

Intereach Children's Services Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities Policy



Applies to	Intereach Family Day Care (FDC) and Intereach Out Of School Hours (OOSH)				
Definitions	Refer to Schedule of Definitions: Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Responsible Person				
Version	2.0	Date approved	26/07/2023	Next review date	26/07/2026

1. Policy Statement

Intereach Children's Services, as the Approved Provider, acknowledges that the family is the most powerful influence on each child's life and that high quality learning outcomes are most likely to be achieved when educators work in partnership with families. Intereach believes collaborative partnerships are achieved when each of the children services are underpinned by a philosophy with a strong commitment to valuing diversity, inclusive practices and connection to the community. Community partnerships based on active communication, consultation and collaboration will also be a key factor of each service as these will support children and families' inclusion and general wellbeing. Children will benefit from their service engaging with local communities and taking part in community activities as these partnerships strengthen children's interests, skills and learning opportunities.

2. Objective

2.1. Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role

Intereach will develop and maintain respectful relationships with families and support them in their parenting role in the following ways:

- encourage authentic family engagement and active participation in service decisions including the educational program;
- reflect on what the concept of family means to each child so they can nurture the important relationships that exist between children and their families;
- support families in their parenting role by becoming a reliable source of practical information about resources and services within the local community;
- employ open, respectful and non-judgmental communication to build a shared understanding of children's learning and participation, particularly where family aspirations and expectations may be in conflict with the service philosophy and practice;
- build relationships between each child, the families of the service and the community they reside, to support each child to develop their identity within the context of their local community;
- assist families to understand what constitutes quality practice; and,
- establish and maintain an active presence in the local community, strengthening community links and sourcing community resources to support families.

2.2. Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing

This policy will support collaborative partnerships between Intereach children's services and enrolled families and the broader community as coordinators, educators and staff to:

- reflect on inclusive practices, identifying and removing potential barriers to providing an inclusive environment; and,
- enact enriching programs, practices and policies which provide an opportunity to support children to respect and value diversity.

3. Responsibilities

Intereach educators and staff will:

- actively communicate with families to provide effective enrolment and orientation;
- develop genuine collaborative relationships with families where we can value each other's knowledge of our children, communicate freely and respectfully with each other, share insights and engage in shared decision making;
- encourage families to be involved in the service, provide input into learning programs, spend time with our educators and contribute their skills and resources to the service to enhance children's wellbeing, learning and development;
- ensure current and readily understood information is available and effectively communicated about the service;
- ensuring children's learning at the service is integrated and interconnected with their learning at home and in the community;
- encourage our families to develop relationships with each other that are supportive;
- understand and provide links to the services available in the community that will support our families; and,
- actively encourage families to provide feedback and will promptly address any concerns from families to resolve issues and maintain good relationships.

4. National Quality Framework

Standard/ Elements	Concept	Descriptor
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
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.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.

Standard/ Elements	Concept	Descriptor
6.2.1	Transitions	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.
6.2.2	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.
6.2.3	Community engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

5. Context	
5.1. Standards or other external requirements	<p>Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017). National Quality Standards</p> <p>Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017) Guide to the National Quality Framework</p> <p>Child Safe Standards NSW</p> <p>Child Safe Standards VIC</p> <p>Early Childhood Australia (2016). Code of Ethics</p>
5.2. Legislation or other requirements	<p>Education and Care Services National Regulations consolidated 2017</p> <p>Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010</p>
5.3. Internal Documentation	A range of procedures and forms support the Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities Policy

6. Document control			
Version	Date approved	Approved by	Next review date
1.0	8/07/2020	Leadership Governance Group	8/07/2023
2.0	26/07/2023	Quality Governance Group	26/07/2026