

## GUIDING SOCIAL COMPETENCE POLICY

### Criteria

*The service curriculum supports children’s developing social competence and understanding of appropriate behaviour.*

### Documentation required

1. *A process for providing positive guidance to encourage social competence in children (C10);*
2. *A process for providing formal and informal opportunities for parents to:*
  - *communicate with adults providing education and care about their child, and share specific evidence of the child's learning; and*
  - *be involved in decision-making concerning their child's learning (C12); and*
3. *A record of information and guidance sought from agencies and/or services (C13).*

### Rationale/Intent:

*This criterion helps to ensure the service curriculum supports and positively guides the development of children’s social competence and their ability to establish and maintain appropriate relationships with other children and adults.* (C10)

“Children learn from and alongside each other and develop as socially and emotionally secure individuals who can manage themselves in group settings.”

(Michael Park Kindergarten - Priority for Learning)

### Rationale:

To support and positively guide children’s developing social competence and their ability to establish and maintain appropriate relationships with other children and adults.

### Purpose:

1. Children and their whanau experience an emotionally warm, reliable, inclusive and safe kindergarten culture.
2. Children experience an environment where they know the limits and boundaries of acceptable behaviour.
3. Teachers and whānau work together positively to encourage children’s social competence.
4. Prevention, intervention and referral strategies are clear and consistently implemented.

5. A record of recommendations, referrals and information sought from outside agencies is maintained.
6. Children are kept safe from physical and emotional harm.

### **Guidelines:**

#### **Curriculum**

- Social competence is a Michael Park Kindergarten priority for learning.
- Teachers support of children's self-directed play is a primary opportunity to develop social competence.
- Teachers contribute to rhythms and routines which create an atmosphere of surety and consistency, as a foundation for self-regulation and developing social competence
- Teachers work with a quality of presence, purpose and imitation where a mood of wellbeing and belonging permeate the environment.
- Approaches to social competence are caring, respectful, responsive, and positive.
- Teachers model culturally responsive, inclusive and non-discriminatory behavior in their interactions with children, colleagues and whanau.

#### **Promoting Social Competence**

- Teachers will guide children by setting limits and boundaries, within which children are free to make decisions.
- Boundaries for behavior are realistic, clear, and consistent, so children feel secure, protected and happy in their relationships and learning experiences.
- Prosocial skills (turn taking, waiting, giving, sharing, helping, cooperation, positive verbal and physical contact, showing concern, taking the perspective of another, making mistakes and trying again) are actively modelled and encouraged.
- Teachers make use of nonverbal communication skills e.g., gesture and imitation as well as verbal communication skills.
- Socially competent behaviours are recognised, acknowledged, and affirmed by teachers working with children.
- Teachers facilitate increasing independence by supporting children to make choices and encounter the consequences of those choices, develop problem resolution skills and peer advocacy.

#### **De-escalation Strategies**

- Teachers endeavor to anticipate when children need guidance to resolve difficulties and do so in the stream of the play taking place.
- Teachers positively emphasize 'what we do here', rather than focus on what not to do, in explanations and instructions.
- Teachers use distraction, redirection, problem solving and reframing strategies to de-escalate inappropriate behaviour.

- A 'no blame, shared concern' approach will be used to facilitate conflict resolution between children.
- Restorative justice processes will be facilitated where appropriate, with consideration for the age and development of the child.

### **Intervention Strategies**

- Teachers will approach situations carefully asking what's happening here, then offer choices for the children on how to try things differently.
- Teachers will clearly communicate limits and boundaries of behaviour so that children know what is expected and what the desired behavior is.
- Children will be given time and support to correct inappropriate behavior.
- Depending on the situation, and the age of the child, teachers may remove a toy, activity, or object after a warning, if there is risk involved.
- Extremely inappropriate behaviour may result in one-on-one time i.e., if behaviour is distracting or upsetting other children, an adult will go with the child, and they will have some time away from the other children to regulate their behavior.

### **Patterns of inappropriate Behaviour**

- Where a pattern of inappropriate behaviour emerges teachers will note the time, date, behaviour, and any antecedents.
- Teachers are expected to seek feedback, guidance, and advice from their colleagues and/or the kindergarten manager where there is a pattern of inappropriate behaviour.
- Parents are viewed as partners in developing social competence and a resource to understanding the child as an individual and part of a whānau
- If the behaviour is ongoing and regular teachers will in consultation with whānau put a place in plan to de-escalate inappropriate behaviours.

Definition: Inappropriate behavior includes incidents of hitting, biting, kicking, yelling, physical threats or intimidation, inappropriate language, belittling, disrupting other children's learning, ongoing noncompliance with reasonable adult instruction, actions that put children or adults in danger or damage resources and property.

### **Recommendations and Referrals**


- Parents will be advised of incidents of extremely inappropriate behaviour.
- Teachers may seek further advice from the Ministry of Education, specialist teachers, school SENCO, agencies, counselors, and therapists as appropriate. Parents need to give permission before outside agencies can be involved with their child.
- Parents are encouraged to support teachers seeking advice and external support for behaviour and where appropriate align strategies across kindergarten and home contexts.

- A record of referrals, recommendations, information, and guidance sought from outside agencies and services will be maintained in a locked and confidential file.
- Key information will be provided to the school as part of the transition to school process.

### **Child Protection**

- This policy applies to all adults in the kindergarten including volunteers and relates to all kindergarten activities including excursions and special events.
- The kindergarten manager reserves the right to exclude a child from the kindergarten where a behaviour is continual and affecting the health and safety of others.
- Children will not be guided through blame, harsh or abusive language, belittling or degrading responses or subjected to any form of physical ill treatment, corporal punishment, solitary confinement, verbal abuse, immobilization or deprivation of food.
- Physical restraint will not be used except as necessary to ensure a child's safety or that of others and only, if necessary, for control of the situation.
- Concerns will be managed by the kindergarten manager according to the Child Protection Policy or Complaints Policy as appropriate, except where the concern involves the manager in which case the principal will manage the process.

Ratified by the Rudolf Steiner Schools Trust

<u>28<sup>th</sup> March 2023</u>	Date
<u>Darren Rawlins (Chair)</u>	Name of Trustee
<u></u>	Signature of Trustee