



**ACT**  
Government  
Education

# ACT PUBLIC PRESCHOOLS INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

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**Education Directorate**

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## Glossary

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Regulatory authority</b>	Children’s Education and Care Assurance (CECA), who undertake investigation, compliance, enforcement and assessment and rating functions against the <a href="#">National Quality Standard</a> .
<b>Approved provider</b>	Approved providers must operate approved services that meets the obligations in the <a href="#">National Law</a> . Approved providers must exercise effective leadership, governance and management to meet their legal obligations. Providers must also employ suitably qualified and experienced nominated supervisors, educational leaders, coordinators and educators.  In the case of government preschools in the ACT, the approved provider is the ACT Education Directorate.
<b>Setting</b>	An early childhood education and care service (centre-based) under the <a href="#">National Law</a> that provide education and care services. For the purposes of this procedure, these settings are public preschools (managed by ACT Education Directorate as the approved provider and undertaking the government preschool program for four-year-olds).
<b>Enrolment</b>	The term used for the administrative procedure by which a person becomes a student of an education provider.
<b>Orientation</b>	The act of supporting familiarity and understanding with reference to a setting, processes and people.
<b>Placement</b>	The process of allocating a student to a particular preschool.
<b>Preschool age</b>	A child is considered of preschool age if they turn 4 prior to 30 April during the year they start preschool.
<b>Guardian</b>	A person who is legally responsible for the care and wellbeing of a child.
<b>Authorised person</b>	A parent* or family member of a child who is being educated and cared for by an ACT public preschool; or an authorised nominee of a parent or family member of a

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	<p>child who is being educated and cared for by an ACT public preschool.</p> <p>* Does not include a parent who is prohibited by a court order from having contact with the child.</p>
<b>Authorised nominee</b>	A person who has been given permission by a parent or family member to collect a child enrolled in an ACT public preschool.
<b>Nominated supervisor</b>	<p>As part of an application for service approval, approved providers must identify the nominated supervisor for the service. The nominated supervisor must be over 18 years old, have adequate knowledge and understanding of the provision of education and care to children, and have the ability to effectively supervise and manage an education and care service.</p> <p>In the case of government preschools in the ACT, the nominated supervisor tends to be the principal of the associated school campus.</p>
<b>Person in day-to-day charge</b>	<p>The approved provider and/or nominated supervisor needs to designate a responsible person to be placed in day-to-day charge of a service if the approved provider and/or nominated supervisor is not present. The person in day-to-day charge must be over 18 years old, have adequate knowledge and understanding of the provision of education and care to children, and have the ability to effectively supervise and manage an education and care service.</p> <p>The person nominated to be in day-to-day charge must accept this responsibility in writing. The nominated person must have adequate knowledge and understanding of the provision of education and care to children and be able to effectively manage a service.</p> <p>A record that demonstrates who is the responsible person in day-to-day charge should be in place. Being in day-to-day charge of a service does not place any additional legal responsibilities on the person under the <a href="#">National Law</a>. The responsibilities relevant to educators under the <a href="#">National Law</a> continue to apply.</p> <p>An approved provider does not have to appoint a person in day-to-day charge if a nominated supervisor(s) or an approved provider is to be the responsible person in attendance during service operational hours.</p>
<b>Educators</b>	Qualified staff who work directly with children to meet their developmental and educational needs. It includes staff who are tertiary qualified teachers.
<b>Educational leader</b>	The <a href="#">National Law</a> requires approved providers to designate, in writing, a suitably qualified and experienced educator, coordinator or other individual as educational leader.
<b>Blue Book</b>	Personal Child Health Record used to record a child's health, illnesses, injuries, growth and development.
<b>Centre-based service</b>	An education and care service other than a family day care service.
<b>Obligations to notify</b>	Approved providers and services have an obligation to notify CECA about incidents, complaints and changes to information about the approved provider or approved service. This includes serious incidents, complaints and circumstances where the health, safety or wellbeing of children may have been put at risk.

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## Obligations

ACT Public Preschools must meet the obligations of the [National Law](#), including Regulation 168, which states that education and care services must have policies and procedures in relation to the following:

- health and safety, including matters relating to:
  - nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements;
  - sun protection;
  - water safety, including safety during any water-based activities;
  - the administration of first aid; and
  - sleep and rest for children.
- incident, injury, trauma and illness procedures;
- dealing with infectious diseases;
- dealing with medical conditions in children;
- emergency and evacuation;
- delivery of children to, and collection of children from, education and care service premises;
- excursions;
- providing child-safe environments;
- staffing, including:
  - a code of conduct for staff members;
  - determining the responsible person present at the service; and
  - the participation of volunteers and students on practicum placements.
- interactions with children;
- enrolment and orientation;
- governance and management of the service, including confidentiality of records;
- the acceptance and refusal of authorisations;
- payment of fees and provision of a statement of fees charged by the education and care service; and
- dealing with complaints.

## 1. Overview

- 1.1. This procedure outlines strategies for the development of positive respectful relationships with each child enrolled at a public preschool.
- 1.2. Each child enrolled at a public preschool is supported to learn and develop in a secure and empowering environment.

## 2. Rationale

- 2.1. It is important that all educators are aware that responsive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships with children promote their wellbeing, self-esteem, sense of security and belonging.
- 2.2. The following procedures are in place to ensure that constructive interactions and shared learning opportunities form the basis of equitable reciprocal relationships between educators and children and that these relationships are encouraged between children.
- 2.3. The United National 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.
- 2.4. Developing responsive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships with children promotes their well-being, self-esteem and sense of security.
- 2.5. Positive interactions between educators, other adults and children can empower children to feel valued, competent and capable.
- 2.6. Interactions which actively engage children in their learning and decision-making during play, daily routines and ongoing activities can stimulate children's thinking, enrich their learning and encourage them to explore and manage their feelings and behaviours.
- 2.7. Maintaining supportive relationships with the nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and staff members enables children to develop confidence in their ability to express themselves, work through differences, learn new things and take calculated risks.
- 2.8. [Regulation 155](#) of the National Law requires an approved provider to take reasonable steps to ensure that education and care is provided to children in a way that encourages them to express themselves, and develop self-reliance and self-esteem, maintains their dignity and rights, provides positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour, and respects their cultural and family values.
- 2.9. [Regulation 156](#) of the National Law 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.
- 2.10. [Section 166](#) of the National Law requires that no child being educated and cared for

is subject to any form of corporal discipline or any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances.

### 3. Values

3.1. In their interactions with children and their families all educators at public preschools are committed to:

- maintaining the dignity and rights of each child at the preschool;
- encouraging children to express themselves and their opinions, and to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem considering the health, safety and wellbeing of each child, and providing a safe, secure and welcoming environment in which they can develop and learn;
- maintaining a duty of care towards all children at the preschool;
- considering the diversity of individual children at the service, including family and cultural values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child;
- building collaborative relationships with families to improve learning and development outcomes for children;
- encouraging positive, respectful, and warm relationships between children, educators and staff at the preschool; and
- developing consistency of high-quality practice amongst staff members.

### 4. Scope

4.1. These guidelines apply to the nominated supervisor, responsible person in day-to-day charge, educators, teacher education students, volunteers, parents and guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of the public preschool.

### 5. Procedures

*Educational Leader (in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor) responsibilities*

- 5.1. Developing and implementing the *Interactions with Children Policy* at the service. Ensuring educators, staff and parents/guardians are provided with a copy of the Policy and comply with its requirements.
- 5.2. Ensuring all staff are aware of the service's expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and reactions when working with children and families.
- 5.3. Ensuring children are adequately supervised, that educator-to-child ratios are always maintained, and the environment is safe, secure and free from hazards considering the size and composition of groups when planning program timetables to ensure all children are provided with the best opportunities for quality interactions and relationships with each other and with adults at the service.

- 5.4. Overseeing the development and implementation of educational programs, in accordance with an approved learning framework, that are based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and that consider the individual differences of each child.
- 5.5. Ensuring the educational program contributes to the development of children who have a strong sense of wellbeing and identity, and are connected, confident, involved and effective learners and communicators ensuring that educators provide education and care to 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;
  - maintains the dignity and the rights of each child at all times;
  - offers positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour;
  - has regard to the cultural and family values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for;
  - ensuring clear and straightforward documentation of the assessment and evaluation of each child's;
    - developmental needs, interests, experiences and program participation; and
    - progress against the outcomes of the educational program organising appropriate training for educators/staff to assist with the implementation of this policy.
- 5.6. Ensuring educators and all staff members at the service who work with children 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.
- 5.7. Ensuring that procedures are in place for effective daily communication with parents and guardians to share information about children's learning, development, interactions, behaviour and relationships informing School Operations of any notifiable complaints or serious incidents at the preschool.
- 5.8. Ensuring that where the service has been notified of a court order prohibiting an adult from contacting an enrolled child, such contact does not occur while the child is on the service premises.
- 5.9. Ensuring educators and staff use positive and respectful strategies to assist children to manage their own behaviour, and to respond appropriately to conflict and the behaviour of others.
- 5.10. Ensuring that an individual learning plan is created to support children as required.
- 5.11. Co-operating with other services and/or professionals to support children and their families, where required.

5.12. Maintaining confidentiality at all times.

*Educator responsibilities*

5.13. Assisting with the development and implementation of the *Interactions with Children Policy*, in consultation with the approved provider, nominated supervisor, parents and guardians and families.

5.14. Providing copies of the Policy to parents and guardians and families.

5.15. Complying with the requirements of the Policy.

5.16. Being aware of service expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour, and acceptable responses and reactions when working with children and families.

5.17. Providing adequate supervision of children at all times.

5.18. Communicating and working collaboratively with parents and guardians and families in relation to their child's learning, development, interactions, behaviour and relationships.

5.19. Delivering educational programs, in accordance with an approved learning framework, that are based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and that consider the individual differences of each child.

5.20. Delivering programs that develop a sense of wellbeing and identity, connection to community, and provide skills for lifelong learning in all children.

5.21. Providing education and care to 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;
- maintains the dignity and the rights of each child at all times;
- offers positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour;
- has regard to the cultural and family values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for;
- developing warm, responsive and trusting relationships with children that promote a sense of security, confidence and inclusion; and
- supporting each child to develop responsive relationships, and to work and learn in collaboration with others.

5.22. Using positive and respectful strategies to assist children to manage their own behaviour, and to respond appropriately to conflict and the behaviour of others.

5.23. Documenting assessments and evaluations for each child to inform the educational program.

5.24. Being 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 maintaining confidentiality at all times.

#### *Parent and guardian responsibilities*

- 5.25. Reading and complying with the *Interactions with Children Policy*.
- 5.26. Engaging in open communication with educators about their child.
- 5.27. Informing educators and staff of events or incidents that may impact on their child's behaviour at the preschool.
- 5.28. Informing educators and staff of any concerns regarding their child's behaviour or the impact of others.
- 5.29. Working collaboratively with educators and staff and other professionals and support agencies to develop or review an individual behaviour guidance plan for their child, where appropriate.

### **6. Contact**

- 6.1. The Director, School Improvement is responsible for this procedure.
- 6.2. For support contact School Operations on 6205 3313 or email [SchoolOperations@act.gov.au](mailto:SchoolOperations@act.gov.au)

### **7. Monitoring and review**

- 7.1. The procedure owner will be responsible for monitoring the procedure through annual scans. A full review will occur as necessary, or within a three-year period.

### **8. Complaints**

- 8.1. Any concerns about the application of this procedure or the procedure itself, should be raised with:
  - the school principal in the first instance;
  - the Directorate Feedback and Complaints team on (02) 6205 5429 or through the [online form](#); and
  - ACT Education's Regulatory Authority, Children's Education and Care Assurance on [\(02\) 6207 1114](tel:0262071114) or [complaintsCECA@act.gov.au](mailto:complaintsCECA@act.gov.au).
- 8.2. For more information also refer to the [Complaints Policy](#) on the Directorate's website.

### **9. Related Policies and Implementation Documents**

- 9.1. Curriculum Requirements Policy
- 9.2. Curriculum Requirements in ACT Public Schools, Preschool to Year 10
- 9.3. Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
- 9.4. Respectful Relationships Education
- 9.5. Safe Supportive Schools Policy

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## 9.6. Safe Supportive Schools Procedures

### 9.7. Additional information:

- Building Positive Partnerships
- Managing Behaviours Safely Risk Management Approach
- National Safe Schools Framework
- PBSP Protective Action Plan Flowchart and Template
- Restrictive Practices FAQ's
- Use of Withdrawal Space Factsheet
- Working together with you school

## 10. References

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- [National Quality Standard and Assessment and Rating](#)