



Emmerick Street Community Pre-School
15 Emmerick Street, Lilyfield

Policy

Policy Name:	SOCIAL COMPETENCY
Policy Number:	QA 5 001
Quality Area:	5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN
Date Developed:	MARCH 2012
Version:	FINAL (3)
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Review date:	AS NEEDED

1. Background

Supporting children to develop their social competency means trying to understand why a child behaves in certain ways and supporting them to express themselves appropriately. This means using strategies that build children's confidence and self esteem, and provide children with support, guidance and opportunities to express their feelings and emotions appropriately and interact with others positively.

2. Aim

To implement appropriate strategies that provides consistency in developing children's social competency.

3. Practices

The Approved Provider will:

- Employ the appropriate number of staff to meet to a minimum the ratios required under the National Regulations and go beyond this, when needed, to support the children adequately throughout the day; and
- Ensure staff attend professional development opportunities relevant to building relationships with children and developing their social competency.

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure staff are up to date with positive strategies to support children's social competency

Educators and Staff will:

- Encourage children to express themselves and their opinions;
- Involve children in experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem, including but not limited to:
 - Involvement in cleaning, setting the table, packing away;
 - Time to master a new skill or develop friendships;
 - Time to practice and existing skill; and
 - Time to listen to and discuss ideas.
- Model and teach a child what is safe, what angers or hurts, what pleases and what positive ways can be used to release anger or frustration;
- Staff will set realistic boundaries and enforce them. The staff will give clear messages about what is acceptable and what is not. The children need the security that comes with knowing that there are limits, and that when they need help with their behaviour they will get it;
- Use positive statements: helping children know what to do instead of what not to do. This will assist children to make judgements about what they can and cannot do. Limits and orders given without explanation keep a child dependent on other people for information about what to do;
 - Using positive language to direct children, for example, "walk inside" as opposed to "do not run inside". Language should not label the child but rather the behaviour, for

- example, "the way you behaved was not kind" as opposed to "you are an unkind boy/girl".
- Use positive techniques or guidance, redirection and reinforcement rather than promote comparison, competition or criticism.
 - Teach children self-discipline and an understanding of the consequences of their behaviour. When children are self-disciplined and self-directed, their needs and interests become clearer to them and to others. From this, a child centred curriculum readily flows. Children also gain understanding and appreciation of other people's needs, rights and feelings;
 - Be conscious of the child's developmental level - what is labelled as misbehaviour may change as a child grows;
 - Provide consistency to minimise confusion and ensure that children are clear about what behaviour is expected from them and from each other;
 - Consult with families about what strategies work at home for supporting their child's development of social competencies;
 - Report to families about what has been supporting their child to develop social competencies at the preschool;
 - Acknowledge and accept the children's feelings of anger, sadness, frustration or jealousy, even if the reaction seems out of proportion to the cause. The feelings should be distinguished from what the child does about the feelings. Children should be encouraged to talk about their feelings. It should be made clear that feelings are not bad and are a natural part of life and that behaviour that results in hurting self, others and/or damaging equipment is inappropriate and unacceptable;
 - Support children, in conjunction with families, to develop appropriate ways of expressing feelings;
 - Provide a balance of quiet and vigorous active activities;
 - Know and understand each child in their care and reflect on individual differences/development, cultural background, families experiences, and environmental influences when implementing behaviour management strategies;
 - Provide enough materials for the number of children involved in the activity;
 - Ensure that activities are appropriate to the children's age and stage of development and reflect their interests;
 - Intervene prior to inappropriate behaviour occurring and redirect children's attention to other activities, using their knowledge of the child;
 - Implement consistent guidelines. It is vital that staff work together to plan and implement behaviour management strategies;
 - Model appropriate behaviours that they are aiming to achieve;
 - Use positive language tone when redirecting inappropriate behaviour;
 - Respond immediately to inappropriate behaviour;
 - Meaningfully praise and recognise children's positive behaviour;

- Encourage children to think about how others might be feeling; and
- Talk with children about their behaviour and how it makes others feel.

Staff will not:

- Use inappropriate language;
- Use or threaten to use corporal punishment (this means, smack, grab, pull, tap, hit, pinch, or physically punish children);
- Use threats of humiliation, such as threatening a child;
- Withhold food;
- Use food as a reward;
- Force feed children;
- Give children time out;
 - Instead a child should be given quiet time (see below)
- Isolate children in corners, on chairs, on beds if they are not sleeping.

3.1. In the case of conflict between children

Educators and staff will:

- Comfort the child who has been hurt and talk to the aggressor as soon as possible;
- Support the aggressor to help look after the hurt child until they are ok;
- Support the aggressor to think of what they can do to make the other child feel better. Including but not limited to:
 - Saying sorry is ok but not enough;
 - Draw them a picture;
 - Give them a cuddle; and
 - Ask the hurt child what they would like to feel better.
- Support the aggressor and hurt child to express their feelings to each other and discuss the incident. The focus should be on feelings, not on being 'bad'. Rather it is how we express them that is important (as above);
- Ensure that open communication is maintained between staff and family members to ensure that consistent strategies are implemented between the home and the pre-school environment; and
- Staff must not use time out. Instead a child should be given quiet time when all other strategies have been unsuccessful. Quiet time allows children to get away from a stressful situation. During this time, children could be given some quiet time with a book, walk around with a staff member, listen to music, complete a puzzle, or draw a picture. Quiet time should be used as a positive approach and carried out in a respectful way so that the child is not intimidated or humiliated.

4. Evaluation

Children build on their social/emotional skills. Educators are supportive of children and assist them to become socially competent.

Statutory Legislation and Considerations

Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 No 104;

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2014;

Links to National Quality Standards 5.1, 5.2, 5.2.2, 4.2.2

Sources

Managing Challenging Behaviour, Porter, L. (2003).

Young children's behaviour: Practical approaches for caregivers and teachers (2nd ed.)

NCAC (2006) Guiding Children's Behaviour in Positive Ways FDCQA Factsheet ,Campbelltown Children's Services Procedure Document, 2005;

Guide to the National Quality Standards (2018).