

CR1 INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES – POLICY AND PROCEDURE

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES POLICY

Policy Statement

The purpose of the *Interactions with Children and Families Policy* at Little.ly Early Learning Centre is to build positive relationships with families and children through positive interactions and collaboration. Ultimately families and children will feel safe, secure, and supported.

Scope

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of the Service.

Background

Research shows children are much more likely to reach their full potential in life when their family and education and care service work together.

At Little.ly Early Learning Centre we see families and children as an extension of our family, and we take our responsibility to deliver high quality care and education to heart.

We believe that more than anything the relationships we build and maintain with families and children are vital to achieve this. These relationships directly affect how children form their own identity, whether or not they and their families feel safe and supported, and ultimately, their sense of belonging.

Legislative Requirements

National Quality Standards

Quality Area 5 and 6		
1.2.1	Intentional Teaching	Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.
1.2.2	Responsive teaching and scaffolding	Educators respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions, and feedback.
1.3.3	Information for families	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.
5.1	Relationships between children and educators	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.
6.1	Supportive relationship 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 in 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.
6.2	Collaborative relationships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
6.2.1	Transitions	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.
6.2.2	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program
6.2.3	Community engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

Education and Care Services National Regulations

155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups

Principles that Inform our Policy

All decision making about our *Interactions with Children and Families Procedures* are carried out in accordance with the principles of our *Interactions with Children and Families Policy*.

Little.ly Early Learning Centre is committed to developing and maintaining positive relationships with families and children. Interactions can include verbal language or the use of body language. This also includes completing a task or playing with and alongside children. Staff should be aware of how to be intentional during their interactions. All staff will comply with EYLF principles

1. Secure, respectful, and reciprocal relationships
2. Partnerships

Educators will actively make time to have positive interactions with children one on one and in groups. They will listen, respond, and consider the children's thoughts. This will build trust and respect that will allow the child and educators to work together and create a thriving learning environment

Educators will respect families as the child's first person. Building trusting relationships and providing support in their parenting role. Educators will value families as a main resource and collaborate with them to establish a transparent and consistent routine and learning plan for the child. Families should feel that the staff members are approachable and can address any concerns or queries they may have.

Key Terms

Term	Meaning	Source
Transparent	Readily understood and characterised by visibility or accessibility of information especially concerning business practices	Merriam-Webster Dictionary
Respectful Relationship	Is about valuing people, including people who are different. When you have a respectful relationship, it means you can accept them for who they are and vice versa.	www.qld.gov.au
Reciprocal Relationships	means a relationship of mutual benefit – exchanging things with someone or a group of people to get something in return.	The Free Dictionary

Links to other Policies

- Education and Care Services National Regulation 2015.
- National Quality Standards.
- Early Years Learning Framework – respectful relationships and partnerships https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-02/belonging_being_and_becoming_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia.pdf
- Respectful Relationships. <http://www.cscentral.org.au/Resources/Publications/respectful-relationships.pdf>
- Revised National Quality Standard.

Induction and Ongoing Training

Little.ly requires that induction and ongoing training of all staff include the *Interactions with Children and Families Policy* to enable staff to fulfill their roles effectively. In addition Little.ly promotes information sharing at staff meetings, sharing of information received from industry trends or changes in legislation, and in consultation at policy review sessions.

Policy Created / Reviewed

Policy Created / Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
Implemented February 2019		February 2020
February 2020	Updated references to comply with the Revised National Quality Standard.	February 2021
August 2021	Reviewed policy following endorsement of the ECEC package	August 2022

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or on occurrence of any relevant legislative change. Management of Little.ly will conduct reviews in consultation with educators at staff meetings.

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES PROCEDURE

Interactions with Children

Management, educators, and staff will:

- have a welcoming atmosphere on arrival and during the day
- treat every child fairly and with equity
- at all times use appropriate positive language with children and be friendly
- role model appropriate positive language with staff
- encourage children to talk about and be aware of their emotions
- be responsive when children are talking by getting down to their level and giving eye contact
- not rush children when talking
- refrain from talking for children where they can speak for themselves
- (in regard to non-verbal children, babies and toddlers) make sure they talk to the child often, smile and use facial expressions
- use positive body language when engaging with children
- encourage children to have positive interactions and relationships with peers
- praise and encourage children when demonstrating pro social behaviour
- use language that builds confidence and resilience
- engage in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning of children
- consider the child's temperament and interact accordingly
- celebrate the uniqueness of each child and encourage others to
- make efforts to speak in the child's language
- take each child seriously and respond respectfully to their suggestions
- be intentional with interactions – be purposeful when asking questions and engaging in conversation including focusing on behaviour you want and refraining from using words such as 'no', 'don't', 'naughty', 'you can't' and other negative-based phrases
- never isolate a child at the service other than when they are ill or have had an accident
- engage in reflective practice and consider how they are interacting with children and develop steps for improvement if needed.

Interactions with families

Management, educators, and staff will:

- greet families when arrive to the centre
- always use positive verbal and body language with families
- be mindful of terminology when speaking to families, check and make sure families are understanding and on the same page
- treat families without judgement and recognise them for who they are
- establish two-way communication with families and open discussions
- be respectful and never discuss a child in front of other families
- share information about their child often and respectfully
- when required, make effort to arrange meetings and catch ups
- share daily and education-information specific to their child regularly
- remain sensitive of cultural difference and encourage incorporating and sharing this in the room
- always respect the parent as the first person and seek permission for all care practices and decision regarding their child
- go above and beyond to answer families' questions or gather additional information they request
- develop understanding of the best way to communicate to family and endeavour to use this – such as by email, phone call or in person
- regularly reflect on family input into the program and make changes where necessary
- engage in reflective practice and consider how they are interacting with families and develop steps for improvement if needed.