

POLICY – RESPECTFUL INTERACTIONS

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1. National Quality Standards

Quality Area 5: Relationships with children		
Area	Concept	Descriptor
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
5.2	Relationships between children	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.
5.2.1	Collaborative learning	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.
5.2.2	Self-Regulation	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities		
Area	Concept	Descriptor

6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	Parents views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.

The National Education and Care Services Regulations are included in the appendix.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 Baringa Early Learning Centre (Baringa) is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment that is inclusive for all children, staff, visitors, and family members. The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) highlights educators' relationships with children as central to supporting their learning. Principle 1 in the EYLF is about secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships. Baringa's philosophy guides our interactions and relationships with children. We aim to ensure all educators develop positive relationships with children based on respect and fostering children's self-esteem and development, ensuring children feel safe and supported.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of Baringa.

4. Background

- 4.1 All children have a right to feel accepted and respected. This is a principle set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention emphasises the importance of children developing connections to culture and community as a means of fostering a strong sense of personal identity and belonging. All children will have their rights, dignity and agency respected. Baringa will ensure that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or any discipline that is unreasonable or inappropriate in the circumstances.

5. Implementation

- 5.1 **Safe Environments:** Centre Management will ensure all educators and staff have undertaken current child protection legislation training including mandatory reporting requirements and obligations. Baringa's approach to equity and inclusion will be included in our philosophy which will be visible in the centre. Baringa will provide a safe, relaxed and engaging atmosphere for children and promote a sense of community in the service.
- 5.2 **Respectful Interactions:** Educators will respond sensitively and appropriately to children's efforts to communicate and engage with them in sustained, positive conversations about their interests. Educators will encourage children to have their own opinions, ideas and comments and will ensure all ideas are valued as children contribute to learning conversations in one-on-one and group settings. Children will be encouraged to exercise agency and seek assistance when needed. Children will never be forced to do something against their requests including rest, eat, participate in group experiences and activities.
- 5.3 **Routines:** Educators will implement a predictable routine for children with interest-based activities and experiences. Baringa will ensure mealtimes are relaxed and unhurried and educators will take the time to sit and talk with children, modelling positive behaviour and engaging in respectful conversation. Baringa will ensure that programs and routines will include regular opportunities for children to engage in social play and group experiences.
- 5.4 **Modelling Positive Behaviour:** Educators will participate in children's play using children's cues to guide their level and type of involvement. Educators will model reasoning, prediction, reflection processes

and language skills. Educators will model strategies for children to initiate interactions, participate in group play and social activities and assist them when they have trouble understanding or communicating with each other.

- 5.5 **Inclusion:** Educators will use techniques such as sign language and other resources to support children with diverse needs and use their interactions with children to support the maintenance of home languages and learning English as an additional language. *Refer to Baringa's Inclusive Approach Policy.*
- 5.6 **Engaged Learning:** Educators will use information from their observations of children to extend children's thinking and learning opportunities. This includes children's shared interests which will be used to plan collaborative learning experiences. Educators will learn more about the histories, cultures, languages, traditions, child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of families at Baringa. Baringa will encourage children to engage in cooperative and pro-social behaviour and express their feelings and responses to others' behaviour confidently and constructively, including setting boundaries and seeking help when needed.
- 5.7 **Secure Relationships:** Educators are sensitive to the needs of children experiencing anxiety and will support children to build secure attachments, feel safe and happy at Baringa. Educators will use positive language, gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice when redirecting or discussing children's behaviour with them. They will remain calm, gentle, patient and reassuring even when children strongly express distress, frustration or anger. Educators will support children to explore different identities, points of view and to communicate effectively when resolving disagreements with others. Educators will discuss emotions, feelings and issues of inclusion and fairness, bias and prejudice and the consequences of certain actions with children. Educators will encourage children to listen to other children's ideas, consider alternate behaviour and cooperate in problem solving situations.
- 5.8 **Collaboration:** All families are treated equitably without bias or judgement, recognising that each family is unique. Regular communication is maintained and family and/or carer input is encouraged, respected and actioned where appropriate. Educators will enthusiastically collaborate with parents and/or carers to best meet the needs of all children and support their transition and ongoing happiness at Baringa. Expectations of respectful interactions will be communicated with families effectively when appropriate.
- 5.9 **Positive Interactions with Children:** Educators will ensure that children have opportunities for peer scaffolding, support and promote children's interpersonal relationships and support the inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds and diverse capabilities in group play, projects and experiences. Educators will ensure that children are being acknowledged when they make positive choices in managing their behaviour.
- 5.10 **Strong Friendships:** Baringa will encourage children to participate in enjoyable interactions with their peers, respond positively to ideas, negotiate roles and relationships, contribute to shared play, and develop friendships. Educators will support children to negotiate their rights and rights of others and intervene sensitively when children experience difficulty in resolving a disagreement. Educators will preempt potential conflicts or challenging behaviours by monitoring children's play and supporting interactions where there is conflict.
- 5.11 **Cultural Diversity:** By teaching respect for cultural diversity, educators will assist children to learn:
- (i) about their cultural background and develop a strong sense of self identity
 - (ii) about and appreciate cultures and traditions other than their own
 - (iii) to enjoy and respect differences and recognise universal characteristics we all share
 - (iv) about racial prejudice and understand why it should be challenged
 - (v) Inspire, encourage and accept each child and encourage them to do the same with their peers by actively fostering each child's:
 - (a) construction of a knowledgeable, confident self-identity
 - (b) comfortable, empathetic interactions with a diverse range of people
 - (c) critical thinking about bias, and to question and enquire
 - (d) ability to stand up for herself/himself and others in the face of bias.

6. Feedback

6.1 Families and staff may provide feedback about this document by emailing admin@baringa.org.au.

7. Approval and Review Details

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Executive Officer
Administrator	Centre Director
Next Review Date	31 December 2026

History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	November 2017
Amendment Authority and Date	06/10/23 changes include: merging of Interactions with Children, Families And Staff Policy (01/11/17) and The Respect For Children Policy (08/02/21).

Sources

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Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Australian Government Department of Education,-(2022). *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.V2.0, 2022*

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[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023)

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Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (Cth).

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Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (2011) Melbourne Graduate School of Education

Evidence Paper Practice Principle 5: Respectful relationships and responsive engagement

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/edcare/respectrelns.pdf>

[Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)

Appendix

Education and Care Services National Regulations	
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