

(Revised September 2025)

Policy Statement:

Mueller College Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) aims to promote a culture of respectful interaction where children and young people are valued, engaged, safe and confident. Interactions with children and young people will:

- Promote a safe, secure and nurturing environment where children and young people have opportunity to grow in their holistic sense of self.
- Be authentic and responsive, encouraging children and young people to express themselves and their opinions.
- Be based on fairness, acceptance and empathy with respect for culture, rights, community and the individual through inclusive practices and championing the rights of the child (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child).

Background:

The Education and Care National regulations require Service providers to have Policies and procedures that support consistent and safe interactions with children and young people.

Important terms:

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| Children and young people | Refers to the children and young people present in the care environment. |
| Educator | Refers to the staff employed by the Service to provide care for children and young people attending. |
| Parent/guardian | Refers to the primary carer/s of the child or young person attending the Service. |
| Family | Refers to the group of people, including the primary carer which engage daily with the child or young person in the home environment. |

Legislation:

National Quality Standard (NQS):

Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice
3: Physical Environment
5: Relationships with Children

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| 1.1 | Program | The educational program enhances each child's learning and development. |
| 1.1.2 | Child-Centred | Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program. |
| 1.2 | Practice | Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development. |
| 1.2.3 | Child Directed Learning | Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world. |
| 3.2 | Use | The service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning. |
| 3.2.1 | Inclusive Environment | Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments. |
| 5.1 | Relationships between educators and children | Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child. |
| 5.1.1 | Positive Educator to Child interactions | Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included. |
| 5.1.2 | Dignity and Rights of the Child | The dignity and rights of every child are maintained. |

Education and Care Services National Regulations

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| 155 | Requires an approved provider to take reasonable steps to ensure that the education and care service provides education and care to children in a way that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) encourages the children to express themselves and their opinions; and (b) allows the children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem; and (c) maintains at all times the dignity and rights of each child; and (d) gives each child positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour; and (e) has regard to the family and cultural values, age, and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for by the service. |
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| 156 | Requires the approved provider of an education and care service to take reasonable steps to ensure that the service provides children being educated and cared for by the service with opportunities to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other and with staff members of, and volunteers at, the service. |
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Education and Care Services National Law

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| 301 (3,i) | Requires the regulations be used in conjunction with the Law in relation to the care and treatment of children. |
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Principals:

- To build a culture of respectful and positive interaction will be promoted with children or young people and educators.
- To enhance interactions as educators, give consideration and respect to children and young people's rights, family and cultural values.
- To balance both planned and spontaneous experiences and routines to provide opportunities for children and young people to engage in meaningful conversations and experiences with educators.
- To develop programs and routines that will provide opportunities for children and young people to engage in social play and collaborative learning experiences that promote acceptance and diversity.
- To assist children and young people to develop and practise the skills required to participate in group discussions and shared decision making.
- To encourage children and young people to express themselves and their opinions and develop self-reliance and self-esteem.
- To promote child safe practices including educating children and young people and maintaining authentic relationships that promote support and safety.
- To develop a clear process for guiding children and young people's behaviour positively in a way that upholds their rights (see Behaviour Support, management and exclusion for behavioural reasons policy).
- Educators will model positive interactions by showing care, empathy and respect for children and young people, educators, and families.

Procedure:

Educators will:

- Respond to children and young people's communication in a just and consistent manner, getting down on their level, using eye contact and empathy where needed.
- Respond sensitively to children and young people's interactions and conversations.
- Support children and young people's efforts, assisting and encouraging as appropriate.
- Support children and young people by developing consistent and warm relationships.
- Support children and young people's expression of their thoughts and feelings.
- Encourage children and young people to participate and contribute to the group.
- Encourage children and young people to make choices and decisions.
- Acknowledge children and young people's complex relationships and sensitively intervene in ways that promote consideration and alternative perspectives and social inclusion. Guidance strategies should be reflective of this approach.
- Acknowledge each child and young person's uniqueness in positive ways.
- Respect cultural differences in communication and consider alternative approaches.
- Maintain and promote child safe practices at all times.

Nominated Supervisor and Educational Leader will:

- Guide professional development and practice to promote interactions with children and young people that are positive, safe and respectful.
- Establish practice guidelines that ensure interactions with children and young people are given priority and those interactions are authentic, just and respect difference.

Approved provider & Nominated Supervisor will:

- Share the 'Interactions with Children and young people Policy and Procedure' with all employees upon their induction and ensure it is available to staff and families at all times.
- Additional professional development will be provided as needed and during review processes.
- All Service policy will be reviewed annually through consultation with all stakeholders or sooner should there be identified changes or updates to legislative requirement.

See also:

- Mueller OSHC Respect for Children and Young People Policy & Procedure
- Mueller OSHC Educational Program Policy & Procedure
- Mueller OSHC Behaviour Support, Management and Exclusion for Behavioural Reasons Policy & Procedure
- Mueller OSHC Anti-Bias Policy & Procedure
- Mueller OSHC Celebrating Cultural difference, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Policy & Procedure

REFERENCES:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, Current as at October 2024
- Education and Care Services National Regulations, Current as at September 2025
- Education and Care Services National Law Act (QLD) 2011, Current as at September 2025
- Guide to the National Quality Framework, Revised September 2025
- My Time, Our Place – Framework for School Age Care in Australia – Produced by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments. Ver2.0, Revised 2022
- National Quality Standard, Revised 1 February 2018
- Guide to the National Quality Standard, Revised May 2022
- The Code of Ethics - Early Childhood Australia Inc. (2025 update)
- ACECQA Fact sheet: Interactions with Children Policy Guidelines (July 2023)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Last modified 2 August 2014)

REVIEW

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| POLICY REVIEWED BY: | Rachel Rose | OSHC Director | 23/09/25 |
| POLICY REVIEWED | SEPT 2025 | NEXT REVIEW DATE | NOV 2025 |
| VERSION NUMBER | V2.3 | | |
| MODIFICATIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> updated references | | |
| POLICY REVIEWED | PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS | PAST REVIEW DATE | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated references Addition of review table | DEC 2024 | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> January legislation update Child safe practice update | MAR 2025 | |