

Policy Document No:	ELC08
Category:	Early Learning
Topic:	Bullying, Violence and Harassment Policy



Date issued: January 2005

Last Review Date: May 2014

Considerations

Philosophy: Caring, inclusive, peace loving environment in which tolerance and diversity is valued.

Children's needs: Creative play encouraged; personal space; to be educated/ informed to know the difference between real and fantasy; their play respected; guidance in appropriate play; the right to self expression; the right to self initiate play; not to feel frightened or intimidated; to have clear guidelines and play monitored; to be aware of how their behaviour effects others; to be educated re tolerance of other cultures.

Parents need: Their children and play areas to be safe; their children not to feel intimidated by other children's play; clear guidelines; communication; opportunities to input into policy. Any concerns to be addressed appropriately by staff and management

Staff need: Clear guidelines and policies; support and open communication with parents; training on how to implement the policy. Any concerns to be addressed appropriately by management with input from the school psychologist.

Management needs: Support of staff and parents in promoting peaceful play.

Background and Legislation

Education and Care Services National Regulations, Part 4, Reg. 156, 168, Ministerial Council For Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, October 2011

National Law, sections 172, 175

Guide to the National Quality Standard, Area 5

Early Childhood Australia website www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

Policy Statement

All children who attend Mount Scopus Memorial College Early Learning Centres have the right to participate in the program and enjoy their play and friendships within a supportive environment among people who are caring and co-operative.

The centre staff will encourage children to speak up about any concerns they may have, and will ensure the program reflects and encourages core values such as friendliness, acceptance, respect, kindness, tolerance and co-operation. Staff will always listen and respond to children and parents when incidents of bullying, violence or harassment are reported or have been observed. Staff will act to eliminate such incidents within the service.

How the policy will be implemented - Specific Practices & Procedures

Violence & Superhero Play

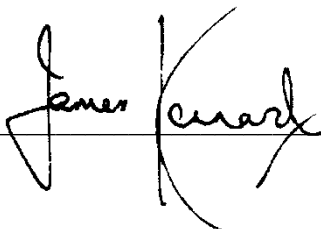
- It is accepted that children will often be exposed to television and internet coverage of violence and war activities, and shows or computer programs involving Superheros, and through this exposure may be familiar with guns and warfare activities. This may then be displayed through children's play. Centre staff will promote positive, peaceful, caring and inclusive interactions within the child care environment, and respect and tolerance for others.
- Children who engage in Superhero play will be reminded of the need to respect and care for other people and their environment, and that they have no special rights because of being a Superhero. Superhero costumes are to be discouraged for dress-up days.

- Staff will help all children to understand how their behaviour affects others and will ensure children's self initiated play:
 - Does not make any other child feel frightened or intimidated
 - Respects the rights and feelings of others
 - Is not overly boisterous or loud
 - Is valued and supported.
- Staff will always model behaviour that encourages inclusion, a sense of fairness, empathy and co-operation with others.
- The centres actively discourage the making of guns or other weapons for fantasy play within the child care environment. Toy guns or other weapons are not to be brought to the centre, or purchased as equipment.
- Staff will discuss any concerns or observations they may have in regard to children's fantasy play, with parents, and decide with parents how any antisocial or warlike behaviour exhibited during play is managed.

Bullying

- Whenever an incident of bullying is reported to, or observed by a staff member, they will:
 - Intervene immediately to stop the bullying behaviour.
 - Talk to the bully and to the victim separately. If more than one child is involved in perpetrating the bullying, talk to each child separately, in quick succession.
 - Consult with other staff members and children to get a wider reading on the problem. Share information with colleagues to alert them to the incident.
 - Minor incidents will be resolved with positive guidance to redirect the bully, reassure the victim, and aim to achieve reconciliation between the bully and the victim.
 - Staff will understand that bullies often try to minimise or deny their actions and responsibilities. Staff will explain to the bully why their behaviour was unacceptable. They will tell them what behaviour they do expect of them.
 - Staff will reassure the victim that all possible steps will be taken to prevent a re-occurrence of the bullying, and will ensure that appropriate measures are taken to achieve this i.e. careful monitoring of the children involved; establishment of a signal system for the victim to call for help etc.
 - Any serious or repeated incidents will be reported to parents. Parents of the bully and the victim will be informed as soon as practicable. Depending on the situation this could be immediately through a telephone call, or when they come to collect their child at the end of the day.
 - Parents will be involved in designing a creative action plan whenever possible.
 - For victims this will involve helping the child to make appropriate friends and develop their social skills and confidence. Specific instruction in assertiveness skills may also be helpful.
 - For bullies, the plan would involve specific programs to modify their behaviour, including increased supervision, anger management skills, praise and recognition for their efforts towards non-violent responsible behaviour. This program of behaviour will be discussed with parents/guardians of the child, to promote a collaborative approach to a solution. If incidents of bullying are very serious or repeated and cannot be resolved, and the bully endangers the safety and enjoyment of other children or staff at the program, they may be suspended on a temporary or permanent basis.
- Staff will teach children caring, non-violent, co-operative and tolerant ideas, values and behaviours through:
 - Recognising and praising positive, friendly and supportive behaviours of children towards each other;
 - Modelling positive, respectful, inclusive and nurturing behaviours towards children, families and other staff;
 - Planning and implementing co-operative, non-competitive activities.
- Parents are asked to speak to staff if they suspect bullying. Parents are also asked to support the importance of courtesy, consideration and co-operation in everyday life, with their child.
- Staff will be given opportunities to attend training that will assist them to:
 - Identify bullying behaviour;
 - Resolve conflicts;
 - Manage groups of children; and
 - Be assertive.

Approved by the College Principal: _____



Date: May 2014