

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Quality Area 2.2 and 5.2

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect the health and safety of all children, educators, volunteers and staff, Sorrento Community Centre has zero tolerance towards bullying behaviour; this includes children, teachers, volunteers, staff and parents.
- To ensure that everyone who is involved in Sorrento Early Learning can work in an environment free from bullying
- To ensure that children are treated respectfully, consistently, fairly and equitably
- To ensure that children are supported to develop age-appropriate behaviour and self-regulation skills

OUR VISION FOR SORRENTO EARLY LEARNING

Our vision is to aspire for excellence in the provision of early childhood services through the creation of a safe, extended family environment and the development of a community of learners where educators, parents and other adults are committed to the children's education and wellbeing.

BROAD GUIDELINES FOR THIS POLICY

- All children have the right to be able to relax, play, join in and learn in a wide range of activities, protected from activities that could harm their development
- Children will be educated on bullying and the consequences of these actions.
- All complaints are treated seriously and confidentially.
- The Centre encourages open and frank communication between children, between educators and staff and with parents
- Every effort is made to deal with bullying in a positive and productive way

PROCEDURES

- It is the responsibility of everyone involved in Sorrento Community Centre and Sorrento Early Learning to refrain from bullying others, and discourage bullying when it occurs, and offer support to those who are the victims of bullying.
- The seriousness and severity of the bullying will be assessed and appropriate action taken. Identified bullying behaviour that continues despite interventions by staff, will be addressed with the parents of the perpetrator (not the victim of the bullying).

This may include any, or a combination of any of the following: counselling, warning, the imposition of sanctions, apology, interview/s with parent/guardian, mediation and in extreme cases suspension.

- Early Childhood Staff will discourage all forms of bullying and provide a safe method for children to report bullying.
- Every effort will be made to educate children on bullying and the consequences of these actions. Staff will encourage children to communicate with each other in a positive and supportive manner.

Identifying Bullying

Staff can identify bullying as follows, and ensure that bullying is dealt with quickly and in a positive and productive way.

- Aggression and learning to not be aggressive is part of a child's growing and learning process, and reaches its peak between 24 and 42 months, then decreases steadily.
While these behaviours are part of the growth process, when directed towards the same children over an extended period of time, they can have serious effects. Educators, volunteers and staff are constantly watching out for these continuing behaviours.
- The most common types of bullying within the early childhood setting are physical and verbal, and to a lesser extent social isolation
 - Physical bullying includes hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, etc. While many of these behaviours occur as part of the process of growing and learning, when they are directed towards the same children over an extended period of time, they can have serious effects.
 - Verbal bullying includes calling children names, taunting them, making racist or sexist statements, making cruel statements about personal attributes, clothing, etc.
 - Social isolation occurs when particular children are excluded from activities and games by other children in a group. Young children form very fluid friendships and may change allegiances regularly so again the distinguishing characteristic is if it is the same child/ren being excluded over time.
- Bullied children more often than not remain silent, but may display signs such as a sudden reluctance to attend child care, separation anxiety and/or withdrawn behaviour.
- Bullying is repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a person or group of persons that creates a risk to their health and safety. It includes behaviour that could be expected to intimidate, offend, degrade, humiliate, undermine or threaten.
- Repeated behaviour is persistent and can involve a range of behaviours over time. The most common type of bullying in the early childhood setting are physical and verbal, and to a lesser extent social isolation.

The following Regulations apply to Sorrento Community Centre Early Learning –

National Quality Standard & Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety and
Quality Area 5: Relationships between Children
Children's Services Regulations 2009
Department of Education and Training - www.education.vic.gov.au

See also: Behaviour Management Policy – April 2020

Policy Control Data

Approved by Sorrento Community Centre

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Next Review Date: