Bullying, Violence and Harassment Policy

Policy Statement:
All children who attend the Centre have the right to enjoy their play and friendships, and participate in the activity program within a supportive environment and among people who are caring and co-operative. The Centre staff will encourage children to speak about any concerns they may have, and will ensure the program reflects and encourages core values such as friendliness, acceptance, respect, kindness, tolerance and co-operation. Staff will always listen and respond to children when incidents of bullying, violence or harassment are reported or observed, and will act to eliminate such incidents at the Centre.

Procedures:

Violence & Superhero Play
It is accepted that children will often be exposed to television coverage of violence and war activities, and shows or computer programs involving Superheros, and through this exposure may be familiar with guns and warfare activities. This may then be displayed through children’s play. Centre staff will promote positive, peaceful, caring and inclusive interactions within the outside school hours care environment, and respect and tolerance for others.

Children who engage in Superhero play will be reminded of the need to respect and care for other people and their environment, and that they have no special rights because of being a Superhero.

Staff will help all children to understand how their behaviour affects others and will ensure children’s self initiated play:
- Does not make any other child feel frightened or intimidated
- Respects the rights and feelings of others
- Is not overly boisterous or loud
- Is valued and supported.

Staff will model behaviour that encourages inclusion, a sense of fairness, empathy and co-operation with others. The Centre actively discourages the making of guns or other weapons for fantasy play within the child care environment. Toy guns or other weapons are not to be brought to the Centre, or purchased as equipment.

Staff will discuss with parents any concerns or observations they may have in regard to children’s fantasy play and decide, with parents, how any antisocial or warlike behaviour exhibited during play is to be managed.

Bullying
The Centre will develop a “Bill of Rights” (with the children’s input and written in their language) for everyone who attends the Centre. The “Bill of Rights” will be reviewed with each new group of children to ensure it is understood and accepted.

Staff will discuss the issue of bullying behaviour with children and make it clear that this kind of behaviour is not acceptable at the Centre. Children will be encouraged to speak to staff if they see (or are subjected to) bullying behaviour. They will also be encouraged to refuse to be involved in any bullying situation.
Whenever an incident of bullying is reported to, or observed by a staff member, they will:

- Intervene immediately to stop the bullying behaviour.
- Talk to the children involved separately. If more than one child is involved in perpetrating the bullying, talk to each child separately, in quick succession.
- Consult with other staff members to get a wider reading on the problem, and to alert them to the incident.
- Minor incidents will be resolved with positive guidance to redirect and reassure the children involved, and aim to achieve reconciliation between the children.
- Staff will understand that bullies often try to minimise or deny their actions and responsibilities. Staff will refer to the Centre’s “Bill of Rights” when telling the child why their behaviour was unacceptable. They will tell them what behaviour they do expect of them, and inform them that a further incident will result in specific (non-violent) sanctions being imposed, and their parents being informed.
- Staff will reassure the child that has been affected by the bullying of another that all possible steps will be taken to prevent a re-occurrence of the bullying, and will ensure that appropriate measures are taken to achieve this i.e. careful monitoring of the children involved; establishment of a signal system for the victim to call for help etc.
- Any serious or repeated incidents will be reported to parents. Parents of both children will be informed as soon as practicable. Depending on the situation this could be immediately, through a telephone call, or when the parents collect their children at the end of the day.
- Parents will be involved in designing a creative action plan whenever possible.
  o For children on the receiving end of bullying behaviour, this may involve helping the child to make appropriate friends and develop their social skills and confidence. Specific instruction in assertiveness skills may also be helpful.
  o For children who have displayed bullying behaviour the plan would involve specific programs to modify their behaviour, including increased supervision, anger management skills, praise and recognition for their efforts towards non-violent responsible behaviour, in addition to sanctions such as a removal of privileges. If incidents of bullying are very serious or repeated and cannot be resolved, and the child endangers the safety and enjoyment of other children or staff at the program, they may be suspended on a temporary or permanent basis.

Staff will teach children caring, non-violent, co-operative and tolerant ideas, values and behaviours through:

- Recognising and praising positive, friendly and supportive behaviours of children towards each other;
- Modelling positive, respectful, inclusive and nurturing behaviours towards children, families and other staff;
- Planning and implementing co-operative, non-competitive activities.

Parents are asked to tell a staff member if there is a bullying incident, or if they suspect that bullying has occurred. Parents are also asked to support the Centre’s “Bill of Rights” and emphasise the importance of courtesy, consideration and co-operation in everyday life to their child.
Staff will be given opportunities to attend training that will assist them to:
  - identify bullying behaviour;
  - resolve conflicts;
  - manage groups of children; and
  - be assertive.

**Staff will** encourages the children to express themselves and their opinions

- allows the children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem
- maintains at all times the dignity and rights of each child
- gives each child positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour, and
- has regard to family and cultural values, age, physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child.

**Sources:**
Children, Youth & Women’s Health Service – Child & Youth Health – [www.cyh.com](http://www.cyh.com)
Department for Community Development Factsheets – [www.community.wa.gov.au](http://www.community.wa.gov.au)
Parents Leadership Institute – [www.parentleaders.org/articles.htm](http://www.parentleaders.org/articles.htm)
OSHCQA Quality Practices Guide – Principles: 1.1, 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 5.3; 7.1
Children & Community Services (Outside School Hours Care) Regulations 2007 –

**NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK**
Interactions with children *National Regulations: regulation 155*

**Education and Care Services National Regulations** – Reg 75(g); 81(2); 85; 87
**National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care (Nov 2010)** – Element 1.1.1; Element 2.3.1; Element 2.3.4; Element 4.2.1; Element 4.2.2; Element 4.3.1; Element 4.3.2; Element 5.1.1; Element 5.1.2; Element 5.2.1; Element 5.2.2; Element 5.3.1; Element 5.3.2; Element 6.2.1

**Early Years Learning Framework for Australia** – Principles: 1. Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships; 4. Respect for diversity – Practice: Holistic approaches; Responsiveness to children; Cultural competence; Continuity of learning and transitions – Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 5

**Framework for School Age Care in Australia** – Principles: 1. Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships; 4. Respect for diversity – Practice: Holistic approaches; Collaboration with children; Cultural competence; Continuity and transitions – Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 5