

Behaviour Support and Safety Policy

QUALITY AREA 5 | DBPS version 1.0

Doris Blackburn Preschool believes that behaviour is communication. Children displaying extreme aggressive behaviours require understanding, skilled support and partnership with families. At the same time, the safety and wellbeing of all children and educators must remain paramount. Through proactive planning, collaboration and evidence-based practices, the Centre aims to support every child's successful participation in the kindergarten program.

PURPOSE

Doris Blackburn Preschool is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, respectful, and nurturing environment where all children can learn, develop, and thrive. This policy outlines how educators respond to children who display severe or aggressive behaviours that may place themselves, other children, educators, families, or community members at risk of harm. This policy is written in addition to the Behaviour Support Policy.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and adults.
- Support children displaying challenging behaviours through a trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate approach.
- Promote positive behaviour and social emotional development.
- Establish clear procedures for responding to aggressive incidents.
- Work collaboratively with families and external specialists to support children.

POLICY STATEMENT

Doris Blackburn Preschool recognises that aggressive behaviour is often a form of communication and may indicate unmet developmental, emotional, sensory, communication or wellbeing needs.

While all children are entitled to inclusion and support, we at *Doris Blackburn Preschool* also have a duty of care to ensure the safety of other children, educators, and visitors.

We will use positive behaviour support strategies, we will not use punitive practices, humiliation, physical punishment, or exclusion as a primary behaviour management strategy.

Working with Families

We value partnerships with families and believe the best outcomes occur when we work together.

When concerns arise, we will:

- Share information respectfully and confidentially.
- Focus on solutions rather than blame.
- Discuss strategies that may support consistency between home and kindergarten.
- Seek family input into behaviour support planning.

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Definition of Extreme Aggressive Behaviour

Extreme aggressive behaviour may include but is not limited to:

- Repeated hitting, kicking, punching, or biting.
- Throwing objects with intent to harm.
- Attempting to choke, strangle or seriously injure another person.
- Deliberately damaging property in a way that creates safety risks.
- Persistent threats of serious harm.
- Unsafe behaviours that place self or others at immediate risk.

Behaviours will be considered extreme when they:

- Present a significant safety risk.
- Occur repeatedly despite preventative strategies.
- Require immediate intervention to prevent injury.

Guiding Principles

Safety First: The immediate safety of all children and staff is the priority.

Respect and Dignity: Children displaying aggressive behaviours will be treated with dignity, respect, and compassion.

Inclusion: Children will not be excluded from the program solely due to behaviours of concern or dysregulation. Where safety concerns arise, appropriate risk management strategies will be implemented, which may include relocating other children from the immediate area to maintain safety and provide the child with space to regulate. Such strategies will be implemented respectfully and without singling out or stigmatising the child.

Collaboration: Families are essential partners in developing behaviour support plans.

Evidence-Based Practice: Responses will be informed by observation, assessment and professional advice. Professional advice will be sought after consent from families is given.

Preventative Strategies

Educators will:

- Develop positive, secure relationships with children.
- Provide predictable routines and transitions.
- Establish clear and consistent expectations.
- Teach emotional regulation and social skills.

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- Use visual supports where appropriate.
- Reduce environmental triggers where possible.
- Conduct regular observations to identify behaviour patterns and triggers.
- Create individual behaviour support plans when required.

RESPONDING TO SEVERE AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Immediate Response

When a child displays extreme aggressive behaviour, educators will:

1. **Remain calm.** Minimise language and keep instructions clear and simple.
2. **Position themselves** between the child/ren to block further strikes without restrains
2. **Use a firm, clear voice:** 'Stop, I cannot let you hit (kick, throw)'
3. **Direct other child/ren** to step back, creating space.
4. **Reduce stimulation** within the immediate environment.
5. Encourage calming and regulation strategies.
6. **Seek assistance** from another educator or nominated supervisor.
7. If child continues to display extreme aggressive behaviour, families will be notified and an earlier pick up will be advised, as part of their behaviour support plan.

Physical Intervention

Physical intervention may only be used when:

- There is an immediate risk of serious harm.
- Less restrictive strategies have been unsuccessful.
- The intervention is reasonable, proportionate, and necessary to ensure safety.

Any physical intervention must:

- Use the minimum force required.
- Be recorded as an incident.
- Be reported to the family and leadership immediately.
- Be reviewed following the incident.

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STAFF SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Doris Blackburn Preschool is committed to providing a safe workplace for all educators, staff, volunteers, children and visitors.

While we recognise that challenging and aggressive behaviours are often a form of communication, all staff have the right to work in an environment that is free from violence, intimidation and risk of injury.

Staff Safety

When a child displays aggressive behaviour that places others at risk, educators will:

- Prioritise the immediate safety of all children and adults.
- Move other children away from the area where safe to do so.
- Use calm and supportive de-escalation strategies.
- Request assistance from another educator or management team, when required.
- Follow the child's Behaviour Support Plan.
- Report and document incidents involving injury, threats or significant aggressive behaviour.

Staff will be offered support to debrief and/or seek support from *Telus Health* our Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Staff are not expected to place themselves at unnecessary risk of harm and should seek support whenever a situation becomes unsafe.

Incident Documentation – to be written up in the *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record*

Following any significant aggressive incident, educators will complete:

- Incident report, to be filled in detail.
- Behaviour observation records to be shared with teaching team and Centre Manager.
- Risk assessment review.

Documentation should include:

- Antecedents (what happened before the behaviour).
- Description of behaviour.
- Educator response.
- Outcome.
- Follow-up actions.

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Development of an Individual Behaviour Support Plan

Where aggressive behaviour is ongoing, the Centre will develop an Individual Behaviour Support Plan.

The plan may include:

- Child Strengths: Interests, Skills, Positive relationships.
- Identified Triggers: Transitions, sensory sensitivities, communication difficulties, social interactions, environmental factors.
- Prevention Strategies: Visual schedules, Predictable routines, small group experiences, Sensory support, Communication aids.
- Response Strategies: De-escalation techniques, Safe spaces, Emotional coaching, Staff responsibilities.
- Review Schedule: The plan will be reviewed regularly with families and relevant professionals.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Doris Blackburn Preschool will:

- Notify families of significant incidents.
- Share observations objectively and respectfully.
- Collaborate on support strategies.
- Encourage referrals to relevant professionals where appropriate.
- Maintain confidentiality for all children involved.

Families are expected to:

- Participate in discussions about support planning.
- Share relevant information that may assist educators.
- Work collaboratively with the preschool and external support.

External Support and Referrals

Where behaviours remain severe or ongoing, the Centre may seek support from:

- Inclusion Support Program providers, i.e. Uniting
- Preschool Field Officers from Merri-Bek City Council

*If further support is required, parents are advised to engage Allied Health Professionals.
These may include but are not limited to:*

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- Child psychologists.
- Behaviour specialists.
- Occupational therapists.
- Speech pathologists.
- Pediatricians.

Parental consent and engagement will be obtained where required.

Control measures may include:

- Increased supervision.
- Modified routines.
- Environmental adjustments.
- Additional professional support.

Temporary Attendance Review

In situations where the risk of serious harm cannot be adequately managed despite reasonable adjustments and support strategies, the preschool may review attendance arrangements.

Any such decision will:

- Be based on documented evidence.
- Include consultation with the family.
- Consider all reasonable supports and adjustments first.
- Focus on safety and wellbeing for all children and staff.

Confidentiality

Information relating to a child's behaviour will be collected, stored and shared in accordance with privacy legislation and organisational procedures.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- Annually.
- Following any serious incident.
- Following legislative or regulatory changes.
- When improvements are identified through evaluation processes.

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AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of *Doris Blackburn Preschool* on 28th September 2026.

REVIEW DATE: 27th September 2027