EARLY LEARNING CENTRE INTERACTIONS
WITH CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND STAFF

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD RELATED STANDARDS/REGULATIONS

Standard 5.1 Relationships between educators and children
  Element 5.1.1 Positive educator to child interactions: Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships with engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
  Element 5.1.2 Dignity and rights of the child: The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.

Standard 6.1 Supportive relationships with families
  Element 6.1.1 Engagement with the service: Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
  Element 6.1.2 Parent 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.
  Element 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.

Standard 7.1 Governance
  Element 7.1.1 Service philosophy and purpose: A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service’s operations.
  Element 7.1.3 Roles and responsibilities: Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood and support effective decision making and operation of the service.

Standard 7.2 Leadership
  Element 7.2.3 Development of professionals: Educators’, co-ordinators’ and staff members’ performance is regularly evaluated and individual plans are in place to support learning and development.

Regulation 155 Interactions with children
Regulation 156 Relationships in groups
AIM
To build and maintain positive and respectful relationships with children, families and Educators, as per the ELC Philosophy and CGGS Code of Conduct.

EXPLANATION
We aim to build positive relationships with children, families and Educators through collaboration and interactions, which is reflective in the ELC Philosophy, the Early Years Learning Framework and the Primary Years Program. Educators and staff will encourage positive relationships between children and their peers as well as with Educators, staff and families at the ELC, ensuring children feel safe, secure and supported.

PRACTICE
INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN
Children need positive relationships with Educators and staff that are trusting and responsive to their needs.

To this end, Management, Educators and all ELC staff will:

- Create a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere in which children experience equitable, friendly and genuine interactions with all Educators and staff.
- Greet children by name.
- Use appropriate language and behavioural all times, acting as a role model for all children.
- Support children to develop an awareness of their own feelings as well as the feelings of others.
- Encourage children to treat other children with respect.
- Provide children with the opportunity to explore their dispositions for learning by expressing themselves and their opinions.
- Assist the children to build resilience and self-assurance through positive interactions.
- Guide children’s behaviour positively.
- Respect the rights of children.
- Support children in all aspects of the environment.
- Speak to children in a positive manner at all times, promoting respect, tolerance and empathy; this includes children using non-verbal cues.
- Engage in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning of children.
- Respect each child’s uniqueness, are attuned to and respond sensitively and appropriately to children’s efforts to communicate and will use the child’s own language, communication styles and culture to enhance their interactions.
- Listen to children and take them seriously.
- Support and encourage children to use appropriate language in their interactions with adults and peers.
• Extend upon children’s interests and ideas through questions and discussions, supported in observations, reflections and programming.
• Communicate with children by getting down to their level, showing respect to the child whilst promoting effective communication and eye contact.
• Show empathy to children.
• Ensure that the values, beliefs and cultural practices of the child and family are considered and respected.
• Refrain from any words, actions or references, real or implied, that refer negatively to a person’s race, religion, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics.
• No child is ever isolated for any reason other than illness, accident or pre-arranged appointment with parental consent. During this time they will be under adult supervision.
• Regularly reflect on their relationships and interactions with children and how these can be improved to benefit each child.
• Challenge each child’s individual development.

INTERACTION WITH FAMILIES
Effective communication is the key to developing and maintaining positive interactions and relationships with others. Educators and staff working within the ELC aim to build positive partnerships with parents and families through open, respectful, communication, thus creating a responsive and inclusive environment for all.

Management, Educators and all ELC staff will:
• Treat all families equitably without bias or judgement; recognising that each family is unique.
• Refrain from any words, actions or references, real or implied, that refer negatively to a person’s race, religion, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics.
• Greet families and children upon arrival, by name where possible.
• Promote two way communication, through leading by example and asking questions.
• Use common terminology when talking to parents regarding their child’s development, or provide context and explanation for educational terms used for a specific purpose.
• Never discuss a child or family’s information with another parent or visitor.
• Remain sensitive to cultural differences amongst families and encourage families to share cultural aspects with the children, Educators and staff at the ELC.
• Seek the advice and opinion from experts, with family permission, to help with regards to a child with additional needs, or support a family through resources available from the School (eg. School Counsellor) or other agencies (eg. speech therapy, occupational therapy).
• Ensure verbal communication is always open, respectful and honest.
• Provide families with up to date information and notices through regular SeeSaw posts, classroom displays and signage, emails and informal verbal communication.
• Reflect on family input into the program and make changes where necessary that will best benefit the Service and children.
INTERACTIONS WITH EDUCATORS AND STAFF

The ELC recognises that the way Educators and staff interact with each other has an effect on the interactions they have with children and families. Staff are required to demonstrate mutual respect towards each other and value the contributions made by each other. This enables individuals to maintain positive relations and model the type of communication that we want children to develop.

To maintain professionalism at all times, Educators and staff will:

- Maintain professional conduct at all times, in order to create an effective work environment and to build a positive relationship with Educators, staff, children and families. This includes being self reflective and self aware, and monitoring non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, tone of voice, body language and attitude.
- Refrain from any words, actions or references, real or implied, that refer negatively to a person’s race, religion, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics.
- Adhere to policies, procedures, timetables and rosters.
- Greet each other by name.
- Recognise that effective communication amongst colleagues creates a positive atmosphere and a professional Service for families. Show genuine interest when communicating with others, by using active and reflective listening.
- Recognise each other’s strengths and value the different work each does.
- Ensure information is being passed on from families to different aspects of the Program, and that consistency occurs.
- Collaborate together as a team, sharing room roles and responsibilities.
- Be respectful when listening to each other’s point of view and ideas, and of diverse views and perspectives.
- Use staff meetings to communicate professional reflections and ideas for continuous improvement as a team. Work collaboratively to reach decisions which will enhance the quality of the Education and care offered at the Service.
- Attend professional development courses to update and refresh individual skills and knowledge.
- Develop and share networks and links with other agencies.
- Raise issues or concerns with other staff members in private, rather than in front of others, particularly children or families.
- Resolve differences promptly and positively and using the experience to learn more effective methods of working together.

Policy reviewed and updated by ELC staff: 23/5/2018