

Mosaic ECD Centre



**Child Behaviour Guidance, Discipline and Biting Policy –
2019/2020**

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Table of Contents

Aims and Intent	2
Key Facts	2
Zero Tolerance Policy	2
Supervision	3
Child Behaviour Guidance Guidelines	3
Rules and Standards for Child Behaviour Guidance	3
Preventative Measures	4
We Do.....	4
We Do Not.....	4
Classroom Setup	5
Disruptive Behaviour	5
Biting Policy	6
Overview of Biting	6
Techniques To Try And Prevent Biting	6
Response to Biting	7
When Biting Continues	8
Biting Confidentiality	8
Reporting Behavioural Challenges	8
Reporting Procedure	8
Responsibility	9
Shared Responsibility:	9
Responsibility of Mosaic ECD Centre	9
Parent’s Responsibility	9
Termination of Services	9
References	10

Aims and Intent

One of the intents of the preschool experience is helping children learn how to get along in the world, enjoy being with other children, and follow the direction of an adult other than their parent.

The aim is to take a caring and positive approach regarding behaviour of the children and reinforce *good* behaviour as often as possible. Our goal is to help the children develop self-control and responsibility for their actions.

Key Facts

1. Mosaic ECD Centre is a safe, high-quality environment and we will always try look for a plan to deal with behavioural issues in a constructive way.
2. The parents are included in this discipline process so children can see that both their parents and teachers reinforce boundary setting.
3. Clear and consistent age appropriate boundaries are set and with these boundaries, each child will gently learn what is appropriate behaviour.
4. Children become self-disciplined, develop good self-concepts and problem solving abilities when adults show them right from wrong. Based on this belief, Mosaic ECD Centre, uses a *positive* approach to discipline and practices *positive* behaviour management techniques.
5. When children repeatedly know something is wrong and choose to do it anyway, the consequences that we will follow are outlined in this Policy.
6. In our ECD centre the children learn to consider and respect others and the environment around them.
7. Children are encouraged to solve as many of their own problems as possible under the guidance of a staff member.
8. Physical or emotional danger will be grounds for a teacher to intervene immediately. At such time, age appropriate and constructive methods of discipline are used, starting with a verbal intervention, redirecting and removing a child from the situation if necessary.
9. On-going and constant disruptive behaviour distracts from the full benefit of the ECD programme for the other children. In consultation with the parents, Mosaic ECD centre will endeavour to rectify the situation if possible.
10. The details of these Key Facts are outlined in this Child Behaviour Guidance and Discipline Policy.

Zero Tolerance Policy

Mosaic ECD Centre has a Zero Tolerance Policy.

We are committed to providing a safe and productive environment for our children ensuring that they can pay attention to their own development without having to worry about being hungry, hurt or made to feel bad.

Every member of staff signs and agrees to Mosaic ECD Centre's Employment Agreement and Code of Conduct, and:

1. They are all well aware that if they should harm, hurt, threaten, bully, intimidate, shout excessively, leave the children unsupervised and/or neglect a child in any way, they will be instantly suspended and their future employment will depend upon the result of a Disciplinary Hearing, which will be conducted according to the Basic Conditions of Employment Act.
2. The matter will be handled swiftly, within 24 hours of the transgression.

3. If the nature of the transgression warrants it, SAPS charges will be laid against that member of staff and they will be reported to the Department of Social Development.

Supervision

Children will be children and there will always be a certain amount of tantrums, arguments, hitting, general mischief, and disruptive behaviour. We believe that maintaining discipline with a group of small children is primarily managed through:

1. Constant supervision:

- a. Mosaic ECD Centre employs sufficient ECD practitioners to ensure that no child or group of children are left unsupervised. At no time shall any child, or group of children, be left unsupervised.
- b. Staff to Child Ratios:
 - i. 18 Months to three years: One ECD practitioner for every 12 children or less, plus one assistant.
 - ii. Three to four years: One ECD practitioner to every 20 children or less, plus one assistant.
 - iii. Five to six years: One ECD practitioner for every 20 children or less, plus one assistant.
- c. Children are supervised indoors, outdoors and in the bathrooms.
- d. Children are not allowed in the kitchen or staff toilets.
- e. Every member of staff knows where he/she needs to be and what he/she should be doing at any given time during the work day.

2. Cheerful Adult Leadership: There are troubled times in everybody's lives and sometimes it is difficult to put a smile on one's face. During these times:
 - a. The management of Mosaic ECD Centre will do our best to give as much support as we can to the staff member who is experiencing personal challenges.
 - b. We manage leave strictly according to the Basic Conditions of Employment Act and staff are given family responsibility/compassionate leave when they have days available.

Child Behaviour Guidance Guidelines

Young children develop optimally through close, affectionate relationships with other people. By nature, people who enter the childcare profession often bond with the children in their care, which encourages developmentally appropriate independence in those children. This independence is important and develops gradually with successful practice.

Rules and Standards for Child Behaviour Guidance

Our staff makes use of positive techniques for guidance. Limits are set for all children and are accompanied by rational explanations of expectations, which help the child acquire a positive self-image and good self-regulation. Such guidance will be constructive at all times and suited to the age of the child. The following rules and standards apply.

Preventative Measures

When unacceptable behaviour occurs or is about to occur, staff will use:

1. Redirection — substitute a positive activity for a negative one.
2. Distraction – change the focus of the activity or behaviour.
3. Active listening to determine what caused the behaviour.
4. Holding and rocking a child will be done when a child needs it.
5. Time-out (separation from the group) - for children aged three years and older.
 - a. Used as a last resort and only when all the less intrusive methods have been tried and/or the child's behaviour is dangerous to him/herself and others.
 - b. In the event a time-out is used, a child will be separated from the group, but close to the Practitioner or assistant, 1 minute away for each year of life.
 - c. **No child may ever be isolated!**

We Do...

1. Model appropriate behaviour. Staff members who are disruptive will be disciplined as per Mosaic ECD Centre's human resources practices and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act.
2. Communicate with children in a calm reasoning manner, using age appropriate language, bending down to their height in order to make eye contact and making positive statements.
3. Encourage the children to use their words during disagreements.
4. Explain unacceptable behaviour to children after an event.
5. Include 'Respect', 'Differences', 'Feelings', 'Sharing', 'Good Manners', etc, as themes that we explore in the curriculum.
6. Use storybooks and discussion to work through common conflicts.
7. Redirect the child's attention if possible.
8. Counsel children individually about their behaviour and help them talk out problems and think of solutions.
9. Make parents aware of behavioural challenges (Incident Report).
10. Praise and encourage the children's efforts and good behaviour a lot using descriptive, encouraging words.
11. Establish clear rules and set boundaries for the children, which we apply consistently.
12. Listen to children and respect their needs, desires and feelings.
13. Always provide comfort to all the children involved, those who were hurt by the behaviour, and those who did the hurting.

We Do Not...

1. Discuss any child, parent or co-worker with anyone.
2. Discuss any confidential school information with anyone.
3. Use physical force to the body of a child – even at the request of the parent. This includes, but is not limited to, spanking, hitting, shaking, biting, pinching, hair pulling, pushing, pulling, or slapping.
4. Use any strategy that threatens, intimidates, shames, belittles, embarrasses, degrades and/or forces a child.
5. Withhold food as punishment, nor give it as a reward (threats and bribes). Children are entitled to food at all times!
6. Withhold any activities from the children as punishment. Every child is entitled to an education at all times!
7. Allow excessive screaming.
8. Make any decision regarding the care of a child without consulting the Principal who consults the parents.
9. Criticise, make fun of, or otherwise belittle a child's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

10. Utter racist remarks nor accusations.
11. Violate any of the rules and regulations and/or policies that govern Mosaic ECD Centre.
12. Shame or punish a child if a toileting accident occurs.
13. Compare children.
14. Leave the children unsupervised.
15. Isolate children!
16. Allow a child to be disciplined by another child.

Classroom Setup

The classrooms at Mosaic ECD Centre are carefully set up in ways that can help prevent the children from experiencing behavioural challenges. This is done as follows:

1. Arrange the classroom environment so as to have sight of every child at all times.
2. Set up the classroom environment to prevent problems.
3. Provide alternatives in order to redirect children to acceptable activity.
4. Give children opportunities to make choices and solve problems.

Disruptive Behaviour

Children from birth to four years of age do not have the neuro-physiology yet to decide to be “naughty” or not. Apart from regular everyday mischievousness, sometimes they may make the decision to do something that they know they shouldn’t, but it is rarely malicious naughtiness.

Disruptive behaviour is always a form of communication coming from a place of fear, anxiety or insecurity. This place might not be clear to grown-ups but has to be respected from the child’s point of view.

At Mosaic ECD Centre we understand this, however, disruptive behaviour will be detrimental to the other children in the class and we need to attend to the issue.

1. The following behaviours are considered disruptive when a child:
 - a. Constantly uses verbal or physical activity that diverts attention away from the group of children, which may be to their detriment.
 - b. Inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children, adults or self.
 - c. Disrespects people, resources and materials provided.
 - d. Consistently disobeys the rules of the classroom.
 - e. Verbally threatens other children and/or staff.
2. Extreme and/or intense disruptive behaviour will be addressed in the Incident Report and will document:
 - a. Any inappropriate behaviour that directly impacts other children, staff members, or the group as a whole.
 - b. How the situation was resolved.
3. This report will be shared with the parent and the behaviour and how it has affected others will be explained.
4. If a child has difficulty managing his/her behaviour on a recurring basis, parents will be asked to meet with the child’s teacher and Principal.
5. If the child’s behaviour continues to be inappropriate, consistently disruptive, and/or dangerous, it may be necessary for the disciplinary process to be activated.

Biting Policy

Overview of Biting

Biting is a very common behaviour amongst young children. It is a form of communication (albeit a negative one), and is often a response to coping with a challenge or stressor.

At Mosaic ECD Centre we believe by understanding the developmental stages of the children in our care and their individual needs, we can help to proactively prevent many biting behaviours by the environment, which we create for the children.

We understand that a child biting other children is one of the most common and most difficult behaviours to deal with at our ECD centre.

1. It occurs without warning.
2. It is difficult to defend against.
3. It provokes strong emotional responses in the biter, the victim, the families, and the staff involved.

For many infants and toddlers, the biting stage is just a passing problem and they try it out as a way to get what they want from another child. It is a process of learning what is socially acceptable and what is not.

Children bite for a variety of reasons: teething, frustration, boredom, inadequate language skills, stress or change in the environment, feeling threatened or to feel a sense of power.

They discover that the bite will get a response from the other child who will probably drop what they had and the biting child will then get the item that he/she wanted.

They will also discover that biting will earn the biter the disapproval of the adults and the child will learn other ways of getting what he/she wants.

Sometimes the urge to bite persists for a child and can become a chronic problem.

Techniques To Try And Prevent Biting

Mosaic ECD Centre has several positive techniques that are known to help prevent incidences of biting.

1. Nurturing relationships between the staff and the children.
2. The staff pay attention and step in when a child is showing signs of aggression, getting overwhelmed or stressed.
3. Children are given opportunities to work in both small and large groups and the children are taught how to "share" a work/play environment with each other.
4. A variety of activities are made available to the children so that they have the opportunity to choose.
5. The children follow a daily routine which helps with their security when at the centre.
6. The routine consists of circle time, time to pursue own work and/or group work, and snack time. Children learn early how to navigate classroom transitions in a way that helps them build confidence and alleviate stress.

Response to Biting

1. The biter:
 - a. The biter will be immediately removed with no emotion, using words such as “biting is not okay – it hurts.”
 - b. The response we give will not reinforce the biting or call attention to the biter – the child will simply be taken out of the situation.
 - c. We will avoid any immediate response that reinforces the biting.
 - d. The biter will not be allowed to return to work/play and will be talked to on a level, which he/she can understand.
 - e. The child will be redirected to other work/play.
2. For the victim of the bite:
 - a. Staff will separate the child who was bitten from the biter.
 - b. The bitten child will get special attention and be comforted.
 - c. First aid is applied to the bite as follows:
 - i. Assess the wound and if it is bleeding, apply pressure directly to the wound, using clean, dry gauze, until the bleeding stops.
 - ii. Clean the bite wound with a mild soap and warm running water for approximately 3 - 5 minutes.
 - iii. Rinse thoroughly, and pat dry with a clean, dry cloth.
 - iv. Cover the wound with a clean, dry dressing.
 - d. Should the wound require immediate medical attention, the parents will be notified immediately.
3. The staff will inform the Principal of Mosaic ECD Centre.
4. Incident Register and Incident Report: This report is a confidential, standardised form that all staff members use to document incidents that happen at the centre.
 - a. The situation is entered on the Incident Register and signed by the member of staff.
 - b. An Incident Report will be filled in.
 - i. A copy is kept on the child’s file.
 - ii. A copy is given to the parents.
 - iii. In addition:
 1. The Principal informs parents of the biter of the event, either on the telephone or when they collect the child that day.
 2. They also inform the parent of the victim of the bite keeping the biter’s name confidential and giving the assurance that the matter is in hand and the Biting Policy is being applied.
5. If it is the 3rd incidence of biting, a meeting will be called with the biter’s parents and an action plan formulated.
6. Management will confer with the staff in the classroom to:
 - a. Review the context of the biting incident.
 - b. Establish whether adequate supervision was present.
 - c. Determine if the environment contributed to the biting incident.
7. If changes in supervision and/or environment are warranted, then those changes will be implemented.

When Biting Continues

1. The teaching staff member will meet with management on a routine basis for advise, support and strategy planning.
2. Every biting occurrence, including attempted bites, location, time, participants, behaviours, staff present, and circumstances has to be recorded.
3. The staff will work together as partners with the parents of both biting children and frequent victims to keep all informed and develop a joint strategy for change.
4. Management and teaching staff will hold a conference with the parents of the biting child to develop a written plan of action.
5. Follow-up meetings or telephone conversations will take place as needed.
6. Parents and Management may consider moving a child to another class for a child “stuck” in a biting behaviour pattern, to provide a change of environment. It will only be considered if it is developmentally appropriate.
7. Management must gently prepare the parents of the biting child for the possibility that the child may have to be removed from the centre and help them to make contingency plans.
8. If it is deemed in the best interest of the child and the other children, Mosaic ECD Centre, can terminate the agreement.
9. A written warning will be given to the parents before this action will be taken.

Biting Confidentiality

Mosaic ECD Centre and the staff will maintain complete confidentiality of all children involved when notifying parents that their child has been bitten or bit another child.

Reporting Behavioural Challenges

When a child’s behaviour is very disruptive or harmful to him/herself or other children, we will discuss the issue with the child’s parents privately in the hope of resolving the situation and that the child may remain enrolled.

Reporting Procedure

1. First Offense:
 - a. A verbal warning is given to the child, with an explanation.
 - b. It will be reported to the parent.
2. Second Offense:
 - a. "Time-out" in the classroom under direct teacher supervision (one minute for every year of age).
 - b. The parent will be notified.
 - c. A Parent-Teacher meeting will be scheduled to:
 - i. Discuss the behaviour.
 - ii. Try and find the under-lying cause of the behaviour.
 - iii. Establish a plan of action.
3. Third Offense:
 - a. The Teaching Practitioner will call the Principal to the room to discuss with the child the offense for which he/she is being reprimanded.
 - b. This will be handled confidentially and with respect to the child.
 - c. The parents will be informed.

4. Fourth Offense
 - a. The parents will be contacted for a conference to be attended by:
 - i. The Parents.
 - ii. The Principal.
 - iii. The Teaching Practitioner.
 - b. At the meeting a new plan of action to handle and correct the child's behaviour will be formulated.
 - c. Referral for outside advice and help will be suggested.

Responsibility

Shared Responsibility:

1. The parents and staff at Mosaic ECD Centre will always work together to deal with persistent behavioural issues such as biting, or unusual or dangerous aggression to self or others.
2. It is our shared responsibility to work together for the good of the child and formulate a sensible, sustainable plan of action of help any troubled child, whether they are acting out or simply withdrawn.

Responsibility of Mosaic ECD Centre

1. It is the responsibility of the ECD centre to inform the parents of the conditions in the Child Behavioural Guidance Policy.
2. If a child appears unusually stressed or anxious, or otherwise motivated to engage in negative behaviours, it is the duty of the child care staff to consult with the parents.
3. The ECD centre is responsible to notify the parents when an unacceptable behavioural event has occurred which involves their child.

Parent's Responsibility

1. It is important for parents to share events that have upset their child with the teaching staff member and/or Principal. These events will be kept strictly confidential but they forewarn the staff that the child will need special care and compassion that day, or during that time if it is an on-going event such as divorce or death in the family.
2. An important parental responsibility for the parents is to work cooperatively with Mosaic ECD Centre so that we can alleviate their child's issues as effectively and quickly as possible.

Termination of Services

1. Mosaic ECD Centre reserves the right to terminate any child's enrolment if an excessive amount of incidents occur, or if we feel that any of following conditions exists:
 - a. The ECD centre cannot meet the child's needs.
 - b. Lack of cooperation by the parents to:
 - i. Work with us to find an acceptable solution to the child's behavioural issues.
 - ii. Resolve differences.
 - iii. Meet the child's needs.
 - iv. Attend parent-teacher meetings on issues of their child's discipline or lack thereof.
 - c. The continuing behaviour endangers the well-being of other children, and/or the child engaging in the behaviour.
2. Abusive behaviour and/or verbal threats by parents towards the Centre will not be tolerated. This will result in immediate termination.

References

1. Anuschka Mouton – Consultant Occupational Therapist and Executive Director of Pay It Forward Friends (PIFF), South African Children's Act
2. Children's Rights, Entitlements and Responsibilities
3. Guideline for ECD Services – Department of Social Development and Unicef
4. "Discipline without Stress" by Dr. Marvin www.marvinmarshall.com
5. The "Top Twenty Teachers" www.toptwentytraining.com