

# DIVERSITY & EQUITY

## Ruby & Ollie's – Out of School Hours Care

### AIM:

We aim to make Ruby & Ollie's an inclusive place for families, children and Educators, through developing a feeling of mutual respect and trust. We do this by providing a safe, harmonious place to belong. We embrace difference in children, families and Educators and share each other's cultures, traditions and child rearing practices. Our Service philosophy is based on Respect for everyone, and we firmly believe that all people are worthwhile, and have something different to offer to enhance our own Service culture.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this Diversity and Equity Policy is:

- To ensure all people are treated equitably and with mutual respect
- To deter any person from making comparisons between children, families, Educators, their backgrounds, abilities or additional needs
- To incorporate an anti-bias approach in all interactions with children, their families and fellow Educators
- To promote inclusive practices within our work and play spaces
- To encourage all people to communicate respectfully and fairly at all times
- To welcome each and every child and their family to the service and its programs, and to embrace their culture and heritage and to celebrate it openly at the Service
- To ensure that the programs appropriately meet their individual physical, cognitive, social, emotional and creative needs
- To encourage every child to develop to their full potential and at their own rate
- To ensure that the service and its programs recognises and respects individual differences, and teaches children about other people around the world, the places in which they live and the differences in all of us
- Our daily practice reflects our beliefs about inclusion and anti-bias, when working with children, families and co-workers
- For each person to be able to:
  - Feel good about themselves
  - Feel comfortable with similarities and differences in themselves and in others
  - Recognise their own bias and stereotypical behaviours, and critically reflect on how to challenge those.
  - Stand up for themselves and others when bias occurs, and support people around them
- To regularly assess the physical environmental for inclusivity and undertake planned changes in the environment where appropriate

### METHOD:

#### Management will:

- Provide an environment that treats and respects all people, regardless of their gender, age, culture, socio-economic status, language or additional needs
- Be an equal opportunity employer, offering opportunities to people from different backgrounds and abilities
- Provide a family friendly workplace, recognising that child care employees are primarily of child bearing age
- Not tolerate behaviour, language, or practice that label, stereotype or degrade others in any manner from Educators, relief Educators, students, volunteers, families or visitors
- Provide equipment that is anti-discriminatory, culturally inclusive and relevant that enable children to explore issues of human diversity and anti-discriminatory (anti-biased) ways of being
- Ensure the physical environment reflects the commitment to a cross-cultural and non-discriminatory perspective

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- Observe our local community and identify the socio-economic and cultural groupings of its families
- Support Educators in developing diverse and equitable partnerships with all people through:
  - Professional development and training opportunities to ensure the provision of cross-cultural non-discriminatory programs
  - Informal discussions about their values and beliefs when reviewing the philosophy statement
  - Inviting members of the community from diverse backgrounds to discuss their personal experiences of prejudices and biased behaviour
  - Tap into the cultural differences within the Educational team to share with others and teach us different ways of doing things
- Ensure Educators feel valued, accepted and supported in their role at the Service
- Ensure that all children and families feel welcome, appreciated and respected at all times
- Ensure the environment reflects an anti-bias approach and ensures families from all different cultures feel supported and welcomed.

### On enrolment:

- Support all families during this process and enlist the help of external support agencies if required
- Access additional resources for families and/or children with additional needs such as pamphlets, brochures, information posters and information from relevant authorities
- Access an interpreter service and/or translate enrolment documents, policies and procedures into the family's home language when required
- Identify strategies that actively promote the emotional wellbeing of children and families, in particular those who have different cultural or language backgrounds during the orientation and settling in process
- Carry out the orientation checklist to assess each orientation visit
- Assess service documents and communications to ensure that they are inclusive and takes into account the additional needs of children and families
- Provide the opportunity for families to contribute to the Diversity and Equity Policy and review the policy at least annually
- Ensure that all equipment and resources purchased are inclusive and display a range of different cultures, and histories.
- Research the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and how it relates to our land and our community, and educate other people about the importance of the first nation people and their culture
- Work collaboratively with parent's when providing for children with special needs, perhaps with extra equipment or changing the environment to suit the children, so that they are fully included within the programs
- Demonstrate the diversity of our families within the program, through photographs, displays, posters, newsletters or through encouraging interactions between families
- Take positive action to resolve any exclusion of parents by other parents or Educators
- Celebrate the cultural diversity of the educators within the Service and share their knowledge and history with the children, families and other educators

### Educators will:

- Be familiar with the Philosophy statement and Diversity and Equity Policy
- "Respect the rights of children as listed in the United Nations convention on the rights of the child (1991) and commit to advocating for these rights." (Early Childhood Australia National Working Party, 2005)
- Ensure that through their programs:
- All children will have equal access to a positive learning environment which will educate them about the importance of celebrating who they are and where they came from
- Use positive empowerment as a main focus of education children
- Be aware of families and children's emotional needs resulting from trauma, abuse, grief
- Be aware that their actions, language, gestures and behaviours may communicate biased or prejudicial opinions or feelings and that children learn through example. Modeling is an important way to teach children about the values that support diversity and equity and Educators are important role models in guiding and educating children and families
- Have the opportunity to develop their understanding of anti-bias through education and professional developmental experiences
- Use critical reflection process to understand our own bias and thoughts on inclusive practice

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- Be able to adjust and challenge these behaviours once identified in a positive way
- Show respect for the various ways that families care for their children and be aware of the range of child-rearing practices and attitudes
- Respond to inappropriate or unfair behaviour by encouraging and modeling positive behaviour and fairness

### SUPPORTING INDIVIDUAL NEEDS:

We believe that working with external agencies, will help us to meet goals and assist children to develop to the best of their abilities. Working collaboratively with each family to set goals and discuss their needs is the best way to achieve success for children in our care

### FOR CHILDREN AND/OR FAMILIES WITH SPECIAL INDIVIDUAL NEEDS:

- Ensure that all communication with family members are meaningful and thoughtful
- Ensure information is provided accurately from families of children with medical conditions to guarantee continuity of care whilst at the service and ensure all Educators are aware of these conditions and are comfortable in assisting families with the additional needs
- Arrange additional support, if required, for children with specific medical conditions
- Gather information about the child's home life on arrival each day in a way that is appropriate for the family
- Support bilingual children and families to ensure that we promote a responsive learning environment for the child at the service and in the home

### IMPLEMENTATION

Some points to consider in the choice of materials and experiences for anti-bias, equitable and diverse daily programs:

#### Educators will:

- Provide opportunities to detail how diversity and equity are reflected in children's individual and group experiences
- Ensure play and learning experiences are child-Serviced, relevant and meaningful
- Enhance children's awareness of Australia's cultural diversity, and understand the importance of the first nation people of Australia
- Help to value and reinforce children's own cultural identity and background
- Ensure programs are reflective of all cultures

#### Communicating with Children:

- Strengthen and reinforce diverse and equitable behaviours and practices with children and challenge prejudice and bias
- Provide opportunities, through planned activities, for the children to:
- Question and explore the social constructions of gender, culture, race, language, lifestyles and additional needs
- Question the children in open-ended ways around issues and listen to their responses to evaluate what is fair and unfair
- Answer questions honestly and openly and to their level of understanding
- Encourage children to understand the right of individuals to have their thoughts, feelings and ideas heard and respected
- Encourage families to visit who may have work roles that will assist the children to understand equal employment opportunities

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### ANTI BULLYING AND WORKPLACE GUIDELINES

Every employee has the responsibility to actively practice and promote:

- Tolerance for individual differences
- Values of courtesy, respect, compassion and care for others
- A supportive and encouraging climate where the achievements and efforts of others are respected and appreciated
- A commitment to adhering to, and upholding, all aspects of this policy and the code of conduct
- For adults in the workplace, harassment (bullying) is outlined in the *Harassment in the Workplace Policy*
- Will be encouraged to participate in the review and, with assistance, in accessing current information

### Communicating Policy to Families, Children and Team Members

Information relating to the Diversity & Equity Policy is communicated in the following ways: Newsletters, Family and Educators handbooks, team meetings and memos, planned experiences for the children, notice boards and posters, pamphlets and information sheets in the foyer, role modelling and signs displayed around the classrooms and Service etc.

### Policy Review Statement

All policies will be reviewed annually in consultation with Families, Team Members and Management. Any changes in legislation, regulations, Quality Assurance and other standards will be considered in the reviewing process. Any changes in policies or procedures will be communicated to families and Team Members verbally and in writing. Failure to abide by policies will result in disciplinary action.

### Sourced:

Belonging, Being, Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework, 2006

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Dau, Elizabeth, 2001, The Anti Bias Approach in Early Childhood, (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). NSW: Longman.

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Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations. (n.d), Child care inclusion and professional support program. Retrieved April 18<sup>th</sup> 2009, from

[http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/early\\_childhood/programmes\\_funding/child\\_care\\_inclusion\\_professional\\_support\\_program.htm#Inclusion\\_and\\_Professional\\_Support\\_Program](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/early_childhood/programmes_funding/child_care_inclusion_professional_support_program.htm#Inclusion_and_Professional_Support_Program)

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<http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au>

# SOCIAL COMPETENCE

## Ruby & Ollie's – Out of School Hours Care

### AIM:

- To create an environment which encourages and reinforces positive behaviour and social competence in children.
- To work with children to develop rules, strategies and tools for promoting appropriate behaviours in the child care setting and beyond.
- To encourage educators to deal with all behaviours consistently and without bias and personal judgment.
- To be clear about what behaviour we expect from children and each other
- To clearly role model appropriate interactions and relationships with and between children and adults.
- To promote a sense of agency and positive choices in children and to build positive, responsive and reciprocal relationships.
- To ensure that the services's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and the centre in the implementation of this policy.
- Discipline & expectations of behaviour vary greatly among different cultures, social groups and child rearing practices. We aim to be sensitive to families' feelings in the consideration of this.

### METHOD:

All children are unique and individual and will have different levels of understanding rules and guidelines. We aim to accommodate all different types of learners and give children tangible guidelines and processes to work through so they can have some control over their own behaviours and build their social competence.

The Educational team have an understanding of their own attitudes, values, experiences, underlying beliefs and feelings in relation to children's behaviours and the impact on the relationships and interaction they have with all children. Critical reflection enables all educators to review their current practices and behaviours and make changes with a view for improvement.

Our policy was developed within the following guidelines and understandings of children's development, behaviour, individual temperaments and needs:

Social competence is a condition of possessing the social, emotional, and intellectual skills and behaviours needed to succeed as a member of society.

Read more: <http://www.healthofchildren.com/S/Social-Competence.html>

- Behaviour is seen as an expression of feelings or an attempt to meet immediate or underlying needs. Educators are sensitive to how children feel and encourage the children to communicate their needs and feelings. We validate the child's feelings, and deal with the underlying problem as well as guiding the child towards more appropriate ways of communicating needs and of interacting pro-socially with others.
- Educators assist and support children when they are having difficulty understanding or communicating with each other and role model positive interactions and provide children with the tools they need for self-management.
- Our Educators' strategies for guiding and managing behaviour take account of the child's whole life situation, developmental level of understanding, ability and needs.
- This policy acknowledges family and cultural attitudes to behaviour within the boundaries of the safety and wellbeing of children.
- Our Educators include consideration of and possible assessment for physiological and psychological conditions that could be affecting behaviour and work with the family to seek appropriate assistance.
- We seek to develop, in a collaborative way, partnerships with parents and strategies for dealing with challenging behaviours that can be both implemented in the centre and at home.

# SOCIAL COMPETENCE

## Ruby & Ollie's – Out of School Hours Care

- Our guidance strategies are flexible as we feel that children are individuals and will need individual strategies to effectively guide them towards more acceptable behaviour.
- Too provide a warm, safe, happy & secure environment in which we respect each other's feelings, belongings and needs.
- It praises and acknowledges caring, co-operative and desirable behaviour.
- It teaches, gives simple explanations, and offers alternatives so a child can make choices.
- It is consistent.
- It is based on self-discipline and self-control

Setting limits helps children to:

- Feel secure
- Find appropriate expression for feelings that are hard to control

### THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME TECHNIQUES FOR BUILDING SOCIAL COMPETENCE:

#### Prevention

- Educators will get to know the children – they are more likely to respond to your expectations if they sense you know and like them.
- The environment is changed to suit group needs. For example, set up a friendly environment that is safe where children can be independent; have appropriately programmed experiences to keep them stimulated.
- Educators are alert to settle or redirect play at the beginning or ending of an activity i.e. transition times.
- Overexcitement is prevented by having a pattern of active and restful activities planned throughout the day
- Educators modify the volume and tone of their voice to calm children when they are distressed.
- Educators provide good modeling behaviour as children learn through imitation.
- Attention is given to good behaviour with specific praise. For example, "You waited so patiently for your turn"
- Children's developmental needs, abilities and behaviours are remembered when planning for them. Educators are sensitive to how children feel at different times of the day and modify their interactions accordingly.
- Educators are aware that at times children act inappropriately to get the attention of adults and focus on giving attention to children for positive behaviour.

#### When prevention doesn't work

- Educators will try first to diffuse a situation, giving the child an out.
- Educators try to use "do's" instead of "don'ts", giving a simple brief explanation.
- Educators use a firm calm manner, indicating what is expected from the children, presenting expectations as a choice wherever possible, for example, "If you chose to do that, I will have to....".
- Consequences for the behaviour are made clear, for example, removal from the situation.
- Consequences are followed through!
- When it's all over it is an essential aim for Educators to restore a positive relationship between themselves and the child, before either of them goes home.

#### IN RELATION TO EDUCATORS

- Educators communicate with each other, for example, potential behaviour problems or specific discipline methods for individual children
- Educators are consistent in using their competence strategies and are supportive of decisions made by co-workers.
- Educators' are positive and consistent in both their verbal and non-verbal communications.
- If there is a disagreement between Educators about a particular disciplinary action they will choose an appropriate time and place away from the children to discuss possible solutions.
- The routine allows for 'time out' for Educators – particularly in high stress situations.

# SOCIAL COMPETENCE

## Ruby & Ollie's – Out of School Hours Care

### IN RELATION TO PARENTS

- Educators provide information to parents regarding their child's behaviour in an honest and confidential manner.
- Parents and Educators engage a team approach to solving behaviour problems.
- Educators communicate with parents to ensure consistency between the centre and home.
- Parents are supported and advised regarding behaviour management information.
- Educators will fill out behavior incident forms , after consultation with the Nominated Supervisor / Person in day to day charge, if the behavior is deemed to be in serious nature and then will be given to families to read over and sign.

Educators and the coordinator will communicate with families at all times any behavior issues with the family. If the behavior is persisting and upsetting other children, families & educators there will be a meeting set up with the child, family and the coordinator to try to work out strategies to help with the behavior, if all avenues have been exhausted and the behavior has not improved the service has the right to ask the family to remove the child from the service.

If there is a situation where a child is seriously physically harming or being very abusive to children or educators the family will be rang to ask to pick up the child immediately.

### Communicating Policy to Families, Children and Team Members

Information relating to the Social Competence Policy is communicated in the following ways: Newsletters, Family and Educators handbooks, team meetings and memos, planned experiences for the children, notice boards and posters, pamphlets and information sheets in the foyer, role modelling and signs displayed around the classrooms and centre etc.

### Policy Review Statement

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### Sourced

Porter, Louise (2008). Young Children's Behaviour: practical approaches for caregivers and teachers, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Elsevier Australia.

The Gowrie (QLD) & The Health and Community Services Workforce Council, (2009). SEEDS Manual. Queensland Health.

Noahs' Ark Childrens' Services Resource Unit (2010). Fact Sheet. Guiding Children's Behaviour.

Retrieved September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2010, from [www.noahsark.net.au](http://www.noahsark.net.au)

Emerging-Child Development in the First 3 Years by Nixon & Gould 1996; Based on

"Developmentally Appropriate Practice" by Sue Bredekamp

Attention Seeking – Noah's Ark Fact Sheet

Young Children's Social Behaviour, What's not Okay is not Okay M. A. Carter Consultancy P/L-

<http://www.macarterconsultancy.com.au/>

<http://www.healthofchildren.com/S/Social-Competence.html>

# INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

## Ruby & Ollie's – Out of School Hours Care

### AIM:

Educators and children interacting in a positive and reciprocal way, builds trust and security. Our main aim at the service is to ensure that all children feel that they belong here. As educators, we try to build warm and respectful relationships with children and their families from the time they first start at the service

Children who experience relationships that are built on respect, fairness, cooperation and empathy are given the opportunity to develop these qualities in themselves. When children are shown positive interactions they develop an understanding of themselves as a participant in the group who is entitled to feel a sense of belonging to the centre community.

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### Interactions with children will:

- be authentic and responsive to individual children, celebrating their differences and uniqueness
- be based in fairness, acceptance and empathy with respect for culture, rights, community and the individual
- Be warm, nurturing and welcoming to all children accessing the service.

### METHOD:

#### The Coordinator (Nominated Supervisor) will:

- Mentor and train educators to build reciprocal relationships with all children in the service.
- Guide professional development and practice to promote interactions with children that are positive and respectful;
- Establish practice guidelines that ensure interactions with children are given priority and those interactions are authentic, just and respect difference.

#### Educators will:

- Respond to children's communication in a consistent manner;
- Respond sensitively to children's attempts to initiate interactions and conversations;
- Initiate one to one interactions with children,
- Support children's efforts, assisting and encouraging as appropriate;
- Support children's expression of their thoughts and feelings;
- Encourage children to express themselves and show an interest and participate in what the child is doing;
- Encourage children to make choices and decisions;
- Acknowledge each child's uniqueness in positive ways;
- Respect cultural differences in communication and consider alternative approaches to own.
- Make sure the atmosphere is relaxed and happy and Educators talk regularly with all children about a range of topics.
- Use words that show affection for the children and show sincere interest.
- When communicating with children will try to be at the child's visual level.
- Model appropriate health and hygiene behaviours for children i.e. hand washing and nutrition
- Avoid interrupting children's communications to correct them – they instead wait until the child has finished before restating the child's words and phrases in the appropriate way to model correct communication skills
- Assist children where necessary to avoid frustration and Educators are patient with children's exploratory behaviours.

### Children's Rights, Family and Cultural Values

Interactions within the setting are greatly enhanced when children's rights and family and cultural values are given due consideration and respect. Administrative procedures, initial conversations, documentation and ongoing communication with children and families are a reference point for interactions and a foundation for authentic and respectful communication.



# INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

## Ruby & Ollie's – Out of School Hours Care

### Listening

Educators must use listening as a foundation for interactions. Listening is based on observation and in leaving spaces in conversations and communication, suspending judgment and in giving full attention to children as they communicate. Truly attending to children's communication promotes a strong culture of listening.

### Children and Families

A culture of respectful interaction is promoted when children's attempts to communicate are valued. Turn taking and regulating children's conversations promotes active engagement. Respectful communication with families generates greater confidence in interacting.

### Reflection and Consideration

Time is dedicated to reflecting upon interactions within children. Reflections should consider how to spend extended periods engaged in interactions with children that comprise communication and listening.

Interactions between educators and children are genuine, positive and responsive and based on respect, fairness, acceptance, co-operation and empathy. This is evident in conversations, communication, pedagogy, and planning for children and families

### Communicating Policy to Families, Children and Team Members

Information relating to the Interactions with Children Policy is communicated in the following ways: Newsletters, Family and Educators handbooks, team meetings and memos, planned experiences for the children, notice boards and posters, pamphlets and information sheets in the foyer, role modelling and signs displayed around the classrooms and centre etc.

### Policy Review Statement

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### Sources

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# CHILD TO CHILD INTERACTIONS

## Ruby & Ollie's – Out of School Hours Care

### AIM:

To encourage and provide children with different ways to interact with other children positively through Educators role modelling and teaching social competence.

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### METHOD:

- Educators will monitor children's behaviours and responses, specifically they will look for incidences where children's interactions are inappropriate and will provide guidance on more appropriate responses. They will also look for positive responses and will praise children and use these incidences as positive examples.
- Children learn by example therefore Educators will ensure that their behaviour and interactions with others provides a positive role model for children.
- Educators will discuss with children about treating others with respect and having empathy, encouraging children to think about how others might be feeling. Spontaneous and routine activities within the program will be used to discuss these topics.
- Educators will discuss with children about dealing with conflicts and the importance of tactics such as using their words to express themselves.

### Communicating Policy to Families, Children and Team Members

Information relating to the Child to Child Interactions Policy is communicated in the following ways: Newsletters, Family and Educators handbooks, team meetings and memos, planned experiences for the children, notice boards and posters, pamphlets and information sheets in the foyer, role modelling and signs displayed around the classrooms and centre etc.

### Policy Review Statement

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