# Policy statement

At Goodstart Early Learning (Goodstart) children's learning, development, and wellbeing is firmly anchored in reciprocal, responsive, and respectful relationships that are attuned to the context of Childrens’ lives within their families and community.

“Children thrive when they, their families and their educators work together in partnership to support their learning, development and wellbeing. “(EYLF: 2022, p 9)

Goodstart Early Learning recognises that young children have the opportunity to thrive in early childhood education settings when they have positive and secure relationships with educators who know how to nurture and stimulate their learning, development, and wellbeing.

Goodstart educators are attuned to individual children and create warm, trusting, and secure relationships with them and between groups of children. These relational pedagogies are is fundamental to children's emerging self-regulation, learning, development, and well-being. Goodstart educators ensure every child feels safe, is heard, and has access and can participate in meaningfully in early childhood education..

Goodstart provides inclusive early learning environments that reflect diversity, support participation and uphold the dignity and rights of all children. Goodstart educators create educational programs based on place-based pedagogies, so learning is relevant to the children in their local content.

Our policies and procedures have been developed to safeguard children from abuse and harm or discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation.

All Goodstart employees within centres and those who work directly with centres (CSO personnel) will maintain an up to date Working with Children check. (WWCC)

## What does this policy apply to?

* Ensuring respectful and equitable relationships are developed and maintained with each child.
* Ensuring each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults.
* Ensuring that all Goodstarters uphold and respect children’s wellbeing and rights.
* Ensuring children feel empowered to learn about their rights and how to exercise these.
* Ensuring each child is provided a culturally safe environment to thrive, make connections with others to promote learning.

**This policy relates to the National Quality Standard’s Quality Area 5: Relationships with children.**

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| Standard/ Elements | Concept | Descriptor |
| QA5 |  | Relationships with children |
| 5.1 | Relationships between educators and children | 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. |

**Related National Law and National Regulations:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Standard/ Elements | Concept | National Law or Regulations |
| QA5 |  |  |
| 5.1 | Relationships between educators and children | Section 166 Offence to use inappropriate discipline  Regulation 73 Educational program  Regulation 155 Interactions with children  Regulation 156 Relationships in groups  Regulation 168(2)(j) Policies and procedures are required in relation to interactions with children, including the matters set out in regulations 155 and 156 |
| 5.2 | Relationships between children | Section 166 Offence to use inappropriate discipline  Regulation 155 Interactions with children  Regulation 156 Relationship in groups  Regulation 73 Educational program  Regulation 74 Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program  Regulation 168(2)(j) Policies and procedures are required in relation to interactions with children, including the matters set out in regulations 155 and 156 |

**Educators develop and maintain respectful and equitable relationships with each child:**

Positive relationships between children and educators occur when educators are attuned to individual children and take the time to get to know them. At Goodstart we deliver this through our key educator relationship approaches. Educators use the knowledge they have of children during interactions or planned experiences to connect with each child, which in turn promotes the child's sense of belonging. Strong educator relationships with children are fundamental to children's learning, development, and well-being. These relationships will continue to grow through responsive one-to-one interactions and conversations.

“Educator practices and the relationships they form with children and their families have a significant effect on children’s participation in early childhood education, engagement in learning opportunities and success as learners.” (EYLF: 2022, p9)

Educator’s interactions with children are meaningful and respect individual children's rights, dignity and wellbeing. Through planned and spontaneous social interactions educators can promote children's learning, development and well-being. It's these social interactions that support the development of children’s self-regulation, as well as speech and language so that they can accommodate new knowledge and ideas.

Through these interactions, educators acknowledge that each child has their own individual abilities and needs. Educators are respectful of this knowledge and ensure every child feels included and secure. Educators make sure their environments are set up in a way that reflects every child, their family and community. (NQS: 2018)

**Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults:**

As children engage and play together in a positive, relationship-oriented environment educators are responsive to all children. Educators and children learn together in an intentional way so that children build upon and extend their knowledge through collaborative relationships.

Educators take a positive and intentional approach to guiding children's behaviour, in a way that promotes each child's rights, dignity and agency at all times. Educators use guidance strategies and practices that support the needs of individual children, acknowledge possible reasons for behaviour and invite children to contribute to their own pro-social solutions. These strategies and practices will support children to acquire new skills and understandings to move towards positive (pro-social) behaviour. (NQS: 2018)

# Related documents

Goodstart documents that support this policy:

[NQS1 Educational Program and Practice REQUIREMENT](https://abcniececom.sharepoint.com/sites/policies/PoliciesandProcedures/NQS1%20Educational%20Program%20and%20Practice%20REQUIREMENT.docx?d=w4340e5c8e6854ce0a22f32d37d2a59fe) ; [NQS1 Individual Learning Plan PROCEDURE](https://abcniececom.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/policies/PoliciesandProcedures/NQS1%20Individual%20Learning%20Plan%20PROCEDURE.docx?d=w29bbbe876e9c4a4a8731aedbe661de06&csf=1&web=1) ; [NQS1 Program and Practice POLICY](https://abcniececom.sharepoint.com/sites/policies/PoliciesandProcedures/NQS1%20Educational%20Program%20and%20Practice%20POLICY.doc?d=we951d079470f4c53bcb0be7b4f12f88e) ; [NQS2 Look, Do, Tell Framework (for Safeguarding Children) REQUIREMENT](https://abcniececom.sharepoint.com/sites/policies/PoliciesandProcedures/NQS2%20Look%2C%20Do%2C%20Tell%20Framework%20(for%20Safeguarding%20Children)%20REQUIREMENT.doc?d=w79afcf0576e84022b5c29e724c1f8510) ; [NQS5 Guiding Children's Behaviour REQUIREMENT](https://abcniececom.sharepoint.com/sites/policies/PoliciesandProcedures/NQS5%20Guiding%20Childrens%20Behaviour%20REQUIREMENT.docx?d=we3706d12f3ed48b98b72892243e3c821) ; [NQS6 Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Community POLICY](https://abcniececom.sharepoint.com/sites/policies/PoliciesandProcedures/NQS6%20Collaborative%20Partnerships%20with%20Families%20and%20Communities%20POLICY.doc?d=wb2248b9db3cf46499a0ddcd667b94073) ; [NQS7 Suitability to Work with Children PROCEDURE](https://abcniececom.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/policies/PoliciesandProcedures/NQS7%20Suitability%20to%20Work%20with%20Children%20PROCEDURE.docx?d=w8e9aa06e307f41c6bf5cc376e384f07d&csf=1&web=1) ; [NQS7 Suitability to Work with Children REQUIREMENT](https://abcniececom.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/policies/PoliciesandProcedures/NQS7%20Suitability%20to%20Work%20with%20Children%20REQUIREMENT.docx?d=w4d9bbe53caa44ace8bd47ada1bfbc3f9&csf=1&web=1) ; [BM1 Child-safe Behaviour Standards REQUIREMENT](https://abcniececom.sharepoint.com/sites/policies/PoliciesandProcedures/BM1%20Child-safe%20behaviour%20standards%20REQUIREMENT.docx?d=w74a181eeb9cf4697a858f78fda37d239) ; [BM1 Code of Conduct POLICY](https://abcniececom.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/policies/PoliciesandProcedures/BM1%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20POLICY.docx?d=wd98595419ad24fe697e7e5289d650567&csf=1&web=1)

# Responsibilities

This policy is to be implemented by: All Goodstart Early Learning employees.

**Safeguarding Children Responsibilities**

All Goodstarters have a responsibility to champion and model a culture that promotes and protects the safety and wellbeing of children in everything we do. Together we “look, do, tell” and prevent, identify and respond to child abuse, neglect and harm

# Definitions

# **Agency:** “being able to make choices and decisions, to influence events and to have an impact on one’s world.” (EYLF, 2009, p.45)

# **Key Educator Relationships:** ensure a triangle of trust, where a named educator is attuned and responsive to a small group of children and their family’s need. The relationship is: purposeful and intentional, sufficiently consistent, in tune and responsive to children’s individuality and mutually owned.

# References

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2013). Guide to the National Quality Standards. Sydney. Retrieved from: http://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf-changes/guide-to-the-national-quality-framework

Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (2009), Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia Retrieved from: <https://docs.education.gov.au/node/2632>

ECA (2013). Learning positive behaviours through educator-child relationships. A Research in Practice Series. Reference #1484.

Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010) Section 166 & 167 found at <http://acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/legislation/>

Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) Regulation 73, 74, 155, 156, 162 (2) (j) found at <http://acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/national-regulations/>

Goodstart Early Learning (2016) The Goodstart Practice Guide: An essential resource for early learning professionals. Victoria: Goodstart Early Learning.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: found at [www.unicef.com](http://www.unicef.com)

ECA Code of Ethics: found at

<http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/>