

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE GUIDELINES



Child Youth & Family

1. Purpose and Intent

The City of Casey is committed to ensuring that all children and young people attending a Council managed Child, Youth and Family service, event or program are provided with a safe and secure environment. The City of Casey aims to build positive relationships between staff, children and young people, and will support children and young people to interact and develop respectful relationships.

2. Scope

These guidelines apply to the Approved Provider, Person with Management and Control (PMC), Nominated Supervisors, City of Casey employees, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents, children, young people, and others attending the programs and activities of Child Youth and Family services managed by the City of Casey.

3. Definitions

Key Term	Definition
Approved Provider	An individual or organisation, such as City of Casey, that has completed an application form and been approved by the Regulatory Authority as fit and proper (in accordance with Sections 12, 13 and 14 of the National Law) to operate one or more education and care services.
Nominated Supervisor	A person who is the Responsible Person in Day-to-Day Charge, and has been nominated by the Approved Provider (City of Casey) of the service under Part 3 of the Act to be the Nominated Supervisor of that service, and who has consented to that nomination. The Nominated Supervisor has day-to-day responsibility for the service in accordance with the National Regulations. All services must have a Nominated Supervisor.
Person with Management and Control	Individuals responsible for managing the delivery of a service or those who have significant influence over its activities. PMCs have specific legal obligations for ensuring compliance within early childhood education and care providers.

4. Background

Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each individual, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, wealth, birth status or ability. Developing responsive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships with children and young people promotes their wellbeing, self-esteem and sense of security. Positive interactions between educators/adults and children and young people can empower them to feel valued, competent and capable.

Child Safe Standards

The Victorian Child Safe Standards are a compulsory framework that supports City of Casey to embed child-safe culture into our everyday thinking, strategic planning and work practices. The standards include 11 requirements that organisations must implement to keep children and young people safe. The City of Casey supports the Child Safe Standards and is committed to creating and maintain a child-safe organisation where protecting children from abuse, harm and neglect is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of Council, its employees, contractors, students and volunteers. Council has zero tolerance of racism and expects staff, students and volunteers will act on incidents of racism.

Child Friendly Cities and Communities Charter

[Child Friendly Cities](#) is a global initiative that supports the rights of every child to grow up in an environment where:

- They feel safe and secure.
- Their voices are heard.
- They can play, learn and grow.

City of Casey is proud to be a Child Friendly City, endorsing the [Victorian Child Friendly Cities and Communities Charter](#).

5. Objective

Child Youth and Family are committed to ensuring each child and young person's health, wellbeing and safety needs are met whilst they attend Child Youth and Family managed services. This guideline outlines expectations and responsibilities to facilitate interactions with children and young people to ensure:

- Positive and respectful relationships are maintained with each child and young person attending children's services managed by the City of Casey.
- Each child and young person is supported to learn and develop in a secure and empowering environment.
- Each child and young person's behaviour is guided in a positive supportive and age-appropriate manner.

6. Responsibilities for this guideline

Child Youth and Family Management, Person with Management or Control or the Approved Provider	All Child Youth and Family • Provide strong leadership that supports a culture of child health and safety in the everyday practice of City of Casey employees. • Support the implementation of the Victorian Child Safe Standards legislation. • Provide robust induction procedures to ensure the practices outlined in this guideline are followed.
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	- Ensure staff are supported to gain appropriate training, knowledge and skills required for the implementation of these guidelines. Kindergarten Programs - Ensure educators are aware of the service expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour and acceptable responses and interactions when working with children and families. - Promote and foster children's sense of agency through all interactions and provide children with the right to make choices and opt in or out of experiences as they desire. - Ensure the size and composition of groups provides children with the best opportunities for quality interactions and relationships with each other and with adults at the service (Regulation 156(2)). - Ensure the service environment allows for natural surveillance. - Ensure inappropriate discipline such as punitive or degrading strategies, time out and punishments such as removal of privileges are not used by educators. - Ensure educators are aware that under National Law it is an offence to subject a child to inappropriate conduct (Section 166A). - Ensure educators are aware that it is an offence to subject a child to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive in the circumstances (National Law: Section 166). - Ensure the Department Education is informed in writing, within 24 hours of receiving a notifiable complaint or serious incident (Section 174(4), Regulation 176). - Ensure that agency educators, visitors, students and volunteers working at the service are aware of these guidelines, the legislation and City of Casey policies regarding positive, respectful and appropriate interactions with children.
Kindergarten teachers, educators and staff	- Adhere to legislation and City of Casey policies regarding positive, respectful and appropriate interactions with children and families. - Interact with children in a way that: - Encourages children to express themselves and their opinions. - Allows children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem. - Always maintains the dignity and the rights of each child, and - Encourages and focuses on the child's efforts or process in doing something, and what the child can do. - Respect cultural and family values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for (Regulation 155). - Immediately raise concerns with management if risks to child safety are identified. - Report and act on any complaints, concerns or breaches regarding child safety and protection.

	• Develop and implement strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children, including gaining consent from children for physical contact. • Ensure interactions with children are not hampered or obscured by the service environment, including clothing worn by the educator, enabling natural surveillance to occur. • Ensure the educational program contributes to the development of children who have a strong sense of wellbeing and identity, are connected, confident, involved and effective learners and communicators (Regulation 73). • Utilise appropriate discipline or behaviour guidance strategies supported by The Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). • Never subject a child to any form of conduct that a reasonable person would consider to be inappropriate at an education and care service, understanding that this is an offence (National Law Section 166A). • Organise learning environments in ways that promote small group interactions. • Maintain a democratic environment. • Initiate one-on-one interactions with children during daily routines. • Model explicit communication strategies to support children to initiate interactions and join in play and social experiences in ways that sustain productive relationships with other children. • Develop warm, responsive, and trusting relationships with children that promote a sense of security, confidence and inclusion. • Promote collaborative relationships between children, families and educators, staff and other professionals, to improve the quality of children's education and care experiences. • Use positive and respectful strategies to assist children to manage their own behaviour and to respond appropriately to conflict. • Communicate and work collaboratively with parents and families in relation to their child's learning, development, interactions, behaviour and relationships. • Always maintain privacy and confidentiality (refer to <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Guidelines</i>).
All Child Youth & Family staff	• Meet City of Casey's expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate interactions with children, young people and families. • Interact with children and young people in a way that: • Encourages them to express themselves and their opinions. • Allows them to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem. • Always maintains the dignity and the rights of each child and young person. • Encourages and focuses on the child or young person's skills and abilities. • Respects the cultural and family values, age, and the physical and intellectual development of the child or young person.

	• Develop and implement strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children and young people, including asking for consent. • Support each child to develop responsive relationships and to work and learn in collaboration with others. Ensure appropriate clothing is worn by staff so that it does not hinder or conceal interactions with children.
Parents/Guardians	• Immediately advise City of Casey staff of any concerns. Kindergarten Programs • Engage in open communication with educators about their child. • Inform educators/staff of events or incidents that may impact on their child's behaviour and development. • Inform educators/ staff of any concerns regarding their child's behaviour or the impact of other children's behaviour. • Collaborate with educators/staff and other professionals and support agencies to develop or review an individual behaviour plan for their child, where appropriate.

7. City of Casey Managed Kindergarten Programs

The following statements guide the philosophy, beliefs and values in Kindergarten Programs about relationships with children:

- Quality Interactions between educators and children and shape children's behaviour and learning.
- Creative and aesthetic play-based learning environments will maximise the opportunity for deeper connections with children that are genuine and authentic.
- Children are viewed as competent and capable learners who can contribute their views of the world and participate in decision making to influence their learning.
- City of Casey operated children's services are intentional in fostering each child's sense of wellbeing. Educators respect diversity and show understanding that others may have different views and beliefs and be open and honest communicators.

The Early Years Learning Framework and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)

The Early Years Learning Framework (Belonging, Being and Becoming) stipulates that "Having supportive relationships with the educators enables children to develop confidence in their ability to express themselves, work through differences, learn new things and take calculated risks" (*Guide to the National Quality Standard*).

The National Quality Standards detail the importance of positive interactions with children within all the quality areas, standards and elements, particularly Quality Areas 1, 5, and 6.

The VEYLDF outlines 8 Practice Principles for teaching birth to eight years, with Principle 4 speaking to respectful relationships and responsive engagement. This guideline also supports the five Early years Learning and Development Outcomes:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Regulation 155 of the National Regulations requires an Approved Provider of children's services to take reasonable steps to ensure that the service provides education and care to children in a way that encourages them to express themselves, and develop self-esteem and self-reliance, maintains their dignity and rights, provides positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour, and respects their cultural and family values.

Regulation 156 requires the Approved Provider to ensure that the service provides children with opportunities to interact and develop positive relationships with each other, and with the staff and volunteers at the service. To meet these requirements, the Approved Provider is expected to consider the size and composition of the groups in which the children are educated and cared for.

8. Associated documents and resources

This guideline should be read in conjunction with:

- Child Safe Environment guidelines
- Child Protection guidelines
- Complaints guidelines
- Privacy and Confidentiality guidelines
- Supervision guidelines
- Mental Health and Wellbeing guidelines
- City of Casey Code of Conduct
- City of Casey Appropriate Workplace Behaviours
- City of Casey Occupational Health and Safety Framework
- City of Casey Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- City of Casey Complaint Handling Policy
- [Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia](#)
- [Guide to the National Quality Standard – ACECQA](#)
- [Supporting Children to Regulate Their Own Behaviour – ACECQA](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework](#)

9. Relevant legislation

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 166, 167
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 73, 74, 155, 156, 157, 168(2)(j)
- Child Safe Standards
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children
- Early Childhood Legislation Amendment (Child Safety) Bill 2025

10. Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

All children or young people who attend services, programs, and events delivered by, and spaces owned or managed by the City of Casey, have the right to feel and be safe. The wellbeing and safety of children and young people in our care will always be our priority.

Council has zero-tolerance of child abuse and is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation where all children and young people are valued and protected from abuse, harm and neglect.

The City of Casey is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation where protecting children and young people from abuse, harm and neglect is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of Council, its employees, contractors and volunteers.

11. Monitoring, evaluation and review

The City of Casey will ensure:

- Regular monitoring of the implementation of this guideline and its associated documents including training and compliance.
- This guideline and its associated documents are kept up to date with current legislation, policy and best practice.
- Review and evaluation of this guideline and its associated documents as part of the service's review cycle, or as required.

Reviewed by:	CYF Policy Officer, Kindergarten Programs Leadership Team, People and Culture, Head of Early Years and Partnerships		
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12. Document History

Date changed	Change Type

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