

Including children with additional needs required Educators to extend upon the strategies they already use in providing quality care for children. It is imperative for Educators to develop a comprehensive understanding of each child's interests and abilities, and implement a program and environment that is receptive to their needs and inclusivity.

To be responsible for each child irrespective of their additional needs and abilities. We aim to provide a supportive and inclusive environment that sanctions each child to fully participate in their education and care at the centre. Educators will remain encouraging, unprejudiced and authentic, ensuring that all children are treated equally and fairly and have the opportunity to grow and develop to their individual potential.

In accordance with the National Quality Standard, our centre positively responds to and welcomes children with additional needs who -

- Are Aboriginals or Torres Strait Islanders
- Are recent arrivals in Australia
- Have a culturally and linguistically diverse background
- Live in isolated geographic locations
- Are experiencing difficult family circumstances or stress
- Are at risk of abuse or neglect
- Are experiencing language and communication difficulties
- Have a diagnosed disability—physical, sensory, intellectual or autism spectrum disorder
- Have a medical or health condition
- Demonstrate challenging behaviours and behavioral or psychological disorders
- Have developmental delays
- Have learning difficulties
- Are gifted or have special talents
- Have other extra support needs.

We understand that additional needs arise from different causes, and that causes require different responses any child may have additional needs from time to time. We recognise that additional needs may be temporary or for a lifetime. Supporting children with additional needs enables them to participate and feel included; this also helps promote their strengths and may reduce their risk of developing mental health difficulties. Strategies for supporting children with additional needs can diverge significantly, because every child is unique.

Learning Environment

Management/Nominated Supervisor will ensure:

- The indoor and outdoor environment and equipment will be designed or adapted to ensure access and participation for all children, supporting inclusion of children with additional needs.
- The indoor and the outdoor environment will be suitable for children with additional needs.
- The program and curriculum meets the needs of children with additional needs. Learning materials and equipment such as books and games will reflect positive inclusion and children with additional needs in the community.
- The centre works with external professionals and families to certify the educational program and learning environment is most suited to each child with additional needs, including children and families from culturally diverse backgrounds. We will keep a copy of any specific plans or instructions provided by external resource providers and professionals for children with additional needs.
- Children's sensory sensitivities to pressure, texture, smell, noise or visual expectation of the environment or colour is considered within the environment.



- Children are encouraged to feel safe and secure during their education and care at the centre by developing trusting relationships with educators, other children and the community.
- Encourage families to meet with the Educators who will be working with the child to converse and comprehend the child's needs and to certify the suitable resources and support provided to both the family and the child.
- Support educators through professional development and networking with professional agencies to certify educators are meeting the needs of each individual child.
- Seek assistance, training and where possible, financial funding from inclusive support agencies to promote the development of skills in children with identified additional needs.
- Ensure privacy and confidentiality for children and families is maintained

Educators will:

- Treat children equally and fairly regardless of perceived dissimilarities
- Create an inclusive program, which is adaptable and supportive of all children
- Advocate for children's rights.
- Create a flexible environment, which can be adapted to each child's needs within the centre to support the inclusion of children with additional needs.
- Implement programming experiences and activities, encouraging children to explore and participate
- Listen carefully to children's concerns and discuss diverse perspectives on issues of inclusion and exclusion and fair and unfair behaviour.
- Work with other professionals who play a role in supporting the child's development.
- Seek specific professional intervention and training in order to meet the individual child's needs
- Develop an Inclusion Support Plan (ISP) for each child that will be kept on file at the centre and shared with families, the child's medical practitioners and/or professional support services.
- Act as role models by displaying appropriate behaviour and language, being consistently aware of and responsive to children who may require additional support, attention or assistance.
- Discuss a wide range of emotions, thoughts and views constructively with the children within a supportive environment.
- Not judge or compare one child's development with another
- Work with families to meet children's developmental needs, building strengths and capabilities.
- Work collaboratively with health professionals and families together to discuss and plans to support children.
- Talk to children about differences and acceptance.
- Providing opportunities for all children to play and learn together, promoting cooperative, caring and pro social behaviours.

Positively Promoting Each Child's Personal Ability

Our centre wants children to develop to the best of their personal ability. Our philosophy highlights our commitment to equity and fairness for all children. Every child in our centre is an individual and we aim to promote and encourage this by:

- Our commitment to ensuring each child is able to fully participate in their education and care at the centre.
- Helping children to develop ease with and have a respect for physical, racial, religious and cultural differences.
- Enabling children to develop autonomy, independence, competency, confidence and pride.
- To provide all children with accurate and appropriate material that provides information about the additional needs of others.
- Providing educators of a high caliber who encourage children to experience active any energetic play in order to develop their physical potential.
- Presenting children with a wide range of male and female work roles, both within the home and the workplace, including nurturing roles.
- Encouraging children to develop friendships with each other based on mutual trust and respect.
- Including in our program and curriculum, and the physical environment, an awareness of cross-cultural and non-discriminatory practices.



- Using a program that is based on a child's development and that is also relevant to the children's life experiences, interests and social skills.
- Encouraging parents from non-English speaking backgrounds to contribute their knowledge and culture to the centre to enhance the program.
- Making it clear to children through all educators that it is not acceptable for a child to say or do unfair thing to another person and that if this does occur a educator member will firmly step in.
- Educators will familiarise themselves with, and share knowledge about, the specific communication needs of each child. This will include verbal and non-verbal communication skills and cues. Where applicable, this may include things such as sign language and or learning key words in the child's home language.

Professional Support Services for Children

- Our centre will not hesitate to access external professional support services for children with additional needs.
- Educators will liaise with the Nominated Supervisor to ensure the needs of each child are met throughout their education and care at the centre.
- The centre will use the Enrolment Form to gather information about children with additional needs. Educators will encourage families to update this information throughout the year and families are responsible for passing on information from any professional support services accessed outside of the centre. This will promote the continuity of learning for each child.
- Information gathered about children with additional needs may be used to develop an individual support plan that will kept on file at the centre and shared with families, the child's medical practitioners and/or professional support services and where appropriate the child's local school if known by the family.
- The centre will work with local schools to help children with additional needs transition. We are open to sharing information about the additional needs of children to promote continuity of learning.
- Educators will remain positive, open-minded and honest at all times.
- The Inclusion Support Facilitator (ISF) is funded by the Australian Government. The centre can lodge an application for Special Needs Subsidy Support (SNSS) funding for additional support workers through the ISF. Funding will be granted when the child meets specific criteria. SNSS workers will help the centre with the integration of children with additional needs and will assist educator in putting together an individual program for each child. Australian government funding is necessary in continuing the availability of support through ISA's and SNSS Workers. Information is available from DEEWR at the following website –

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Programs/ChildCareforCentres/SupportFamilyCCS/Pages/InclusionSupportProgram.aspx>

Professional Development for Educators

Our centre will access professional development for educators to help the centre meet the needs of each child with additional needs.

Offer training on two levels:

- **General awareness training**
 - General information about working with children with specific needs should be incorporated in the overall training of educator.
- **Specific Training for when a new child is to attend**
 - Training on issues of a child's specific disability should be made available to the relevant educator
 - Time should be made available – with the provision of relief educator – for educator to attend training or to visit/observe the child in other situation so as to best assess the requirements of the child.
 - Training offered by peers who have a knowledge of working with children with specific needs AND an understanding of the needs of the Centre, should be maximized as a means of Informing/training educator in this area.
 - Parents and other key informed people (integration aids, advocates, etc) would be seen as resources.



- Provide information as support to families so as to achieve participation in the planning and evaluation of program decision that affect their child's settlement into the Centre. The process will as far as possible be collaborative and take into account parent expectations and the needs of the child.
- Organize parent information or discussion nights where awareness of integration issues can be promoted

Inclusion Support Memorandum: Moreland City Council and Brunswick Crèche and Day Nursery

Council's Responsibilities

An Inclusion Support Facilitator (ISF) will be assigned to the centre. The ISF will support the centre to:

- Build on their strengths and capacity to be inclusive of all children;
- Respond to local needs and develop strong relationships with the diverse community;
- Engage in ongoing processes of reflection and development.
- The ISF will do this by:
 - Providing information and support with inclusion for groups of children and for individual children;
 - Supporting the centre to develop a Service Support Plan (SSP) that can be used effectively for both funding applications and for ongoing planning;
 - Assisting the centre to link with relevant community groups, services and organizations;
 - Assisting children and families' referrals to other professional for assessment and support (not: ISF's do not assess children);
 - Supporting the centre to work in partnerships with families and their support networks (note: working directly with families is primarily the responsibility of the centre, through ISF may support this);
 - Supporting the centre to apply for Inclusion Support Subsidy (ISS) and Flexible Support Funding (FSF) when children are deemed eligible;
 - Assisting the centre to identify their professional development needs;
 - Always considering the values of "Being, Belonging and Becoming" as embodied by the National and Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Frameworks;
 - Supporting the centre to engage in ongoing improvement and reflective practices.

The Centre's Responsibilities:

The centre will work in partnership with the ISF to ensure that all children's needs can be met. The centre management and educators will do this by:

- Discussing the concerns about individual children with parents or caregivers and together with them completing and lodging an ISF referral form;
- Sharing all relevant information with ISF's , including observations;
- Allowing for time out of children's rooms in which educators and managers can discuss issues with the ISF and work on inclusive practices;
- Developing the SSP with the support from the ISF;
- Support all educators to continually evaluate the SSP and use it for planning and to implement effective practices;
- Submitting applications for ISS when children are deemed eligible (with support from the ISF);
- Ensuring ISS workers are used in accordance with the guidelines;
- Managing ISS claims and keeping track of renewal dates;
- Encouraging and supporting all educators to access appropriate professional development.
- Always considering the values of "Being, Belonging and Becoming" as embodied by the National and Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Frameworks;
- Committing time and resources to inclusion. Including time to liaise with the ISF and other involved professionals.
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Source: National Quality Standard, Education and Care Services, National Quality Standards, National Regulations 2011, Early Years Learning Framework, www.raisingchildren.com and www.aaca.com, Equity Issues,



Date Implemented: 16/04/2012
Review Completed: 05/03/2019
Schedule for Review: 05/03/2020

National Quality Standard – NQS		
Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice		
1.1.1	Approved Learning Framework	Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, and confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.
Quality Area 3: Physical Environment		
3.1	Design	The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service
3.1.1	Fit for purpose	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
3.2.1	Inclusive environment	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
3.2.2	Resources support play-based learning	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.
Quality Area 5: Relationships with children		
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
Quality Area 6: Partnership with families		
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.
Education and Care Service National Regulations		
155	Interactions with children	
156	Relationships in groups	
157	Access for parents	
Early Years Learning Framework		
Learning Outcome 1 - Children have a Strong Sense of Identity		
1.1	Children feel safe, secure, and supported	
1.2	Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency	
1.3	Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities	
1.4	Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect	

