Glen Iris Child Care and Kindergarten

GI-019 – Interactions with Children Policy

Policy Number	GI-019
Quality Area	QA5 – Relationships with Children
National Law	s.166 • s.167
National Regulations	Regs. 155 • 156 • 168
Related NQS	QA5.1.1 • QA5.1.2 • QA5.2.1 • QA5.2.2
EYLF V2.0	Principles – Secure, Respectful and Reciprocal Relationships • Equity, Inclusion and High Expectations • Collaborative Leadership and Teamwork
Victorian Child Safe Standards:	Standards 2, 3, 4, 5 & 11
Version:	1.0
Approved By:	Centre Director
Approved Date:	July 2026
Review Date:	July 2027

OUR COMMITMENT

At **Glen Iris Child Care and Kindergarten**, we are committed to building warm, respectful and responsive relationships with every child. We believe that positive interactions form the foundation for children's learning, wellbeing, confidence and sense of belonging.

Educators intentionally create safe, inclusive and nurturing environments where children feel valued, listened to and supported to express themselves. Every interaction promotes dignity, respect and kindness while recognising each child's unique identity, culture, abilities and rights.

We are committed to maintaining high professional standards and ensuring all interactions with children reflect our Child Safe commitment, service philosophy and the principles of the Early Years Learning Framework.

LEGISLATIVE INTENT

This policy supports Glen Iris Child Care and Kindergarten in meeting its obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations by promoting respectful relationships, protecting children from harm and ensuring educators interact with children in ways that uphold their dignity, rights and wellbeing.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear expectations for respectful, responsive and positive interactions between educators and children.
This policy promotes children's safety, wellbeing, learning and development by ensuring every child experiences caring relationships, emotional security and environments where they feel respected, included and empowered.

WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO

This policy applies to:

- Approved Providers
- Centre Director
- Nominated Supervisor
- Responsible Persons
- Educational Leader
- Educators
- Administration Team
- Students
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Visitors

DEFINITIONS

Positive Interactions
Warm, respectful and responsive communication and relationships that promote children's wellbeing, learning, confidence and sense of belonging.

Dignity and Respect
Recognising every child's rights, individuality, culture, abilities and opinions, and treating them with kindness, fairness and compassion.

Co-regulation
The process of educators supporting children to understand and manage their emotions through calm, responsive and consistent interactions.

WHY THIS POLICY MATTERS

Positive relationships are central to children's learning, development and wellbeing.

Children thrive when they feel safe, respected and genuinely connected with the adults who care for them. Responsive interactions build trust, strengthen children's confidence, support emotional regulation and create opportunities for meaningful learning.

By developing strong relationships with children, educators foster a sense of belonging, encourage independence and support every child to participate confidently within the learning community.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Glen Iris Child Care and Kindergarten is committed to:

- Building trusting and respectful relationships with every child.
- Listening to and valuing children's voices.
- Supporting children's emotional wellbeing through responsive interactions.
- Promoting inclusion, equity and respect for diversity.
- Using positive guidance strategies that preserve children's dignity.
- Supporting children to develop confidence, resilience and independence.
- Maintaining professional and ethical conduct at all times.
- Providing environments where children feel safe, secure and valued.

OUR POLICY

Glen Iris Child Care and Kindergarten is committed to ensuring all interactions with children are warm, respectful, responsive and focused on promoting each child's wellbeing, learning and development.

Educators will build secure relationships through consistent, caring interactions, recognising children's individual strengths, interests, cultures and abilities. Children's voices will be respected, and educators will encourage children to express their ideas, emotions and opinions in ways that are meaningful to them.

Positive guidance strategies will be used to support children's developing social and emotional skills. Practices that humiliate, shame, threaten, intimidate or frighten children are strictly prohibited and are inconsistent with our commitment to child safety, professional practice and the rights of every child.

Children's dignity, safety and wellbeing will remain central to every interaction and decision made by educators.

HOW WE PUT THIS POLICY INTO PRACTICE

Building Positive Relationships

Educators at Glen Iris Child Care and Kindergarten will:

- Develop warm, trusting and respectful relationships with every child.
- Greet each child in a welcoming and genuine manner.
- Spend meaningful time engaging in children's play, conversations and learning.
- Demonstrate empathy, patience and kindness in every interaction.
- Respond consistently to children's individual needs, interests and strengths.
- Promote secure attachments by being emotionally available and responsive.

Respecting Children's Rights and Dignity

Educators will:

- Treat every child with dignity and respect.
- Listen to children's ideas, opinions and feelings.
- Encourage children to make choices appropriate to their age and development.
- Respect children's cultural identities, languages, family backgrounds and abilities.
- Support children's growing independence while providing appropriate guidance.
- Protect children's privacy during routines such as toileting, dressing and rest.

Positive Guidance

Glen Iris Child Care and Kindergarten believes children learn best through supportive relationships and positive guidance.

Educators will:

- Use calm, respectful communication.
- Support children to recognise and express their emotions appropriately.
- Guide children to solve problems and resolve conflicts peacefully.
- Model respectful behaviour and positive relationships.
- Redirect behaviour where appropriate while preserving children's dignity.
- Use co-regulation strategies to support children's emotional development.

The following practices are not permitted under any circumstances:

- Corporal punishment.
- Physical restraint unless required to protect immediate safety.
- Humiliation, ridicule or shaming.

- Threatening, intimidating or frightening children.
- Yelling at children.
- Withholding food, comfort, rest or access to toileting.
- Any practice that compromises a child's safety, wellbeing or dignity.

Supporting Children's Emotional Wellbeing

Educators will:

- Recognise children's emotional cues and respond sensitively.
- Support children through transitions and changes in routine.
- Encourage children to identify and communicate their feelings.
- Create calm, predictable learning environments.
- Build children's resilience through encouragement and positive reinforcement.

Inclusion and Respect for Diversity

The service will:

- Value every child's unique identity.
- Promote inclusive practices for all children.
- Celebrate diversity through the curriculum and learning environment.
- Ensure every child feels respected, safe and included.
- Work collaboratively with families to support children's individual needs.

Professional Practice

Educators will:

- Reflect on the quality of their interactions with children.
- Participate in professional learning that strengthens responsive practice.
- Follow the Child Safe Code of Conduct at all times.
- Seek guidance and support where additional strategies are required.
- Work collaboratively to maintain consistent expectations across the service.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Approved Provider

Will:

- Promote a culture that values respectful relationships with children.
- Ensure policies support children's rights, safety and wellbeing.
- Provide resources and professional learning that strengthen educator practice.

Centre Director

Will:

- Model positive interactions with children, families and educators.
- Monitor educator practice to ensure interactions align with service expectations.
- Provide coaching and support where improvements are required.
- Address concerns regarding inappropriate interactions promptly and professionally.
- Promote reflective practice across the service.

Educational Leader

Will:

- Support educators to strengthen relationship-based practice.
- Facilitate reflective discussions about interactions with children.
- Encourage intentional teaching that responds to children's strengths and interests.

- Promote evidence-informed approaches to positive guidance and co-regulation.

Educators
Will:

- Build respectful, responsive relationships with every child.
- Listen to and value children's voices.
- Use positive guidance strategies.
- Support children's emotional wellbeing and resilience.
- Maintain professional conduct at all times.
- Reflect on and continuously improve their interactions with children.

Students, Volunteers and Visitors
Will:

- Interact respectfully with children under the guidance of educators.
- Follow the Child Safe Code of Conduct and all service policies.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Report concerns regarding children's safety or wellbeing immediately.

GLEN IRIS IN PRACTICE

At Glen Iris Child Care and Kindergarten, relationships are at the heart of everything we do. Educators intentionally build meaningful connections with children by spending time alongside them, engaging in conversations, joining their play and responding to their interests with genuine care and curiosity.

Positive guidance is embedded throughout the day. Educators support children to understand their emotions, develop self-regulation skills and resolve conflicts respectfully through co-regulation, modelling and problem-solving. Every interaction is viewed as an opportunity to strengthen children's confidence, wellbeing and sense of belonging.

We recognise that every child is unique. Educators adapt their interactions to meet individual needs, respecting each child's personality, culture, communication style and stage of development while maintaining high expectations for respectful relationships across our learning community.

CHILDREN'S VOICE IN ACTION

Children are active participants in shaping their daily experiences.

Educators intentionally listen to children's ideas, questions, feelings and opinions, using these to inform decision-making, curriculum planning and daily routines.
Children are encouraged to make choices, express preferences, solve problems collaboratively and contribute to creating respectful learning environments.

By valuing children's voices, we strengthen their confidence, sense of agency and belonging while fostering respectful relationships built on trust and mutual respect.

EXCEEDING PRACTICE

Glen Iris Child Care and Kindergarten recognises that meaningful relationships are fundamental to children's learning, wellbeing and development.

Educators engage in ongoing critical reflection to evaluate the quality of their interactions, ensuring they remain responsive, respectful and inclusive. Through mentoring, professional learning and collaborative discussions, our team continually strengthens relationship-based practice and positive guidance strategies.

Our commitment extends beyond compliance. We intentionally create a culture where every child feels safe, heard, valued and empowered, and where relationships with children are recognised as the foundation of high-quality education and care.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Glen Iris Child Care and Kindergarten is committed to continuously strengthening the quality of interactions between educators and children.
This policy will be reviewed through:

- Children's feedback and participation.
- Family feedback.
- Educator self-reflection.
- Professional conversations and mentoring.
- Staff and leadership meetings.
- Critical reflection.
- Quality Improvement Plan goals.
- Changes to legislation or best practice guidance.
- Assessment and Rating outcomes.

Continuous improvement ensures our interactions remain respectful, responsive, child-focused and aligned with our commitment to providing safe, nurturing and inclusive environments.

RELATED LEGISLATION

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

- **s.166** – Offence to use inappropriate discipline.
- **s.167** – Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards.

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

- **Reg. 155 –** Interactions with children.
- **Reg. 156 –** Relationships in groups.
- **Reg. 168 –** Education and care service policies and procedures**.**

National Quality Standard
Quality Area 5 – Relationships with Children

- **QA5.1.1 –** Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
- **QA5.1.2 –** Dignity and the rights of every child are maintained.
- **QA5.2.1 –** Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.
- **QA5.2.2 –** Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) V2.0
Principles

- Secure, Respectful and Reciprocal Relationships
- Equity, Inclusion and High Expectations
- Collaborative Leadership and Teamwork

Practices

- Responsiveness to Children
- Holistic, Integrated and Interconnected Approaches
- Learning Through Play
- Cultural Responsiveness
- Collaborative Leadership and Teamwork

Outcomes

- **Outcome 1 – Children have a strong sense of identity.**
- **Outcome 3 – Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.**
- **Outcome 5 – Children are effective communicators.**

Victorian Child Safe Standards
This policy supports:

- **Standard 2** – Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
- **Standard 3** – Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
- **Standard 4** – Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- **Standard 5** – Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
- **Standard 11** – Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Guidance Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Educational Program and Practice Policy
- Inclusion and Equity Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Staff Recruitment and Induction Policy
- Volunteers and Students Policy

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The following documents support the implementation of this policy:

- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Educator Code of Conduct
- Professional Learning Records
- Staff Meeting Minutes
- Critical Reflection Records

- Children's Learning Documentation
- Individual Support Plans (where applicable)
- Family Communication Records
- Quality Improvement Plan

EVIDENCE OF PRACTICE

Glen Iris Child Care and Kindergarten demonstrates this policy through:

- Warm, respectful and responsive interactions between educators and children.
- Positive guidance and co-regulation strategies used consistently across the service.
- Children's voices informing curriculum planning and daily decision-making.
- Learning environments that promote inclusion, belonging and respectful relationships.
- Educator reflection on relationship-based practice.
- Ongoing professional learning in child development, behaviour guidance and child-safe practices.
- Collaborative partnerships with families to support children's wellbeing.
- Documentation demonstrating children's participation and agency.
- Quality Improvement Plan goals focused on strengthening relationships and educator practice.

REFLECTION & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Critical reflection supports our commitment to building meaningful relationships and ensuring every child experiences respectful, responsive interactions.

Reflective questions include:

- How do our interactions promote each child's sense of safety, belonging and wellbeing?
- In what ways do we actively listen to and value children's voices?
- How consistently do educators use positive guidance and co-regulation strategies?
- Do our interactions respect each child's culture, identity, abilities and individual needs?
- How do we model respectful relationships for children?
- What feedback have children, families and educators provided about the quality of our relationships?
- What opportunities exist to further strengthen relationship-based practice across the service?

Outcomes from these reflections inform policy reviews, professional learning, educator mentoring and our Quality Improvement Plan.

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Date Approved	Approved By	Summary of Changes
1.0	July 2026	Centre Director	Initial policy developed as part of the Glen Iris Child Care and Kindergarten Governance, Policy and Procedures Manual. Developed to align with the Education and Care Services National Law, National Regulations, National Quality Standard, EYLF V2.0 and Victorian Child Safe Standards.