1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to act as a guide in staff interactions with children, particularly concerning behaviour guidance. The steps documented here are intended as a guide, and are to be used throughout the Children’s Services.

The primary objective of this policy is to inform staff decision making in managing challenging behaviours in children. The intent here is to assist staff in maintaining a safe, positive and nurturing environment for all of the children in care at The Hutchins School, even where challenging behaviours are presented, and to ensure that the children in our care feel “safe, secure... and respected”.

2. Definitions

Behaviour Guidance

The process through which children’s behaviour is influenced and shaped in a productive, positive manner, encouraging children to act appropriately toward themselves and others.

3. Policy Information

The Hutchins School: Outside School Hours Care will be uses a 3-step system of Behaviour Guidance, designed to help staff consistently and fairly apply the principles of the Behaviour Guidance Policy. This 3-step system is as follows:

Our Behaviour Guidance Framework

1. REMINDER

“Time for the meeting, Josh. You need to sit quietly and listen, please. This is your reminder.”

2. WARNING

“I’ve asked you to sit quietly and listen, Josh. This is your warning. What comes next?”

3. CONSEQUENCE

“Okay, Josh. You’ve had a reminder, and a warning, but you haven’t changed your behaviour. Go and sit on the yellow chair, please. Five minutes.”

In many instances, it will not be necessary to follow through with all three steps. Most children will not progress past the warning stage. This framework is to be applied consistently, firmly and fairly with all children, at all times. Staff
are encouraged to “exhibit qualities of fairness… sympathy and understanding” throughout this process, in order to “[build] respectful and trusting relationships with children”. The framework is designed not only to simplify the behaviour guidance process for staff, but also to help the children understand what is expected of them, and when consequences come into effect.

Further ideas and recommendations for dealing with behavioural issues are also presented below. In each instance these suggestions are intended to guide staff interactions and to help facilitate a straightforward, positive and productive behaviour guidance strategy. With that in mind, staff are encouraged to:

Be encouraging: “That was really helpful, I like the way you…”

Be Specific: “You need to find something different to do now. How about (give specific examples)?”

Be Proactive: “What are you going to do today? How about we…”

Be supportive: “How was your day today?” “What was your favourite thing about it?”

Be interested: “What did you do in class today?” “How was your weekend?”

Be considerate: “How does that make you feel?”

Be positive: “Walk through the room, please” – as opposed to “no running inside!”

Be honest: Tell children “I want you to...” (settle down please, you’re being too silly) / (find a quiet activity for a while) / (share with Jacob, please)...

Be calm and quiet: Wherever possible, correct behaviour quietly and calmly. Often, a touch on the shoulder and a quiet word will be more effective than a loud verbal command.

In each of these instances and situations, it is important that you expect the child or children you are dealing with to follow your instructions. Children need to learn and understand that you mean what you say, and that you will follow through on it. This is why it is so important to be clear and precise about what you expect the children to do. Then, if they do as they are asked, take the time to encourage and praise them for having done the right thing. If they do not do as asked, you are then justified in following the three-step framework: reminder / warning / consequence.

As always, staff should be encouraging, positive and full of praise.

This framework is designed to uphold and encourage behaviour guidance in accordance with “My Time, Our Place”, the Framework for School Age Care in Australia. It is intended to support children to “understand themselves in [a] positive way”, and encourage “the development of a strong sense of wellbeing and social competencies”. With this in
mind, all interactions using this guideline should be intended to foster "secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships between... children and adults" (10).

4. Supporting Procedures / Guidelines

CS-103: Behaviour Guidance Policy

5. Related External Documents

Numerous articles and books are available that address Behaviour Guidance. If this is an area in which you would like further assistance or development, speak with the Director of Child Care; resources will be made available to you.

Additional resources are available on the OSHC web site in the ‘Staff Document Library’ under ‘Behaviour Guidance’.

6. Record Keeping

The master copy of this document is kept on Sharepoint (Policies) and is read-only in PDF form. All printed copies are uncontrolled.

7. Policy Owner

The Hutchins School Headmaster