

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Aim

Long ago, children naturally developed the skills needed to be confident communicators and be able to interact with other villagers. Through the strong links forged within the community, children felt safe to state their needs and to comfortably ask questions that helped them better understand themselves and the world around them.

Positive relationships formed in the early years influences how confident each child becomes in their ensuing adulthood. It is therefore our mission to embrace each child for who they are and nurture their growth by celebrating their independence and providing the opportunities to help them become themselves.

National Quality Standard

This policy links to the following NQS: National Quality Standards 5.1, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.3, 5.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3

Links to other policies

- Biting Policy
- Behaviour Guidance Policy
- Keeping of Records Policy
- Child Safe Environment Policy

Sources

- Anne Stonehouse Relationships with children
- NQS PLP e-Newsletter No.36 2012
- Circle of Security: An Attachment Based Intervention Charles H. Zeanah, M.D. Institute of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Tulane University School of Medicine

Strategy

This policy will be followed in conjunction with the Behaviour Guidance Policy that aims to guide children's behaviour through similar means.

- All relationships forged within The Little Village will strive to be positive, encouraging and providing the security to explore and communicate needs.
- The importance of role modelling positive relationships and interactions is:
 - For children to feel secure, which frees them to explore, play and learn
 - To contribute to children's sense of identity
 - To offer opportunities for children to learn how to interact with others, respect others' rights, be appropriately assertive, show caring, negotiate and resolve conflicts
- Positive relationships will be promoted through everyday practice. This will be used as the basis of all relationships formed within the village.
- Staff Villagers and all villagers will be encouraged to:
 - Show warmth and welcome to all villagers: demonstrating to children and families that you are happy to see them, sharing a laugh with them
 - respect each person/child's uniqueness and communicating that respect to each person
 - actively look for each person's strengths and sharing your appreciation of those with the child, the child's family and colleagues
 - show children that you know them well, for example by helping them to identify their feelings and offering needed help and support to deal with feelings
 - create and take full advantage of one-on-one times, even brief ones, with each child, family and colleague
 - work with families and trying hard to understand children's communication—verbal and non-verbal indications of wants and needs—and responding appropriately
 - respond respectfully and authentically to encourage children and families to ask questions and share their thoughts
 - remember something a child told you and mentioning it later
 - keep promises
 - be available, accessible and interested—for example, sitting nearby, watching and listening





- support and encourage the emerging independence of babies, toddlers and older children
- help children to form relationships with children and other educators
- show children you understand that learning to relate to and interact with other children and manage behaviour is hard
- look behind their behaviour to try to figure out what it means
- All interactions are to be positive. We will avoid reprimand for undesired behaviours. Rather, we will strive to understand the motivation behind reactions and redirect.
- As the carers for these little villagers, our job is to protect their self-esteem at all times and to encourage their curiosity and exploration as they grow and develop. To do this we are required to take a step back, but always be available to them when we are needed.
- To facilitate their exploration, we are reminded to see things from their point of view:
 - Watch over me
 - Help me
 - Enjoy with me
 - Delight in me
- To guide their relationships, from the child's point of view:
 - Protect me
 - Comfort me
 - Delight in me
 - Organise my feelings



As the adult, we are always reminded to:

Always: be **BIGGER, STRONGER, WISER, and KIND.**

Whenever possible: follow the child's need.

Whenever necessary: **TAKE CHARGE.**

Taking charge doesn't by any means have a negative connotation, but we are responsible for the safety and comfort of these little villagers. For this reason, they look to us for security and this in turns means making confident decisions for the well-being of each individual.