



### 1. Purpose

St Paul Lutheran OSHC (SPLASH) recognises that respectful, responsive and positive relationships between educators and children are fundamental to children's wellbeing, learning and development.

This policy ensures that all interactions with children:

- are positive, responsive and respectful
- promote children's dignity and rights
- support children's sense of belonging, wellbeing and agency
- encourage positive peer relationships
- reflect the Christian values of respect, compassion and care.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all educators, staff, volunteers and students
- children attending the service
- families and authorised nominees
- all environments including excursions, transitions and digital interactions.

### 3. Background

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, approved providers must ensure that services implement policies and procedures that guide positive interactions with children.

Positive interactions are essential to:

- protect children's safety and wellbeing
- support learning and development
- build secure, respectful relationships
- promote a strong child safe culture.



### 4. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy is guided by:

#### National Law

Section/Regulation	Description
Section 165	Inadequate supervision
Section 166	Inappropriate discipline

#### National Regulations

Section/Regulation	Description
Regulation 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Regulation 166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
Regulation 168	Offence related to required programs
Regulation 169	Offence relating to staffing arrangements
Regulation 73	Educational Program
Regulation 84	Awareness of child protection law
Regulation 115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
Regulation 117A	Placing a person in day-to-day charge
Regulation 118	Educational Leader
Regulation 123	Educator to child ratios- centre-based services
Regulation 145	Staff Record
Regulation 155	Interactions with children
Regulation 156	Relationships in groups
Regulation 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

### 5. Policy Statement

SPLASH recognises each child as a capable, competent and active participant in their learning, consistent with our Reggio Emilia inspired philosophy.

Educators will:

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- build warm, trusting and respectful relationships
- support children’s voice, choice and agency
- model positive behaviour and respectful communication
- provide consistent, fair and supportive guidance
- support children to develop self-regulation and social skills.

All interactions will:

- maintain each child’s dignity and rights
- be responsive to children’s individual needs
- consider family, cultural and developmental factors
- promote inclusion, belonging and wellbeing.

### 6. Principles to inform our Policy

- We believe that positive educator to child interactions are central to ensuring quality outcomes for children’s education and care.
- We value the important role our educators and staff play in children’s education and care. We equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to interact positively with the children and promote relationships between children.
- All children attending our service are provided with a safe environment through the creation and maintenance of a child safe culture, and this extends to the safe use of digital technologies and online environments.
- Our educational program encourages children’s self-expression, promotes self-reliance, maintains their dignity and rights, gives positive guidance, and recognises their culture, values, and abilities. We regularly reflect on and refine the program as needed in this regard.

### 7. Key Terms

Term	Meaning	Source
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<p><b>ACECQA – Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority</b></p>	<p>The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.</p>	<p>acecqa.gov.au</p>
<p><b>Dignity and rights of the Child</b></p>	<p>Element 5.1.2 of the National Quality Standard (‘Dignity and rights of the child’) aims to achieve the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a universally agreed set of non-negotiable standards and obligations founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each child, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth status or ability. Article 19 of the Convention states that children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically, or mentally.</p>	<p>Guide to the NQF (Element 5.1.2)</p>
<p><b>Positive interactions between educators and children</b></p>	<p>Involves educators viewing each child as capable and competent, with a right to a voice, and able to contribute to decisions that affect them. This enables educators to focus their practices on children’s strengths and inclusion in the group environment.</p> <p>Educators who are responsive to children’s thoughts and feelings are supporting them to develop a strong sense of wellbeing. By interacting positively and meaningfully with children, educators help each child to feel accepted and to develop a sense of attachment and trust.</p> <p>Children who are supported to understand themselves experience a sense of belonging that fosters self-esteem which contributes to the development of identity and is critical to children’s capacity to understand their own strengths, abilities, and interests. When children feel safe, secure and supported, they develop confidence to explore and learn.</p>	<p>Guide to the NQF (Element 5.1.1) Early Years Learning Framework, p20 Framework for School Age Care, p19</p>



<p><b>Relationships between Children</b></p>	<p>When educators create supportive environments in which children experience mutually enjoyable, caring and respectful relationships, children respond accordingly.</p> <p>Positive relationships provide children with the confidence and agency to explore and learn about their world.</p> <p>As their relationships become more complex and far-reaching over time, children's interactions with others also help them to extend their knowledge, thinking and ability to apply what they already know in new and unfamiliar contexts.</p> <p>Developing effective relationships with others is a key part of children's social development and these relationships also provide a base for children's learning.</p>	<p>Guide to the NQF (Standard 5.20) Early Years Learning Framework, p25 Framework for School Age Care, p24</p>
<p><b>Relationships between educators and children</b></p>	<p>When children experience nurturing and respectful reciprocal relationships with educators they develop an understanding of themselves as competent, capable and respected. Consistent emotional support contributes to children developing a strong sense of wellbeing and belonging.</p> <p>Relationships are the foundation for the construction of identity, and help shape children's thinking about who they are, how they belong and what influences them.</p>	<p>Guide to the NQF (Standard 5.1) Early Years Learning Framework, p20 Framework for School Age Care, p19</p>

### 8. Links to other Policies

- providing a child safe environment
- safe use of digital technologies and online environments
- enrolment and orientation
- staffing
- governance and management

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### 9. Induction and Ongoing Training

- All leaders, educators and staff will be informed of the Interactions with Children Policy
  - during induction and regularly in daily practice.
- All families will be informed of the Interactions with Children Policy
  - During the enrolment process.
- The provider and all staff involved in management of the service will be provided with training around acceptance and refusal of authorisations which takes account of the Education & Care Law, National Regulations and the National Quality Standards.
- Training and information sharing to assist managers, co-ordinators, educators and other staff to fulfil their roles effectively, will include reference to the Interactions with Children Policy.

### 10. Monitoring, evaluation and review

SPLASH will:

- regularly reflect on educator interactions with children
- gather feedback from children and families
- review practices through staff meetings and observations
- update the policy in response to legislative or service changes

### 11. Policy Review

Last reviewed: March 2026

Date for next review: March 2027



## Procedural Guidelines

### 1. Reference to Policy and Philosophy

These procedures support the SPLASH Interactions with Children Policy and reflect the service's commitment to respectful, responsive and child-centred practice.

### 2. Procedures

#### 2.1 Educator-Child interactions

Educators will:

- Communicate respectfully using positive language
- Actively listen and respond to children's ideas and feelings
- Engage in meaningful conversations
- Support children's decision-making and independence
- Provide encouragement and positive reinforcement
- Model empathy, fairness and respect

#### 2.2 Supporting Children's Voice and Agency

Educators will:

- Encourage children to express their thoughts and opinions
- Involve children in decision-making and program planning
- Provide opportunities for choice and independence
- Respect children's ideas and contributions

#### 2.3 Behaviour Guidance

Educators will:

- Guide behaviour using positive, supportive strategies
- Support children to understand emotions and consequences
- Redirect inappropriate behaviour in a respectful way



- Avoid any form of corporal punishment or harsh discipline
- Support children to develop self-regulation skills

### 2.4 Child-to-Child Interactions

Educators will:

- Support children to build friendships and social skills
- Encourage cooperation and teamwork
- Facilitate inclusive play experiences
- Support children to resolve conflicts respectfully
- Promote empathy and understanding

### 2.5 Supporting Children to feel safe

Educators will:

- Create an environment where children feel safe to speak up
- Listen to children's concerns and respond appropriately
- Support children to identify trusted adults
- Follow child protection procedures where required

### 2.6 Inclusive Practice

Educators will:

- Respect each child's culture, identity and background
- Adapt interactions to meet individual needs
- Support children with additional needs
- Promote equity and inclusion

### 2.7 Group Size and Supervision

Educators will:

- Organise groups to support positive interactions
- Maintain appropriate educator-to-child ratios



- Ensure adequate supervision at all times
- Adjust groupings to minimise conflict and support engagement

### 2.7 Digital Interactions

When using digital technologies, educators will:

- Ensure interactions remain respectful and safe
- Supervise children’s online engagement
- Teach safe and appropriate online behaviour
- Follow the Safe Use of Digital Technologies Policy

### 2.8 Monitoring and Reflection

SPLASH will:

- Conduct regular reflections on interactions with children
- Discuss practices during team meetings
- Review programming to ensure positive interactions are embedded
- Support continuous improvement

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
<b>Approved Provider</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met</li> <li>• Refer to the National Model Code – Taking images in early childhood education and care and related guidelines when planning how often and when to take images and videos of a child during interactions</li> <li>• Ensure that the Safe use of digital technologies and online environments policy and procedures is also considered when interactions with children include digital technologies and online environments</li> <li>• Ensure that the service provides education and care to children in a way that:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ encourages the children to express themselves and their opinions</li> <li>○ allows the children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem</li> <li>○ maintains at all times the dignity and rights of each child</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ gives each child positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour</li> <li>○ has regard to the family and cultural values, age, and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child (regulation 155).</li> <li>• Ensure that the service provides children with opportunities to interact and develop respectful relationships with each other and with educators, staff and volunteers, having regard to the size and the composition of the groups in which children are being educated and cared for (regulation 156)</li> <li>• Ensure the service meets minimum educator and staff requirements, such as qualifications and educator to child ratios</li> <li>• Ensure all educators and staff, including volunteers and students, have undertaken current child protection legislation training, including for the mandatory reporting requirements and obligations in their jurisdiction</li> <li>• Ensure that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or inappropriate in the circumstances</li> <li>• Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the Interactions with children policy and procedures</li> <li>• Ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, coordinators, educators, staff, volunteers and families, and available for inspection</li> <li>• Notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or</li> <li>○ significantly impact the service’s education and care of children or</li> <li>○ significantly impact the family’s ability to utilise the service.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Nominated Supervisor</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the Interactions with children policy and procedures</li> <li>• Devise methods to lead the development and implementation of quality practices across the service that ensure that the requirements of regulations 155 and 156 are met</li> <li>• Support educators to promote quality practice approaches to interactions with children</li> <li>• Ensure minimum educator and staff requirements are met, such as qualifications and educator to child ratios</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all educators and staff, including volunteers and students, have undertaken current child protection legislation training, including for the mandatory reporting requirements and obligations in their jurisdiction</li> <li>• ensure that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances.</li> </ul>
<b>Educators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the development of, and implement, quality practices that ensure that the requirements of regulations 155 and 156 are met</li> <li>• Promote quality practice approaches to interactions with children</li> <li>• Be aware of current child protection legislation, including the mandatory reporting requirements and obligations</li> <li>• Monitor and maintain staff to child ratios to ensure adequate supervision of children, including when using digital technologies and online environments               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support children in line with the strategies in the ACECQA Relationships with children information sheet</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Refer to the National Model Code – Taking images in early childhood education and care and related guidelines when planning how often and when to take images and videos of a child during interactions</li> <li>• Ensure that the Safe use of digital technologies and online environments policy and procedures is also considered when interactions with children include digital technologies and online environments</li> </ul>

### 12. Procedure monitoring, evaluation and review

These procedures will be:

- Reviewed regularly
- Updated in response to feedback or incidents
- Monitored through observations, supervision and staff discussions

### 13. Procedure review

Effective date: March 2026

Review date: March 2027