

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT AND PROCEDURES

All children need a safe and secure environment and positive interactions with peers and adults. Encouraging positive behaviour in all children and ensuring that all children are respected and valued as individuals.

Pinemont Preschool is committed to:

- Respecting the importance of positive interactions and relationships between children, families, staff and committee
- Acknowledging that children have the same rights as adults and recognising the diversity that exists in everyone
- Protecting children from aggression by providing them with a safe and secure environment, and the opportunity for positive and respectful interactions with adults and other children
- Recognising that children's behaviour reflects their level of development and is influenced by a range of factors
- Providing a learning environment that supports the growth, wellbeing and development of the whole child
- Respecting cultural practices and beliefs and working in partnership with parents/guardians and other professionals with issues relating to the guidance of a child's behaviour
- Encouraging children's learning in identifying their own rights, needs and feelings with those of others, to interact effectively and, in doing so, to gain an understanding of empathy
- Engaging only in practices that are respectful of, and provide security for, children and that in no way degrade, endanger, exploit, intimidate or harm them psychologically or physically
- Reflecting the values, attitudes and current recommended strategies that promote positive behaviours.

GUIDANCE STRATEGIES

Social environment

Children who play and learn in an environment which promotes positive social relationships are less likely to display inappropriate behaviours. Positive relationships are developed when staff members and family day carers:

- establish positive relationships with children
- empower children to use language and other forms of non-hurtful communication to communicate their emotions
- promote positive, empathetic relationships between children assisting them to develop respectful relationships
- encourage and assist children to make decisions for themselves and provide opportunities for independence and self-regulation
- provide clear and reasonable limits so that children know what is expected of them and follow through to help them abide by the limits
- model appropriate behaviours
- provide positive feedback and focus on children's strengths and achievements and build on their abilities
- be understanding and supportive – acknowledge children's emotions
- help children develop a sense of social responsibility, so that they become aware of the impact of their actions on others
- promote children's initiative and agency
- discuss guidelines, rules, limits and what is fair with children, and use their contributions in setting limits and guidelines.

Physical environment

Children who are engaged and active are less likely to display challenging behaviours. The physical environment needs to provide developmentally appropriate materials and equipment so that children do not become bored or frustrated, which is likely to result in challenging behaviour. To make sure that children are engaged it is important to:

- provide interesting and age appropriate equipment and materials
- make sure that there are plenty of opportunities for outdoor play
- set up the environment so that children can engage according to their abilities and interests
- provide sufficient materials and equipment
- balance children's need for sameness and variety by making appropriate changes to the environment and materials and equipment in it
- model care of equipment and materials and help children learn to care for them
- limit the number of children in areas appropriately
- give children opportunities for independent and solitary play
- arrange the environment so that there is easy movement within and between areas
- set up environments that give children choices about working and playing alone, with one or two other children, or being part of a larger group and that support engagement and concentration
- make sure that there is enough space overall so that children have choices about being together.

Program structure

In planning the educational or recreational program for the children, consider the following:

- the way routines or transition times are planned so that they are relaxed and children are not rushed
- allow for flexible routines, e.g. allowing a child to eat when they are hungry
- maximise choices throughout the day. For example, if there are children who do not sleep during rest time provide them with a choice of quiet activities that they can participate in
- provide for many child initiated experiences
- organise the day into big 'chunks' of time, so that children have sufficient time to engage in experiences.

GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR

Pinemont Preschool will have a range of behaviour guidance strategies that help children learn to guide their behaviour. These strategies are ways of guiding behaviour and are to be used consistently by all staff members involved with the child.

The aim is for children over time to rely less on adults to guide them as they develop their own self-control and understand what acceptable behaviour is. With this aim in mind, the following points may assist in developing behaviour guidance strategies:

- establish positive relationships, which are the foundation for building children's self-respect, self-worth and feelings of security
- observe children to identify triggers for challenging behaviours.
- Pay attention to the child's developmental level and any program issues that may be impacting on the behaviour
- use positive approaches to behaviour guidance. Some of these include positive acknowledgement, redirection, giving explanations, encouragement, giving help, collaborating to solve problems and helping children to understand the consequences and impact of their behaviour
- support children by providing acceptable alternative behaviours when challenging behaviour occurs
- ensure limits are consistent, carried out in a calm, firm manner, followed through and that children are helped to behave within the limits
- involve the family and the child in appropriate ways in addressing challenging behaviour
- use other professionals when necessary to help with behaviour guidance, for example, the Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) or the Inclusion Support Facilitator (ISF)
- identify children's strengths and build on them
- seek support from other staff members or family day carers and management

Some questions that may be helpful for staff in responding to children's behaviour are:

- What are the possible causes for the behaviour?
- Would the behaviour be addressed by the child developing some new skills?
- Is the behaviour appropriate for the child's age or developmental level?
- What is the goal of the behaviour? e.g. What is the child trying to communicate?
- Is the environment or the program contributing to the behaviour?
- What are my expectations about appropriate behaviour? Are they suitable in the circumstances?
- Are my interactions contributing to the behaviour?
- Are there triggers for the child's behaviour? What happened before the behaviour occurred? Are there times or situations when the behaviour is more likely to occur?
- Is there a change in the child's life that is affecting her or his behaviour?
- Do I need to seek assistance from another professional or engage or seek external support?
- Are all staff members aware of the approach to behaviour guidance and consistent in using the approach?

Consulting and referring with other professionals

Children's services may have access to a range of existing supports where referral for intervention is requested by staff members or family day carers.

When professionals from other support services become involved in assisting with a behaviour guidance program for a child, it is important that this is done in collaboration with staff members and parents. This gives everyone the opportunity for input and information about the strategies and expectations that are developed.

Additional support services

After evaluating a child's behaviour, discussing the situation with parents and the child where appropriate, and trying a range of strategies, the service may wish to consider consulting with and/or engaging support professionals. Parental permission would be needed in this instance.

Some early intervention professionals who will be of assistance are:

- Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS)
- Preschool Field Officers (PSFO)
- Inclusion Support Facilitators (ISF)
- paediatric services
- other health professionals such as psychologists,
- speech pathologists, or occupational therapists

SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/regulation/pracnotesbehavpol.pdf>
- Early Learning Association Australia: www.elaa.org.au

Service policies

- *Supervision of Children Policy*
- *Child Safe Environment Policy*

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITIES

Who is responsible for what?

- The committee is responsible for approving any changes to this policy.
- The staff are responsible for raising issues in line with this policy.

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Committee of Management/Board 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.

Date of Approval:

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Pinemont Pre-school on **2 May 2018**.

Date of Review: 02/05/2020