

BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT POLICY

QUALITY AREA 7 – VERSION 1.1



PURPOSE

This policy provides clear guidelines and procedures for Denzil Don Kindergarten to:

- promote positive behaviour and support each child to achieve success
- foster the development of positive self-esteem and emotional wellbeing
- prevent and respond consistently to challenging behaviours, and
- ensure a safe, respectful, inclusive learning and working environment for children, staff, and families.

POLICY STATEMENT

The safety, health, wellbeing, rights and best interests of every child guide all decisions, actions and practices of Denzil Don Kindergarten staff.

VALUES

Denzil Don Kindergarten is committed to:

- providing each child with positive guidance, encouragement, and support to promote developmentally appropriate behaviour
- encouraging children to express their thoughts, feelings, and opinions in respectful and ways that provide a successful outcome
- supporting children to participate in experiences that foster independence, confidence, and positive self-esteem
- maintaining the dignity, agency, and rights of every child
- recognising and respecting the diversity of children and families, including cultural and family values, lived experience, abilities, and each child’s emotional and physical development
- fostering positive, respectful, and warm relationships between children, families, and all service staff
- promoting the health, safety, and wellbeing of all children and staff by providing a safe, secure, inclusive, and welcoming environment.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, all service staff (educational and non-educational), students, volunteers, parents/carers, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Denzil Don Kindergarten.

Responsibilities: R indicates legislation requirement	Approved provider & persons with management or control	Nominated Supervisor and Person In Day-to-Day Charge	All service staff (educational & non-educational)	Parents/Carers	Contractors, Volunteers & Students
Developing and implementing this policy in consultation with all relevant stakeholders to ensure it reflects the service philosophy, beliefs, and values	√	√	√		
Ensuring that all staff are aware of, and adhere to, the service expectation for positive, respectful, and appropriate behaviour. This includes understanding appropriate and acceptable responses to children’s behaviour and fostering warm, trusting, and reciprocal relationships with children and families, in line with the <i>Code of Conduct Policy</i> and <i>Interactions with Children Policy</i>	√	√	√	√	√
Ensuring educators refrain from all forms of inappropriate conduct (<i>see Definitions</i>), consistently maintain professional boundaries, and engage	R	R	R	R	R

in respectful interactions with children. All actions and practices will align with the Code of Conduct Policy , Child Safe Environment & Wellbeing Policy , and Interaction with Children Policy (see also Child Safe Standard 2)					
Ensuring that children are adequately supervised at all times and that educator-to-child ratios are consistently maintained, in accordance with the Supervision of Children Policy and (Child Safe Standard 9)	R	R	√		√
Ensuring the service environment is safe, secure, and free from hazards in accordance with National Law (Section 167) , and that it supports the active participation and inclusion of every child, in line with the Child Safe Environment Policy , Occupational Health and Safety Policy , and Supervision of Children Policy (Child Safe Standard 9)	R	√	√		√
Developing and implementing educational programs that align with an approved learning framework, are responsive to the developmental needs, interests, and lived experiences of each child, and recognising and considering their individual strengths and differences, as guided by the Educational Program and the Inclusion and Equity Policy	R	R	√		√
Using planned and spontaneous discussions with children to explore emotions, feelings, inclusion and exclusion, fair and unfair behaviour, and bias and prejudice (annual Class Charters are one way we intentionally explore these themes with Children)		√	√		√
Maintaining the dignity and rights of all children at all times, in accordance with Child Safe Standard 3	√	√	√	√	√
Ensuring that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or discipline that is unreasonable, in accordance with National Law (Section 166) and (Child Safe Standard 1 & 2)	R	R	R		R
Ensuring that frightening methods of control and discipline are never used (Child Safe Standard 1 & 2)	R	R	R		R
Ensuring that behaviour guidance is never associated with food, rest, toileting, or isolation. Under no circumstances will a child be force-fed or denied food as a form of discipline, in accordance with Child Safe Standard 1 & 2 and National Law Section 166	R	R	R		R
Applying a trauma-informed approach when supporting children to develop self-regulation skills and manage their behaviour (Child Safe Standard 1)		√	√		√
Providing all children with positive guidance and encouragement to support acceptable and appropriate behaviour, as well as encouraging expression of self and feelings (Child Safe Standards 1 & 3)		√	√		√
Modelling respectful behaviour and using supportive language to enable children to safely express and verbalise their concerns (Child Safe Standards 1 & 3)		√	√	√	√
Talking with children about the consequences of their actions		√	√		√
Planning and implementing strategies to support individual children's behaviour		√	√		√
Supporting children to identify and understand their feelings, and providing a safe, supportive space for them to explore emotions and develop strategies to calm and regulate their body and mind (Child Safe Standard 1 & 3)		√	√		√
Listening with empathy when children express emotions - acknowledging those emotions and reassuring them that all emotions are normal (Child Safe Standard 1 & 3)		√	√		√
Supporting children to negotiate their rights in relation to the rights of others, and stepping-in, if needed to support children with conflict resolution (Child Safe Standard 1 & 3)		√	√		√

Supporting children to understand that sometimes peers and friends may not wish to engage with them		√	√		√
Pre-empting conflicts or challenging behaviours by understanding individual children and the group more broadly, actively observing play and guiding and supporting interactions as needed		√	√		√
Understanding each child's personality, and friendship preferences to support them to manage their emotions and behaviour, and to develop empathy and an understanding of the feelings and needs of others <i>(Child Safe Standard 1, 3, & 5)</i>		√	√		√
Supporting children to negotiate and share ownership of responsible and respectful behaviours, and working collaboratively with families and other professionals to support each child's emotional and social learning		√	√		√
Working with families and, where applicable, support services, to ensure an inclusive and consistent approach for supporting children to regulate their behaviour and communicate effectively <i>(Child Safe Standard 4)</i>		√	√	√	√
Managing situations in which families have different views and expectations from the service regarding guiding children's behaviour <i>(Child Safe Standard 4)</i>		√	√	√	√
Respectfully managing situations in which a child may benefit from additional support to manage their behaviour <i>(see Documentation 1)</i>		√	√		√
Collaborating with other professionals and support agencies working with children who have diagnosed behavioural or social challenges <i>(Child Safe Standard 4)</i>		√	√	√	√
Documenting communication with families, ensuring it captures their views, suggestions and preferences, and shows they have been considered when planning appropriate strategies to support their child's inclusion in the program <i>(Child Safe Standard 4)</i>		√	√	√	√
Putting a Behaviour Guidance Plan <i>(see Definitions)</i> <i>(see Documentation 1)</i> in place for a child with behaviour that the service believes may put them, other children, service staff, and/or others at risk <i>(Child Safe Standard 4)</i>		√	√		√
Ensuring that Behaviour Guidance Plans <i>(see Definitions)</i> for children include documented evidence of consultation with families and, where appropriate, input and recommendations from appropriate professional and support agencies <i>(Child Safe Standard 5)</i>		√	√	√	√
Developing links and referral pathways for support children experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, as well as their families	√	√	√		√
Ensuring parents/carers and other support people are consulted if a child's Behaviour Guidance Plan <i>(see Definitions)</i> has not improved the challenging behaviour <i>(Child Safe Standard 4)</i>	√	√	√	√	
Setting clear timelines for review and evaluation of Behaviour Guidance Plans <i>(see Definitions)</i>	√	√	√		
Providing information, ideas and practical strategies to families, educators and staff on a regular basis to promote and support health and wellbeing in the service and at home <i>(Child Safe Standard 4)</i>	√	√	√		
Consulting with, and seeking advice from DE if a suitable and mutually agreeable Behaviour Guidance Plan <i>(see Definitions)</i> cannot be developed and implemented	R	√	√		
Investigating the availability of extra assistance, such as Kindergarten Inclusion Support <i>(see Definitions)</i> , by engaging the Preschool Field Officer <i>(see Definitions)</i> , specialist children's services officers from DE, or other agencies working with the child	R	√	√		

Ensuring that all service staff are provided with appropriate training to guide appropriate responses to challenging behaviour	√	√			
Informing all service staff of concerns, events or incidents that may impact their child's behaviour at the service (e.g. moving house, relationship issues, a new sibling) (<i>Child Safe Standard 4</i>)				√	
Providing and promoting a safe work environment where staff are not exposed to hazards and can work without risk of injury or harm including behavioural aggression (<i>see Definitions</i>)	R	R			
Identifying, assessing, and controlling environmental workplace risks to reduce the potential for harm to staff, including behavioural aggression (<i>see Definitions</i>) (<i>see Occupational Violence and Aggression Policy</i>) (<i>Child Safe Standard 2</i>)	R	R			
Having zero tolerance to any form of harm, including behavioural aggression (<i>see Definitions</i>) against staff members (<i>see Occupational Violence and Aggression Policy</i>)	R	√			
Providing staff training related to the degree of risk faced within the working environment	R	√			
Supporting staff members to report incidents and hazards related to behavioural aggression (<i>see Definitions</i>)	R	√			
Ensuring all incidents and near misses of behavioural aggression are reported internally. External reporting to WorkSafe may also be required, in the case of notifiable incidents	R	√	√		√
Taking appropriate action after incidents of behavioural aggression – with support, counselling and follow-up	R	√			
Always maintaining confidentiality (<i>see Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i>)	R	√	√	√	√

BACKGROUND & LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

From infancy, children begin a journey of understanding their world, which includes learning to recognise and manage emotions and behaviour, as well as developing an understanding of rights and responsibilities.

Through positive, consistent, and respectful daily interactions, educators play a critical role in supporting children to develop self-regulation skills. In their interactions with children, they foster a sense of belonging, and support the development of empathy, responsibility, and respectful citizenship. As a result, children build the confidence and skills to manage their behaviour, make informed decisions, and develop positive, respectful, and meaningful relationships with others.

Challenging behaviours in children may be developmentally appropriate, arise from attempts to meet needs, or be a way of expressing unmet needs or emotions. Positive adult role models support children to learn socially acceptable behaviours, which is essential in helping them develop appropriate ways to communicate their needs. A positive, safe, and responsive learning environment further supports children's wellbeing and helps to minimise the occurrence of challenging behaviours.

As early childhood professionals, we recognise that children's ability to self-regulate develops gradually over time and exists along a continuum. A child's ability to use self-regulation skills can be influenced and impacted by factors such as mood, health, family circumstances, and the challenges or situations they are experiencing.

The Committee of Management (as the employer) and service management have a duty under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 to eliminate risks to the health and safety of employees, children, and other persons, so far as is reasonably practicable. Where risks cannot be eliminated, they must be minimised so far as is reasonably practicable. This includes taking all reasonable steps to identify, assess, and manage the risk of behavioural aggression (*see Definitions*) at the service.

Behavioural aggression (*see Definitions*) can have significant short-and-long-term impacts on a person's physical and psychological health. It's not just violent incidents like physical assault which can cause harm. Being exposed to lower level but frequent forms of aggression, like yelling, name calling and challenging behaviours, can also have a lasting effect on a person's health and wellbeing.

LEGISLATION & STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au

Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au

DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms, see the Definitions File located online: <https://denzildonkinder.org.au/policies/> OR in the Policies Folder in the kindergarten office.

Behavioural Aggression: incidents in which a staff member is physical or verbally abused or assaulted by a child in their care. This definition covers a broad range of actions and behaviours that can create a risk to the health and safety of employees and other persons in the workplace. Examples of behavioural aggression can include, but are not limited to:

- biting, spitting, scratching, hitting, kicking, choking
- pushing, shoving, tripping, grabbing, slapping
- screaming, punching, swearing
- throwing objects.

Behaviour guidance: a means of assisting children in positive and effective ways to help children gain understanding and learn skills that will help them learn to manage their own behaviour.

Behaviour Guidance Plan: a plan that documents strategies to assist educators working with children presenting with challenging behaviours to manage the behaviour. Plans are developed in consultation with service management, the child's educators, parents/carers/families, and other professional support agencies as applicable.

Challenging behaviour: behaviour that can be described as:

- infringing on the rights of others
- disrupting others or causing disputes between children
- causing harm or risk to the child, other children, adults or living things
- is destructive to the environment and/or equipment
- inhibits the child's learning and relationship with others
- a child presenting as shy, withdrawn or excessively passive in a way which is inhibiting their learning and/or development
- is inappropriate relative to the child's developmental age and background.

Frightening methods of control: disciplinary or authoritative techniques that instil fear, intimidation, or distress in individuals as a means of regulating their behaviour or actions. These methods often rely on threats, aggression, coercion, or the imposition of negative consequences that evoke fear or anxiety in the individual being controlled. Examples may include yelling, physical punishment, verbal abuse, humiliation, or any other form of coercion that induces fear or distress in order to manipulate behaviour. Such methods are generally considered harmful and ineffective in fostering healthy relationships and promoting positive behaviour development.

Inappropriate conduct: conduct that a reasonable person would consider inappropriate in an education and care service, taking into account any of the following circumstances:

- whether the conduct aligns with generally accepted education and care practice
- the child's age and developmental stage
- whether the conduct is likely to cause or result in harm (including emotional, psychological or physical harm) or injury to a child or children
- whether the conduct is sexual, aggressive or violent.

In deciding if the conduct is inappropriate, it does not matter if:

- the child consented (agreed to the conduct, either by directly expressing their consent or implying consent through their actions)
- the person subjecting the child to the conduct believes the child has consented
- the person subjecting the child to the conduct is related to the child.

Subjecting a child to inappropriate conduct can occur in a number of ways including, but not limited to:

- in-person via words or behaviour, including adult to child OR between adults, in the presence of children
- filming and capturing images or recordings
- as a single occasion or as part of a pattern over time
- either directly or indirectly (for example, exposure to inappropriate language or conversations, or leaving inappropriate material accessible to children)
- online
- as an omission (for example, deliberately excluding a child).

Kindergarten Inclusion Support Program (KIS): supports funded kindergartens to plan and implement a program that is responsive to the individual abilities, interests and needs of children with a disability, developmental delay or complex medical needs. If a KIS funded Additional Assistant is allocated to the kindergarten as the result of a KIS application, they will work as a member of the team delivering the program that is inclusive of all children in the group. The KIS funded additional assistant does not work exclusively with the child identified in the KIS application and is not included in ratio.

Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) Program: supports the access and participation of children with additional needs in their kindergarten program. For more information visit: www.education.vic.gov.au

School Readiness Funding (SRF): supplementary funding support for kindergarten services. SRF endeavours to enrich kindergarten programs and offer tailored assistance to children, particularly those facing educational disadvantage, ensuring they start school developmentally on track. Within the framework of SRF, kindergarten services allocate the funding across three principal outcome domains: Communication (fostering language development), Wellbeing (enhancing social and emotional aspects), and Access and Inclusion.

SOURCES & RELATED POLICIES

SOURCES

- ACECQA: Planning and Strategies to Promote Positive Behaviour (Babies - 5 years): www.acecqa.gov.au
- ACECQA: Supporting children to regulate their own behaviour: www.acecqa.gov.au
- Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: www.acecqa.gov.au
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- Department of Education: Supporting children’s behaviour in early childhood services: www.vic.gov.au
- [Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics](#)
- [Emerging Minds - Supporting children in families with complex needs: Nine tips for practitioners who feel out of their depth](#)
- Guide to the National Quality Framework, ACECQA: www.acecqa.gov.au
- [The Kindergarten Funding Guide](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework: www.acecqa.gov.au

RELATED POLICIES

- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints
- Educational Program
- Inclusion and Equity
- Interactions with Children
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Occupational Violence and Aggression
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Staff Grievances and Dispute Resolutions
- Supervision of Children

EVALUATION

To assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, we will:

- seek feedback from all parties affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before any significant change is made to the policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk ([Regulation 172 \(2\)](#)).

SUPPORT DOCUMENTATION

- Documentation 1: Behaviour Support Plan Template
- Documentation 2: Behaviour Information Gathering

AUTHORISATIONS

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Denzil Don Kindergarten on 12/05/2026.

REVIEW DATE: 12 / MAY / 2028