Respond with strategies listed provided in *Behaviour Guidance Policy and Procedure*
- Identify, based on observations, whether there is a need to develop an individual behaviour guidance plan for the child.

##### **Step 2 – Discuss**

Invite parents/guardians to a meeting to discuss:

- the ongoing behaviour displayed by the child, including highlighting improvements, and celebrating successes
- their aspirations, as well as the service's aspirations, for the child
- the child's individual characteristics, including interests, temperament, age and cultural background
- recommended strategies to support the child's development, and how these strategies will be reviewed and evaluated
- resources or changes to the environment/program that may be required for a behaviour guidance plan to be implemented e.g. changes to routines and transitions
- the support already accessed by the family to assist with managing the child's behaviour
- other support available, such as a Preschool Field Officer for referral for specialist assessment and additional adult support (written consent is required from parents/guardians before any intervention/assessment is undertaken)
- any other matter that will assist with the development of a behaviour guidance plan.

##### **Step 3 – Consult**

- If appropriate, and with the permission of parents/guardians, consult with other support agencies or service providers who are already working with the child, to assist with the development of a behaviour guidance plan.

**Step 4 – Develop**

Develop an individual behaviour guidance plan, based on consultation with the child's parents/guardians and other support agencies, that is:

- appropriate to the needs of the child and accepted/agreed to by parents/guardians and other professionals involved in the education and care of that child
- clear and easy to follow for all educators, staff, parents/guardians and/or volunteers/students working with the child.

**Step 5 – Monitor and review**

- Continually review, reflect, evaluate and revise the strategies that have been implemented.
- Communicate with the parents/guardians regarding the child's progress and involve them in evaluating and revising the strategies.