MANAGING AN AGGRESSIVE PERSON/VISITOR POLICY

Our Service aims to establish and maintain positive and open relationships with all parents of enrolled children. However, we understand that on occasion there may be times when a parent or visitor arrives at our Service displaying aggressive, difficult or challenging behaviour. Our Service is committed to maintain a safe workplace for all staff and visitors and ensure staff have the skills to safely prevent and de-escalate aggressive behaviours. Workplace violence can be any incident where a person is abused, threatened or assaulted whilst engaged in work.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
Sec. 174	Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures must be followed
173	Prescribed information to be displayed

RELATED POLICIES

Code of Conduct Policy Dealing with Complaints Policy Enrolment Policy Family Communication Policy	Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

PURPOSE

Our Service aims to ensure that all staff members have skills and understanding of conflict resolution strategies to manage situations involving angry or aggressive parents or visitors.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Parents have the right to make a complaint or report a concern to our Service at any time. Complaints may be real or perceived, and of a serious nature or more trivial nature (but important to them) such as not being able to quickly find their child's shoes at the end of the day. However, on occasion a parent's feelings may escalate into anger or aggression, not necessarily due to the concern at hand, but due to other events or situations they have had to already deal with that day, or due to the effect of drugs or alcohol or mental health.

WHAT IS 'AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR' OR 'WORKPLACE VIOLENCE'?

Within this policy, aggressive behaviour or workplace violence could include, but is not limited to:

- verbal abuse and threats
- intimidation and insults
- angry and hostile behaviour
- shouting and swearing
- stamping feet
- physical violence
- threatening behaviours

These behaviours could be caused due to:

- frustration
- intoxication

- substance misuse or abuse
- psychological imbalances or disturbances

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/ NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/ MANAGEMENT WILL ENSURE THAT:

- obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations are met
- violence and aggression toward educators and/or staff are treated like any other hazard
- a risk assessment is conducted to identify possible hazards and identify control measures
- a procedure/plan is developed to de-escalate any aggression or violence and ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff
- all staff are familiar with this policy and are provided with opportunities to review and modify this policy
- staff are provided with training to learn skills to safely prevent and de-escalate aggressive behaviours- such as conflict resolution
- staff involved in a situation involving an angry or aggressive parent or visitorwill be provided time for a debrief session following the event with a supervisor and/or offered professional support
- families are clearly informed, that any aggressive behaviour towards staff will not be tolerated
- families are made aware of our *Dealing with Complaints Policy* and *Code of Conduct* at time of enrolment of their child
- notification of a serious incident is submitted to the regulatory authority within 24 hours when there has been an incident that has posed a risk to the safety and wellbeing of the children
- the name and telephone number of the person to whom complaints can be made is clearly visible at the service.

EDUCATORS/STAFF

Should a situation arise where a staff member is confronted by an aggressive or violent parent or visitor, they will:

- remain calm
- implement strategies to de-escalate the aggressive behaviours
- establish whether or not this is a situation you should deal with on your own, *or*
- advise the parent or visitor that you will get the Nominated Supervisor/appropriate person to come and speak to them
- offer and encourage the parent or visitor to move into a private space away from children and other families (This may even be outside if the children are inside). If they ignore or refuse the invitation, begin moving slowly towards a private area

- if moving into a room with the parentor visitor, always ensure you have access to the exit door
- if you are continuing to deal with the situation but feeling uncomfortable, request another staff member to accompany you
- if you are feeling threatened or in danger at any time, request another staff member to ring the police
- calmly tell the parent or visitor that you are prepared to listen, but the interview cannot continue if he/she continues to use a raised voice or inappropriate language
- if the same behaviour continues, leave the room and state that you will give the parent or visitor five minutes to calm down and then return
- ensure children are removed from the area/room if a parent or visitor becomes hostile in an area where children are located

When you feel the parent or visitor has calmed down enough to discuss the issue:

- remain calm
- be aware of what you say and how you say it (tone of voice)
- do not be provoked into getting into an argument
- listen effectively and allow the parent to talk without interrupting
- when the parent or visitor has got the main facts 'off their chest', restate what you believe the problem to be politely and respectfully
- ask relevant questions to clarify any issues
- as soon as the issue has been clarified begin to work on a solution: Note, do not give excuses as to why something may or may not have happened as it may anger the parent or visitor again. Instead, focus on moving forward with strategies the parent will accept to solve the problem.
- when discussing solutions clearly explain any limitations of the Service (regulations, policies and procedures)
- refer to *Dealing with Complaints Policy* for information about procedural fairness, strategies and practices to promote conflict resolution

Dealing with difficult, challenging and aggressive behaviours can have a huge impact on staff's wellbeing.

Following the incident Management will ensure staff involved will:

- be provided with a 'debriefing' time. This may be talking to a manager or colleague, or simply moving off the floor for a short time
- document the incident and provide management with a copy

- follow up on anything agreed to with the parent or visitor or monitor that another staff member/ management follows up in a timely manner
- be aware of any modifications to care or procedures and have a thorough understanding of the situation
- respect the confidentiality and/or privacy rights of the parent or family
- evaluate the risk assessment for the Service regarding aggression and/or violence.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

The *Managing an Aggressive Person/Visitor Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in conjunction with children, families, educators, staff and management.

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
Bryant, L., & Gibbs, L. (2013). *A director's manual: Managing an early education and care service in NSW.* Marrickville, NSW: Community Child Care Co-operative Ltd. (NSW).
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).
Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023).
NSW Ombudsman. (2014). Model guidelines – Managing and responding to threats, aggressive behaviour and violence from members of the public.
Waniganayake, M., Cheeseman, S., Fenech, M., Hadley, F., & Shepherd, W. (2012). *Leadership: Contexts and complexities in early childhood education.* South Melbourne, Victoria: Oxford University Press.

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Krystle Hills	Centre Manager	23/04/2025
POLICY REVIEWED	April 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	April 2026
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy maintenance • sources check and updated as required		

POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
21/02/2024	• annual policy maintenance • added term 'visitor' within policy • no major changes in policy • sources checked for currency and repaired where required	January 2025
JANUARY 2023	• annual policy maintenance • name change of policy to Person/Visitor [deleted Parent] • minor formatting edits within text • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required • continuous improvement/reflection section added	JANUARY 2024