

POLICY & PROCEDURAL STATEMENTS

Topic: Early Learning Interactions with Children and Group Relationships

Scope: This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisors, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Avenue Neighbourhood House @ Eley Inc Early Learning.

Relevant Legislation and Standards:

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2018* (Cth) Regulation 155 and 156
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (Cth) Sections 166, 167
- *Children Services Act 1996* (Vic)
- *Children Services Regulations 2020* (Vic) Regulation 104 and 105

Policy: Avenue Neighbourhood House @ Eley Inc. (ANH@E) will promote the development of positive and respectful interactions and relationships with each child and their family at the service and ensure each child is supported to learn and develop in a secure and empowering environment.

ANH@E is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure the education and care of children is provided in a way that always:

- Maintains the dignity and rights of each child at the service.
- Encourages children to express themselves and their opinions.
- Presents experiences and opportunities that enable children to develop self-reliance and self-esteem.
- Includes and regards family and cultural values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child.
- Offers positive guidance and encourages acceptable behaviour.
- Offers opportunities to interact and develop positive, respectful, and warm relationships between children and educators/staff and volunteers at the service.
- Regards the size and composition of groups in which children are education and cared for.
- Builds collaborative relationships with families to improve learning and development outcomes for children.

Procedures:

To ensure positive interactions and relations in groups between educators and children and their families, ANH@E will:

- Ensure Early Learning staff and parents/guardians, have access to a copy of the Interactions with Children and Group Relationships Policy and comply with its requirements. The policy will be included in the Early Learning Handbook and published on the ANH@E website. Early Learning staff will be provided with a copy of the policy upon induction and annually.

- Provide children with the opportunity to explore their dispositions for learning by expressing themselves and their opinions.
- Spend time listening to children and responding appropriately so they learn that their opinions are valued thereby building self-esteem and a healthy self-concept.
- Communicate with children to ensure the child's dignity and rights are always maintained.
- Provide an environment and educational program to help the child to succeed at managing their behaviours.
- Role model the use of appropriate language and behaviours and use positive and respectful strategies to assist children to manage their own behaviour and respond appropriately to conflict and the behaviour of others.
- Give priority to nurturing relationships and providing children with consistent emotional support so children can be assisted to develop skills and understandings about how to interact positively with others.
- Take every opportunity to help children learn about other cultures and lifestyles in everyday situations to facilitate respect for diversity. This will help children become aware of connections, similarities, and differences between people.
- Draw on a child's own language, communication styles and culture to enhance their interactions and relationships.
- Ensure the environment and interactions reflect all families both attending the centre and in the wider community, so children have opportunities to explore diversity of culture, heritage, background, and tradition so children learn that diversity presents opportunities for choices and new understandings.
- Treat all families equitably without bias or judgement; recognising that each family is unique.
- Remain sensitive to cultural differences amongst families and encourage families to share cultural aspects with the children and Early Learning educators.
- Provide learning strategies and an appropriate educational program that takes into account a child's age, physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child.
- Provide spaces for children to play in both small and large groups (facilitating choice of peer group and choice of experience).
- Ensure the size and composition of groups is considered to provide with best opportunities for quality interactions and relationships with each other and with adults at the service. Smaller group sizes are considered optimal.
- Support Early Learning staff to gain appropriate training, knowledge, and skills for the implementation of this policy.
- Promote collaborative relationships between children/families and educators, staff, and other professionals, to improve the quality of children's education and care experiences.

Related Policies

This policy must be read in conjunction with the following ANH@E policies and Codes of Conduct:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Standards
- Early Learning Duty of Care
- Early Learning Behaviour and Guidance

This policy was created in August 2021 and will be reviewed again in October 2023