

EDUCATION AND CARE GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Guiding Children's Behaviour

Introduction

Cumberland City Council's Education and Care services aim to provide a safe and caring environment where children have a clear understanding of acceptable behaviours through consistency and guidance.

Council's Education and Care Services promote educators, families and other involved parties to work collaboratively to maximise progressive, proactive partnerships to positively support children's behaviours and to assist children to develop self-control, self-reliance, a sense of responsibility and social competence while promoting an inclusive and anti-bias environment.

Cumberland City Council has zero tolerance for violent behaviours.

Scope

Educators aim to help protect children from the adverse behaviour of other children whilst guiding them to learn appropriate social behaviour.

Behaviour guidance strategies will not under any circumstances involve the use of any physical punishment, isolation, humiliation, intimidation or negative labelling.

All children have the right to be supported in dealing with problems and concerns and to feel secure, confident and included within the education and care service.

Definitions

CDO:	Child Development Officer
FDC:	Family Day Care
Families:	Parents, guardians and/or caregivers
OOSH:	Out of School Hours Care
Regulations:	Education and Care Services National Regulations

Contents

Responsibilities	2
Unacceptable behaviour	4
Biting	4
Bullying.....	5
Procedure – managing bullying in services including FDC services	6
Tips for talking about bullying	7
Consequences of unacceptable behaviour	7
Action plan checklist	8
Attachments	9

Responsibilities

Behaviour management begins with acceptance, sensitivity and respect for each other, consistency and knowledge of age appropriate behaviours.

Children are recognised as individuals therefore their needs, interests and background are considered at all times.

Interactions should ensure that all participants in the service feel valued and respected and should take into account the different backgrounds, requirements and communication skills of individuals.

Children (consider age appropriateness) are required to:

- respect the service / home and the equipment
- respect other children, educators, families and visitors by considering their feelings, needs and individual interests
- support others
- follow service rules and instructions given by educators
- develop self-discipline by accepting responsibility and consequences for own behaviour.

Children are also encouraged to talk to educators or their families if they have any concerns about any area of the service (OOSH children).

Educators are required to:

- create an atmosphere that is generally relaxed and happy
- role model positive and responsible behaviours
- develop relationships with each child's family and respect the values and cultural beliefs of the child's family
- create an environment which assists in reducing the incidences of undesirable behaviour and develop routines and rules collaboratively with children
- set responsibilities and consequences and ensure that expectations are consistent and clear to children
- give positive guidance directed towards acceptable behaviour and give praise and encouragement to children freely (emotional support)
- communicate with children and families at all times in a respectful and positive manner
- support the child to feel important
- encourage children to settle their differences in a respectful manner
- encourage appropriate ways of expressing feelings
- discourage unacceptable language
- get down to the child's level when communicating
- deal with the behaviour in an appropriate manner and express limits to behaviour in clear and simple positive terms

- consult/discuss behaviour management strategies used with families at first interview and as required
- work in partnership with families to develop and implement appropriate and consistent behavioural strategies and/or individual behaviour support plans (as required) in managing the child's behaviour
- provide information to families about external support services and other resources in the community
- discuss any issues the family may be aware of that could be contributing to behavioural changes
- seek professional support where unacceptable behaviour continues
- consistently record child interactions (both positive and negative)
- maintain confidentiality when dealing with behaviour management
- provide various activities through the day preventing boredom, focussing on the children's interests
- participate in behaviour training/professional development as required
- implement experiences and activities aimed at teaching social skills and interactions to all children, particularly children who need additional support with their social interactions.

The Guiding Children's Behaviour Incident Report form (attached) is to be completed under the following circumstances:

- when educators notice a change in a child's behaviour,
- when a child displays unacceptable behaviours, or
- when an educator is looking to track a pattern of unacceptable behaviours.

When completing the form, educators are to maintain confidentiality and ensure the names of other children/parties involved are not used. Families are to be informed when a form has been completed about a behaviour incident/concern, including any children involved in the incident, ensuring confidentiality is maintained at all times. The nominated supervisor, responsible person or room leader must consider the most appropriate way to advise the families about the incident, ensuring the message is not communicated via the person picking up the child. It may be necessary to contact the families via phone or email rather than discussing the matter on pick up, especially if the incident/concern is deemed complex or serious.

An Incident Record and/or Injury and Trauma Record may also need to be completed in line with sections [85-87](#) of the Regulations if a child is injured ([R 85\(a\)](#)), becomes ill ([R 85\(b\)](#)), or suffers from a trauma ([R 85\(c\)](#)) (refer to Accident, Incident and Trauma Guiding Principle).

Under no circumstances are educators to use any form of physical or verbal punishment with any child

Families are required to:

- listen to concerns of educators encouraging ongoing open communication between educators and families
- discuss incidents of inappropriate behaviour with child, set consequences and follow through

- participate in meetings, formal or informal, with educators or other involved parties when requested
- assist and abide by guiding children's behaviour plans developed
- attend **all** interviews scheduled with nominated supervisor/educator and follow up requests to access appointments from external agencies, therapists etc requested by the service
- work with educators to implement appropriate consequences at home and be consistent with their approach
- provide educators with regular feedback on behaviour at home
- strongly discourage retaliation and support children in feeling comfortable approaching educators if another child has behaved inappropriately toward them
- sign any "Guiding Children's Behaviour Incident Reports" written regarding their child.

Under no circumstances are families allowed to approach a child or other family in relation to the behaviour of their own or another child. All concerns are to be raised with the nominated supervisor/educators at a mutually convenient time

Unacceptable behaviour

Including but not limited to:

- verbal and/or physical aggression against a child, educator or any other person in the service
- swearing, spitting, vandalism or theft of property which belongs to the service, school or other children
- ignoring or disobeying instructions or requests given by educators, speaking rudely or answering back
- intentionally throwing or breaking equipment/resources, including the intention to hurt or hit an educator or child
- absconding or attempting to leave the education and care service
- biting
- bullying.

In the case of unacceptable behaviour, educators are to complete the Guiding Children's Behaviour Incident Report (attached).

Biting

Biting occurs with children of varied ages for a range of reasons. Educators and staff aim to identify why a child may be biting and the most effective way to respond.

One of the most effective methods to eliminate biting is to provide consistent responses to the child by educators and families to ensure a clear message is demonstrated to the child (see attached information sheet).

When a child has been bitten, first aid is to be administered, Incident Record and/or Injury and Trauma Record to be completed and both families to be informed of the incident, maintaining confidentiality at all times. The nominated supervisor/FDC educator will implement the following procedure:

- Any biting incidents which result in skin breaking must be washed with warm soapy water and the biting child's mouth rinsed with water only.
- Both families will be notified after any biting incident has occurred.
- Biting will be discussed at a staff meeting and strategies will be developed (centre based).
- Document in staff reflection book reoccurrences of biting – educator will observe incidents carefully and assist in determining a pattern. FDC educators are to keep notes about any recurring biting behaviours in children and discuss concerns and possible patterns with their CDO or the nominated supervisor.
- A child may need to be monitored by educators using "scrunchie system" (early childhood, centre based).

Information to be documented after each incident if behaviour recurring:

- which child/ren were bitten
- age ranges of child/ren
- does the biting child have any language difficulties
- what body parts were bitten
- degree of bite e.g. broken skin, bruising
- location of incident - indoors or outdoors
- was the biting a result of conflict
- what activities were taking place at the time of the incident (i.e. transition times)
- what time did the biting incidents occur (educators to be made aware of this period - centre based)
- what days of the week
- health of biting child; i.e. teething, illness, hearing, language, emotional.

The attached information sheet will be sent home to all families on a regular basis - attached to newsletters or at the discretion of the nominated supervisor.

A meeting should occur with families once a pattern has been identified.

After these strategies have been implemented, further possible solutions will be discussed at the Education and Care Management Team meeting.

Bullying

A significant body of research has been undertaken in the area of bullying. A summary of key information is outlined below:

- Children are often bullied because of a perceived difference. The difference can be related to culture, gender, ability, religion, medical conditions, physical appearance or being new to a child care centre/ service or school.
- There are several ways that a child may be bullied; this can be in the form of verbal, physical, social, psychological behaviour or cyber bullying.
- Bullying always involves a power imbalance.
- Reported current statistics show 1 in 4 children are bullied on a weekly basis in Australian schools. True figures would be higher as all bullying is not reported.

- We encourage children to seek help from others if they are being bullied. This is most frequently through a peer, mother, father and/or teacher.
- Informing others about bullying decreases as children get older.
- The majority of children are supportive of victims and would like to see bullying stopped.
- Family attitudes opposing bullying play a significant role in stopping a child from bullying others.

Educators will:

- remind children that it is their right to feel safe and happy whilst at our service however they have a responsibility to be kind and fair to others.
- role model positive and responsible behaviour.
- encourage children's friendships and empathy towards the feelings of others.
- promote positive problem solving strategies and assertiveness amongst the children attending the service and encourage strategies for children to use for dealing with teasing and bullying.
- foster children's confidence and reassure them they can approach educators with any problems they have and that their concerns will be respected.
- provide families with information on bullying and engage their support in creating an environment that promotes a disapproval of bullying behaviours.
- monitor/observe children's interactions throughout the daily program to identify if forms of bullying are evident.
- encourage families to advise the nominated supervisor/ educator if their child has disclosed that they are being bullied at the centre/service.
- discuss expectations and guidelines with the children, encouraging their input in developing group rules.
- reassure children on a regular basis that educators want to know if there is a problem and that it is OK to tell them. Educators will reassure children that educators will keep matters confidential should the child request so. If child is not comfortable talking to an educator then promote peer mediation.
- provide positive strategies for peers to disclose information on bullying if confided in by a friend.
- be made aware of any warning signs or indicators e.g. mood swings, refusal to attend service, marks / bruises on body, any conditions such as ADHD and special needs which may explain the behaviour.
- talk to the children about bullying.
- reassure children that it is ok to be different and to accept their peers' differences.

Under no circumstances is a family allowed to approach a child or other family in relation to the behaviour of their own or another child. All concerns are to be raised with the nominated supervisor/ educators at a mutually convenient time.

Procedure – managing bullying in services including FDC services

- Educators to discuss undesirable behaviour with the child and the impact it has upon the other child/ren in reference to their bullying and encourage the child to explain why. Educators will request child to cease this behaviour and a verbal warning will be given.
- Reassure and support the victim.

- If a child continues bullying others, the child will receive last verbal warning and / or consequences identified (i.e. miss sport, activity etc).
- Educators will devise agreement with child outlining expectations.
- The nominated supervisor / educators will discuss concerns and agreement with family.
- If necessary make an appointment with the family to discuss the child's behaviour. Depending on the age of the child it may be appropriate for the child to attend the meeting. Alternatively it may be more appropriate to have a separate meeting with family without the child initially.
- Agree to a trial period for the agreed behaviour management strategies.
- Failure to adhere to the contract / individual agreement during this trial will lead to termination of care.
- Any repeated acts of aggression, intimidation or failure to follow educators' instructions will lead to immediate termination of care.
- It is recommended that experiences and activities that promote social skills programs are incorporated into centres' programs throughout the year (all children to take part).
- Have regular discussions in group time about bullying.

Tips for talking about bullying

- Listen
- Stay calm
- Summarise the problem
- Agree that there is a problem
- Let the child know it is ok to talk to someone about bullying
- Praise the child
- Make it clear to the child that you will help
- Talk about why people bully
- Steer clear of negative comments.

Consequences of unacceptable behaviour

The consequences of unacceptable behaviour will vary depending on the severity of the behaviour. **No form of corporal punishment or demeaning criticism is acceptable within our service, nor is rough treatment of a child acceptable. Under no circumstances is an educator to take the direction from a parent to use corporal punishment.**

Unacceptable behaviour will be assessed individually considering the following:

1. Frequency of unacceptable behaviour - this needs to be consistently documented
2. Safety of the child, other children, educators, families or visitors
3. Age of child.

Action plan checklist

- Observe behaviour, document and analyse. Consider patterns or triggers. Discuss with the team and nominated supervisor to identify strategies. All educators to have access to the documented strategies (centre-based). FDC educators are to discuss this with their CDO or nominated supervisor and develop strategies that are used in the FDC service.
- Educators to have a quiet word with child to highlight the behaviour and why it is unacceptable (e.g. throwing equipment may cause another child to be hurt) and redirect to an alternate activity.
- Temporarily remove child from activity and /or other children to further discuss behaviour. Redirect as necessary to anticipate inappropriate behaviours and to prevent injury to others and themselves.
- Clear alternatives will assist the child to develop their decision making skills.
- The thinking or reflecting area is only used for short periods and aims to provide the child with an opportunity to calm down and think about their behaviour. During reflecting time educators to discuss with the child appropriate responses should further incidents arise e.g. playing with a different group of children.
- Loss of privileges, the child may be unable to use particular equipment/resources or participate in activities until an improvement in behaviour (OOSH).
- Educators to discuss any concerns with a child's behaviour with the nominated supervisor (centre-based). FDC educator is to discuss concerns with their CDO or nominated supervisor.
- Informal discussion with families, informing them of behavioural issues occurring.
- When considering positive behaviour guidance strategies and techniques, it is important that educators consider the context of the situation as well as the behaviour itself.
- If behaviour continues to persist, families will be required to attend a formal meeting with the nominated supervisor/educators and a member of the Senior Management Team to discuss the behavioural incidents and to form a joint plan of action to modify behaviour. For the wellbeing of the child it is imperative that the plan is maintained and followed by educators and families.
- Seek advice from outside agencies such as a counsellor, school teachers, additional needs teacher, doctors etc. (if required).
- Families and educators to work through the plan of action (developed for the child through consultation with all of the above). At this time a review period is to be set and a written record of strategies and expectations completed.
- After the agreed review period the situation is to be reassessed.
- If improvement can be detected the plan of action will continue – and be modified as necessary.
- If the plan of action does not seem to be improving the situation, the following strategies will be considered:
 - **If the child displays violent behaviour constantly, deliberate with intention to injure another child or educator, the child will be immediately sent home**
 - Reduction of hours and days the child uses care
 - Situation reassessed after an agreed period of time
 - Manager Children, Youth & Families to be consulted
 - Aggressive, violent behaviour will be observed and the nominated supervisor will decide if the child will remain in care for the rest of the day.

The need for children to be excluded from a service is rare and would be carried out only after all steps have been followed. This situation will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Each case is to be individual, with all factors considered. However, should at any time the behaviour of a child put at significant risk the safety or wellbeing of themselves, another child, educators, other families and/or visitors, care will be terminated immediately.

When a child has a plan of action in place while using one of Council's 0-5 years services, this will also be carried over to any OOSH service when the child moves on to school. A new meeting will be arranged with all previous involved parties as well as the nominated supervisor of the OOSH service that the child wishes to attend. If days and hours are part of the plan of action these will continue in the OOSH service and will be reviewed at an agreed date in the future.

Attachments

	Page No.
Guiding Children's Behaviour Incident Report	11
Behaviour Support Plan	12
Biting Information for Families	16

Related Legislation and Online Resources

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#): Section [168](#), [Part 4.2](#) and [Part 4.5](#)
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), [National Quality Standards](#): Quality Areas 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 5.1, 5.1.2 & 5.2.2
- Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment - [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia](#) (EYLF)
- Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment - [My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia](#) (MTOP)
- Raising Children Network (Australia) Limited - [Encouraging good behaviour: 15 tips](#) – suitable for 1-8yrs
- [Triple P Positive Parenting Program](#)
- [Australian parenting website raisingchildren.net.au – Bullying: how to spot the signs](#)
- [Headspace – Bullying factsheet](#)
- [Bullying No Way: Facts about bullying and violence](#)

Related Documents and Council Policies

- Cumberland City Council Education and Care Guiding Principles:
 - [Immunisation, Infectious Diseases & Illness Exclusion](#)
 - [First Aid](#)
 - [Accident, Incident and Trauma](#)
- Cumberland City Council Education and Safe Work Procedure:
 - Managing aggressive outbursts from children

Authorisation & Version Control

Guiding Principle owner	<i>Manager Children, Youth and Families</i>
Authorised by	<i>Education and Care Management Team</i>
ECM no.	<i>8484497</i>
Implementation date	<i>September 2021</i>

GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR Incident Report

Service:

Name of child:

Date of incident: Time of incident:

Witnessed by:

What occurred before the incident?

.....

.....

The incident:

.....

.....

After the incident:

.....

.....

Follow up, including resources needed to improve behaviour:

.....

.....

Any further action:

.....

.....

Review date: Educator's name:

Educator's signature:

Family's name: Family's signature:

Office use only (to be used if a parent refuses to sign the form):

Has the family been notified: Yes / No

Notified by (Educator's name): Date family notified:

BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT PLAN

Child's name:		Child's D.O.B:
Service name:	Date of plan:	Date of review:
Days and times of attendance:		Care environment:
Plan written by:		Parent/Guardian:
Persons involved in developing plan:		
<p>Child's background Information:</p> <p><i>In this section you would include any background information about the child. This might include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Family information</i> • <i>Culture</i> • <i>Languages spoken</i> • <i>Family structure</i> • <i>Place in family</i> • <i>Disability or diagnosis</i> • <i>Development</i> • <i>Medical history – health/diet/medication</i> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>		

Short term goals:

Short term goals for the child should be identified and listed here. These include goals or outcomes that can be achieved immediately or within a short period of time.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Long term goals:

Long term goals for the child should be developed and listed here. These are the goals that will take longer to achieve or that will occur over a longer period of time.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Behaviour/Concerns	Triggers/Antecedents	Supporting and Intervention Strategies	Preventative Strategies
<i>List the concerning behaviours the child is displaying identifying the exact behaviours</i>	<i>Identify any observed or known triggers or patterns of the concerning behaviour e.g. frustration, group settings, Inability to communicate, tiredness, feeling unwell, transitions, certain times of day</i>	<i>Clearly list the strategies/actions and steps that will be used to address the behaviours when they occur. These strategies should be developed considering the short term and long term goals. Strategies must be clear, detailed and suitable to the environment.</i>	<i>Detail the strategies that will be used as part of an early plan approach. These will include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Intentional teaching strategies – to be included at calm times of the day and alternate or replacement skills to be taught such as communication skills, social skills, problem solving skills etc</i> <i>• Environment modifications – e.g. resources, equipment or materials that need to be added to the environment such as a calm space to retreat, ensuring items that calm the child are available at all times etc</i> <i>• Routine strategies – e.g. modifications to the routine to support the child i.e. consistent transitions</i>

Review Process	Internal support	External support
<p><i>This section identifies details about the review, i.e.:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Who will be involved in reviewing the plan</i> • <i>How will they will be involved</i> • <i>What methods will be used to review the plan</i> • <i>When will the reviewal process take place?</i> • <i>How will this be communicated to those involved</i> 	<p><i>This refers to any support required by any of the caregivers – Early Childhood Education and Care service or the child's family</i></p>	<p><i>This section is used to provide details about any external support – for example agencies or support services</i></p>

Family Agreement

In this section you will identify any follow up actions that are required by the family. Ensure that actions are measurable and set an achievable time frame; e.g.:

- *Book in appointment with medical professional*
- *Obtain and provide Medical report*
- *Complete and bring in communication book daily*

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Family name:

Signature:

Educator name & position:

Signature:



CUMBERLAND
CITY COUNCIL

BITING INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

Overview

Biting is normal behaviour for infants and toddlers, who naturally explore the world with their mouths. So the goal is to teach them to know the difference between things they should bite (food, teething rings) and what they should not bite (people).

The key is to accept the emotions for what they are and to set clear limits, even at a very early age, on aggressive behaviour.

If your child does bite, say calmly but firmly “We don’t bite. Biting hurts” and remove them quickly from the situation.

Your child needs you to understand their feelings and they need your help to manage them.

Unfortunately problems such as biting do not disappear overnight and anguish is experienced by **ALL** who are involved:

- the child who has bitten
- the family of the child who has bitten
- educators at the centre/service.

Some reasons why children bite

1. **Natural curiosity/exploration** - Biting is one way that infants explore their world
2. **Teething** - Their gums feel sore
3. **Frustration or excitement** - Frustration happens when children get into situations that they cannot handle
4. **Attention seeking** - Children will seek attention even though it is negative
5. **Powerlessness** - In groups a child can discover that biting is a way of getting some power
6. **Stress** - Biting often occurs when children are under emotional stress that they cannot handle. This biting is an expression of distress and pain
7. **Limited communication skills** - Children cannot express their needs in words.

What to do about biting

- Do not smack. If you are holding the child when he/she bites, put the child down immediately (children soon learn it’s better to get a cuddle than be on the floor, alone).
- Do not bite your child (it only teaches them that if you can do it, it’s OK for them to keep doing it).
- Watch your child – learn what situations or times they are more likely to bite, e.g. in a large group, when they are tired, when they are with younger or older children etc.

Cumberland City Council

16 Memorial Avenue, PO Box 42, Merrylands NSW 2160.

T 8757 9000 W cumberland.nsw.gov.au E council@cumberland.nsw.gov.au

 Cumberland City Council Sydney  [cumberlandcitycouncil](https://twitter.com/cumberlandcitycouncil)

- Say clearly “NO BITING, BITING HURTS” if your child bites another person.
- Remove the child from the activity. Depending on the age of the child, explain why this is not acceptable behaviour.
- Help children to find other ways to express their feelings, such as through stories and play.
- Provide a wide range of chewable toys and teething rings for children to bite on.
- Teach your child gentle ways of showing affection and excitement such as cuddling and stroking.
- Young children need close adult supervision, especially if they are known to bite.
- If a child bites another child while playing, give the toys and attention to the injured child.
- Try to deal calmly with the “biter” as he/she is probably feeling upset and overwhelmed by the situation too.
- If your child has bitten another child, or has been bitten, make sure you work with your child care provider to deal with the situation as quickly and effectively as you can.
- Apply these strategies at home so that the child’s biting is managed consistently.

Remember

- It is **better to avoid situations** than deal with them after someone is bitten.
- It is **normal**, though undesirable.
- Children grow out of it, usually when their verbal skills improve.
- By age two biting regularly appears in times of high frustration or stress. By age three it is rare.

For any further advice, please speak to the nominated supervisor/educator who would be more than happy to offer some advice and information books from the service’s parent library (centre-based). In Family Day Care (FDC), please speak with your FDC educator or coordination unit.

Reference

- [Raising Children Network](#)
- [Parenting South Australia Government](#)
- www.careforKids.com.au