

# **Our Lady of Hope Greenwith Campus Outside School Hours Care**



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## **POLICY DOCUMENT**

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### **INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN**

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## BACKGROUND

The implementation of the National Quality Framework sees the introduction of a learning framework—My Time, Our Place—for school age children in education and care settings. This framework recognises the valuable role OSHC services play in the lives of children and families. My Time, Our Place sets a vision for children’s learning through play and leisure, in contrast to the expectations in classroom settings. We are implementing a new behaviour system at OSHC in line with OLOH and Greenwith schools called “Play is the Way” This is an exciting program with positive learning for our stud

## POLICY STATEMENT

The Our Lady of Hope Greenwith Campus OSHC service uses the My Time, Our Place Framework for School Age Care in Australia to underpin the operational development of the service and ensure that the needs of each child are addressed. Our philosophy states the service’s purpose and direction underpins all policies and procedures. The ethos of our service is to value each of our OSHC educators and enable them to access professional development and training. This informs them of the latest research findings that will guide and empower them to effectively support and nurture children. This will enable us to uphold our mission statement, growing through meaningful interactions

## RELATIONSHIP

Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other policies/Service documentation	Other legislation/Guidelines
168	1, 5.1, 5.2 & 7	Philosophy Statement	My Time, Our Place
155 & 156			

## HOW THE POLICY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED

### GENERAL

My Time, Our Place contains broad principles that support practice and reflect contemporary theories and research regarding children’s play, leisure and learning. The principles of secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships, partnerships, high expectations, equity and respect for diversity should guide interactions with children. ‘Educators who are attuned to children’s thoughts and feelings support the development of a strong sense of wellbeing and social competencies’ (My Time, Our Place, p10). Educators who strive to build strong connections with children contribute to their sense of belonging, fairness and self-esteem. ‘Partnerships are based on effective communication which builds the foundations of understanding about each other’s expectations and attitudes and build on the strength of each others’ knowledge’ (ibid). Important qualities for educators when building relationships with children include fairness, integrity, authenticity, humour, sympathy, understanding and open communication. The practices and outcomes identified in My Time, Our Place will guide educators in their interactions with children.

Reflective practice is another principle underpinning the school age care framework. It is central to sustaining high quality programs and interactions with children, bringing theory and practice together. This enables learning from experiences and to adapt and develop practices in the light of new understandings. Learning together with children and colleagues draws upon the diverse knowledge, experiences, views and attitudes of individuals within the group. Being reflective means being open to change and examining current beliefs, attitudes and knowledge while constantly looking for ways to improve. Services implement reflective practice by providing time for educators to examine aspects of service delivery: firstly, how it is done then, questioning why it is done this way. This examination allows educators to reflect on current theory as well as attitudes and beliefs, which may influence their views. Inquiry may increase levels of cultural appropriateness and reveal practices that may impact on children’s wellbeing.

## PROMOTING PARTICIPATION

Participation is an ongoing process of engagement and involvement through which children and young people:

- are actively listened to
- are supported to express their views
- have their views valued and documented
- are involved in decision-making processes

The underpinning principles of the Child Protection Act 1999, section 5, clearly emphasise participation by children and young people, respect for their rights, consideration of their views and, where possible, involvement in decision-making processes affecting their lives.

## INCLUSION POLICY

Our OSHC service is committed to providing an environment with activities and experiences that encourage all children to learn, extend their skills and have fun. The service will offer care for children from diverse cultural, linguistic and economic backgrounds and for children with varying developmental, physical and intellectual abilities. The program will be developed to accommodate the needs of all children in our care. The service will actively promote the positive aspects of diversity and encourage acceptance and appreciation of individual differences. Staff will respect individual differences and treat everyone without bias, prejudice or reference to stereotyping, and will encourage the children to reciprocate these ideals.

How the policy will be implemented:

- The individuality of all children and staff will be respected.
- The service is respectful of staff, children and families all backgrounds, and structures the program to assist these individuals wherever possible.
- Programming will be inclusive of each individual's cultural needs and differences as much as possible; diversity will be celebrated. This assists children in understanding and appreciating cultural diversity.
- The service will actively seek input from cultural identities within the local community.
- Children with disabilities and additional needs will be included into the service once appropriate levels of support to facilitate effective inclusion are available. This may include some physical facilities, specialised staff training, and additional staff.
- A positive relationship is formed with all families of children with additional needs to learn more about their child/ren, his/her requirements and the expectations of the family.
- Staff will help children to show understanding, acceptance and respect for individual differences by modelling appropriate behaviour and using opportunities such as informal discussions during play to address issues of fairness and justice.
- Staff will encourage children to communicate with each other respectfully and to be fair to one another.
- The service will program equitably for everyone and, where possible, offer opportunities for activities to be done individually or collaboratively, providing the children with choice within the service.
- The service identifies and encourages children's differing special qualities and ensures that programming enables each child to succeed.
- Resources will be monitored within the service to ensure that there is no evidence of stereotyping, bias and discrimination.
- To ensure that all children are receiving optimal care within the service, staff will participate in professional development and training and have ready access to reference materials within the service.

## BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICY

Our OSHC service is committed to meeting the needs of the children in care in a way that fosters a positive and nurturing environment. The safety of all children and educators is a priority. Children and educators are to be treated respectfully. The behaviour management process at OSHC is guided by the intentions, language and learning from **Play is the Way**. Play is the way is a practical methodology for teaching social and emotional skills using guided play, classroom activities and an empowering language. Both Our Lady of Hope Campus and Greenwith Campus utilise Play is the Way as an integral part of behaviour management and learning, developing student's personal and social capabilities.

### **We believe that to effectively guide children's behaviour we need to:**

- ensure children are continually guided positively and encouraged towards acceptable and inclusive behaviour in order to maintain their self-esteem, dignity and personal integrity
- guide children to recognise personal responsibility and self-discipline
- acknowledge that children can learn from their mistakes
- be fair and consistent
- place focus on the behaviour and not the child when guiding behaviour
- recognise that a child's behaviour is affected by a multitude of factors, including age, physical environment, time of day, staff and other children's actions, family experiences and cultural backgrounds
- work together with families and educators to build positive relationships
- provide a wide and varied program
- seek input from families and children when reviewing behaviour management policy, to encourage ownership and acceptance.

### **The behavioural expectations are as follows:**

- We respect and care for ourselves, other people and property.
- We work and play safely and cooperatively.
- We follow directions of educators.
- We stay inside the supervised boundaries.

### **Positive behaviour reinforcement plan:**

**Play is the Way** provides a framework where children can feel validated to explore the unknown and build on their own personalities to become strong individuals. **Play is the Way** focuses on behaviour education, where the development of personal and social capabilities is utilised to teach self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and social management.

**Play is the Way** has 5 main concepts which have been developed in order to act as guidelines for developing positive actions and a rounded character. These concepts will be reinforced within our OSHC to promote positive behaviour amongst the children and aim to increase the positive atmosphere.

Key concept 1: **Have reasons for the things you say and do**

Key concept 2: **It takes great strength to be sensible**

Key concept 3: **Pursue your personal best no matter who you work with**

Key concept 4: **Be brave – Participate to progress**

Key concept 5: **Treat others the way you would like to be treated**

A core belief of **Play is the Way** is the importance of manners.

Our positive behaviour plan will aim at having one of these 5 + the theme manners as main concepts for a positive behaviour focus each week. For example, week 1 could focus on key concept 1 "have reason for the things you say and do" and then the next week could focus on key concept 2 "it takes great strength to be sensible".

With each week having a concept to focus on, educators proactively look out for children that are displaying positive behaviours of the target key concept. Examples of what positive behaviour for each concept could look like are identified below.

**Key concept 1: Have reasons for the things you say and do**

- Helping others without being asked
- Being a good friend to others
- Thinking before you do

**Key concept 2: It takes great strength to be sensible**

- Children removing themselves from situations which are not necessarily the right ones to be in
- Children generally being sensible and doing the right thing

**Key concept 3: Pursue your personal best no matter who you work with**

- Children engaging in activities positive with other children who may not necessarily be their friends
- Putting your all into activities no matter who is in your group

**Key concept 4: Be brave – Participate to progress**

- Fully engaging in activities
- Taking on new groups that a child may not be familiar with
- Testing their 'their comfort zone'

**Key concept 5: Treat others the way you would like to be treated**

- Being inclusive in group games
- Sharing with others

**Manners: Respect for all**

- Use of please, thank you, turn taking etc

**Reward system:**

Educators will use the language and concepts of **Play is the Way** in assisting children to develop appropriate behaviour skills. This will include positive recognition of desirable behaviour as outlined. Educators will acknowledge positive behaviours with positive language/ responses, stickers, first person to have a turn etc. Educators will give a child a certificate to recognise outstanding positive behaviours. The certificates will be put in the child's portfolio.

Positive behaviour reaching (3 certificates) within a term will be rewarded by letting the child/ren choose from the prize box, celebrating that child's positive achievement and behaviour. This extended reward system is aimed to encourage the continuation of positive behaviour showing our gratitude to those who continue to go above and beyond at OSHC.

Our **Behaviour Guidance & Re-think** process follow the goal of educating the children to be in control of their own behaviour, teaching the children to assess their behaviour and develop an awareness of a better option – see below.

I was doing the **RIGHT THING** *or* the **WRONG THING**.

I was making a **STRONG DECISION** *or* a **WEAK DECISION**.

My **FEELINGS** *or* **THINKING** were in charge of my actions.

I was **RUNNING AWAY** from *or* **DEALING** with the problem.

Using this language, the children will be empowered to be the boss of their own behaviour /choices whilst learning that educators are there to help them not hurt them.

Our intention is to assist the children at OSHC to develop and learn. We believe that our behaviour guidance consequences are designed to educate the children and support them to make better choices. The following process will be introduced when expectations are not being followed:

1 – An **informal reminder** is given to the child about their behaviour drawing links to the language and expectations of **Play is the Way**

2 – **Reflection time** or a **conversation with an Educator** is given to the child to provide opportunity to review their own behaviour and ensure they are emotionally ready to rejoin other children at the service.

3 – A **formal reminder** is given to the child about their behaviour drawing links to the language and expectations of **Play is the Way**

4 – A **re-think\*** will be given to the child and will be discussed with families upon collection. Parent/carer to sign.

## **Definitions**

### **Rethink:**

A rethink is an opportunity for a child to reflect on their actions and how their actions have affected others. The aim of a rethink is to help the child to reflect, learn and develop. Parents are informed of all rethinks and urged to discuss and support their child in making appropriate choices moving forward. In the event a child receives three rethinks in a term they will be given a step – that is the 4<sup>th</sup> rethink incident is also counted as STEP 1. Three rethinks then result in the 4<sup>th</sup> rethink being also STEP 2 and so on. This process resets at the start of each term. The behaviour resulting in a rethink must be recorded in the behaviour book for all staff to read and sign. The rethink sheets will be filed in a behaviour folder in the office.

### **Step:**

A step is a notification of inappropriate behaviour that has persisted on three occasions despite the formal and informal support and/or against OSHC values. The next incident (4<sup>th</sup>) will record a step. Parents are notified of all steps and are urged to discuss this with their child/ren to ensure the child understands their actions and to assist the prevention of this behaviour reoccurring in the future. The behaviour resulting in a step must be recorded in the behaviour book and signed by all staff. The rethink sheets will be filed in a behaviour folder in the office.

## **Rethink consequences**

### **Rethink 1:**

- Child fills out rethink reflection sheet, the parent/carer notified and to sign rethink form after discussion with educator. Rethinks are recorded in the behaviour folder.

### **Rethink 2:**

- Child fills out rethink reflection sheet, the parent/carer notified and to sign rethink form after discussion with educator. Rethinks are recorded in the behaviour folder.

### **Rethink 3: (equivalent to 1 step)**

- Child fills out rethink reflection sheet, the parent/carer notified and to sign rethink form after discussion with educator. A **Step** is received, and parents are informed.
- Recorded in behaviour folder

## **Step consequences**

### **Step 1:**

- Parent/carer is called/ notified of step and a discussion about potential ways to minimise repetitive/ unacceptable behaviour
- Recorded in behaviour book
- Child/ren allocated to groups/areas at the discretion of staff

### **Step 2:**

- Parent/carer attends a meeting/discussion about inappropriate behaviour and potential ways to minimise this
- Child/ren allocated to groups/areas at the discretion of staff

### **Step 3:**

- Child/ren will take place in targeted play where they will have their group and play determined by the leadership team

### **Step 4:**

- Child/ren will be suspended from the OSHC service
- Parent/carer attends a meeting/discussion about their child's return to OSHC and how we will work together to support them prior to return to service

### **Step 5:**

- After a suspension the child has a fresh start
- At the beginning of each term every child has a fresh start

### **Step 6:**

- A suspension can be given by the director for any extreme unsafe/violent behaviour directed towards children or staff without adhering to the rethink process or above steps

### **Step 7:**

- If after repeated conversations with families it becomes apparent that the family is not willing to work in partnership with the OSHC Service, or the child is unable to successfully attend the OSHC service with compromising the safety and wellbeing of staff and other children, then expulsion may occur. Expulsion is a last resort and will only be considered after all other reasonable options have been considered. The decision to expel a child from the program will need to be made in consultation with and approved by the Principal.

In addition to the process directly involving the children/families educators will ensure notes regarding behaviour instances are made in the behaviour book. These records will then be moved to the child's blue folder.

## MANAGING CONFLICT THROUGH MEDIATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The OSHC service recognises that the service will run most effectively when there is minimal conflict and that any conflict is resolved quickly. We recognise that mediation is an effective tool in achieving this and it is actively promoted within the service.

Mediators promote constructive communication, help disputants take responsibility for their own actions, clarify their needs and feelings and focus on mutual needs and interests.

Mediators help people in a conflict to work together to resolve the dispute. This principle acknowledges that children in conflicts (disputants) have the wisdom within them to resolve their own disputes. The mediator guides and helps this to happen.

Staff are expected to use the mediation process with children's disputes.

### What is mediation?

- Mediation is a fair way to resolve conflict. A mediator does not take sides but serves as an impartial listener and facilitator to help people in conflict come to an agreement.
- Mediation is workable because the disputants solve their own conflict and their feelings are dealt with.
- Mediation focuses on problem solving rather than on blaming, punishment or revenge.
- Mediation enables the child to own and accept his/her behaviour and the consequences because the child has been involved in resolving the conflict through the mediation process.
- In order for mediation to effectively resolve conflict, the mediator needs to be an active listener, which involves:
  1. Putting yourself in the other person's place to understand what the person is saying and how she/he feels.
  2. Showing understanding and interest by your:
    - tone of voice
    - facial expression
    - gestures
    - eye contact
    - body language.
  3. Do not:
    - interrupt
    - offer advice
    - give suggestions.
  4. Reflect and paraphrase what the person has said to ensure that your understanding of the situation is accurate.
  5. Ask questions to clarify what is being said.
  6. Repeat in your own words what you think the person means.

### Rules for mediation to occur

- If the problem is to be solved, the mediator and disputants must agree on the following points:
  1. One person speaks at a time, no interrupting.
  2. Everyone listens to each other.
  3. Everyone is honest.
  4. No 'put downs' should be expressed.
- The mediator will be fair and not take sides.

### Mediation steps

- Decide who will talk first, then ask:
  1. What is the problem?
  2. How do you feel?
  3. What do you want to happen?



4. What is the plan/solution?
  - Work with suggestions until disputants develop one they are both happy with.
  - There may be more than one problem.
  - Make sure all problems are solved.
  - Check that both disputants are happy with the plan.
5. How can you avoid the problem happening again?
  - In closing, tell the disputants the problem is solved.

### Strategies for resolving conflicts

1. Take turns
2. Share
3. Compromise
4. Apologise
5. Get help
6. Avoid
7. Humour
8. Allow chances

### Handling difficult situations

1. What are the likely problems?
  - Are they telling the truth?
  - Is there a lack of willingness to solve the problem?
  - Is there an inability to explain the situation due to low self-esteem, powerlessness or unequal power?
2. Strategies to counter difficulties
  - Review rules and agreements (ie the importance of honesty).
  - Separate disputants and talk to them individually, and then try to solve the problem all together.
  - Allow disputants a cool-off period until they are willing to participate.

### What if one person won't agree to mediate?

- Staff member asks what will happen/are the consequences if the problem is not sorted out. Then ask if that is what the disputant wants to happen.
  - No** Then it will help to mediate.
  - Yes** Then I can't help you now. If you change your mind I will help you.  
(This disputant then suffers the consequence.)
- The person who did want help needs to carry on until such time that the other disputant is willing to enter into mediation.

## **HARASSMENT POLICY**

Our OSHC service is a place of belonging where each person has the right, to feel safe and secure at all times and the responsibility to make it happen, and so we seek to live justly, through our mutual respect for each other.

### ***WHAT IS HARASSMENT?***

Harassment is any repeated action, which threatens, hurts, frightens, embarrasses or humiliates a person.

Some examples are:

- Fighting, pushing, shoving, gestures
- Picking on others
- Threats
- Name calling, put downs, etc
- Offensive language, notes or graffiti about others
- Repeatedly teasing, making fun of others
- Spreading stories about someone or their family
- Intimidating anyone or their family by 'nuisance' actions e.g. telephone calls, chain letters

### ***Other forms of HARASSMENT:-***

#### **Racist:**

- Calling a person names or saying unpleasant things because of their culture, background or language
- Telling jokes or showing offensive material that is degrading to a person of a different racial background
- Deliberately excluding others because of their race

#### **Sexual:**

- Inappropriate touching or brushing against someone
- Unwelcome staring, whistling, gesturing or making comments about someone's body, looks or clothes
- Writing and/or distributing rude/unpleasant notes about someone
- Telling jokes or showing reading material/pictures that are offensive
- Making suggestive comments of a sexual nature
- Making comments about someone's sexuality

### ***HARASSMENT CAN OCCUR***

For example .....

- Between children
- From a child to a staff member
- From a staff member to a child
- Between staff members
- From a parent to a staff member
- Between parents
- From a parent to a child

## WHAT SHOULD BE DONE WHEN BEING HARASSED?

### A

Ignore it.

Result	
Harassment stops	Harassment doesn't stop. Go to B, C or D



### B

Ask the person who is harassing you to stop. Tell him/her how his/her actions make you feel. If this is difficult for you to do, ask one of the staff to help you.

Result	
Harassment stops	Harassment doesn't stop. Go to C or D



### C

Go to your parent, staff member or any adult you can trust for help.

- ☐ Talk openly about the problem
- ☐ Staff to take appropriate action to include:
  - ☐ Interviewing all children named by the victim
  - ☐ All children interviewed individually
  - ☐ Follow up action depending on results of interviews
  - ☐ If further action needed to be referred to the Director

Result	
Harassment stops	Harassment doesn't stop. Go to D



### D

Go to the Director with staff or parent, or both

- ☐ Talk openly about problem
- ☐ Allow the Director to take suitable action to control the problem, or to refer the matter to outside authorities.

**Stages may be skipped for cases of serious harassment.**

## Resources/References

It is recommended that services have some reference material that underpins their practice. The following names provide useful reference points for internet searches: Dr Louise Porter, Ben Furman, William Glasser, Dianne Nixon and Katy Gould.

1. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at [www.unicef.org/crc/](http://www.unicef.org/crc/)
2. Child Protection Act 1999
3. DECD Discipline in Schools Policy  
[www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/SchoolDisciplinePolicy.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/SchoolDisciplinePolicy.pdf)
4. DECD Protective Practices for Staff in Their Interactions with Students at  
[www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ProtectivePracticesforSta.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ProtectivePracticesforSta.pdf)
5. Guiding Children's Behaviour in a Positive Way—Article from Putting Child First Issue No 25, March 2008 at [www.acecqu.gov.au](http://www.acecqu.gov.au) (go to NCAC archives)
6. My Time, Our Place, Framework for School Age Care in Australia at [www.acecqua.gov.au](http://www.acecqua.gov.au) (go to publications)
7. CESA Guidelines

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(Chairperson)

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