

All children have the right to be treated equally. Diversity in all its forms should be embraced in children's Centres to help develop positive and accepting attitudes in children, and to help them gain a better understanding of their care environment, community, country and the world.

Purpose

We aim to provide an inclusive environment for all children, families and educators and acknowledging the uniqueness of each individual regardless of their additional needs and abilities, race, gender, sexuality, religion, culture, physical and mental abilities and socio-economic background. This policy ensures all children and families are welcome, treated equitably and with respect.

Implementation

Our Anti-Bias and Inclusion policy underpins the philosophy of the Centre. The role of educators is to encourage children to share and learn about the individuality of each child and their family and their role in the Centre. This policy aims to assist children to form positive social relationships and to learn to accept the diversity of members of the Centre community.

'Educators who are culturally competent respect multiple cultural ways of knowing, seeing and living, celebrate the benefits of diversity and have an ability to understand and honour differences. This is evident in everyday practice when Educators demonstrate an ongoing commitment to developing their own cultural competence in a two way process with families and communities.' (EYLF Page 16)

Creating Inclusion

Inclusion supports children's rights, fosters diversity and overcomes bias and barriers that may exist preventing children to participate in experiences within our Centre. Inclusion is consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international conventions, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We will ensure children are provided with access to activities and environments, meaningful participation to foster a sense of belonging and opportunities to experience positive learning outcomes.

Cultural or National Origin and Racial Identity

Our Centre values and promotes equity, respect and awareness of different cultures. We ensure a cultural inclusive curriculum that reflects the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of our society.

A Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person /Educators will:

- Access information and professional development/awareness about other cultural and racial identities, especially those relevant within the Centre
- Engage in critical reflection about stereotypes and biases
- Ensure our program design and delivery builds on community and cultural strengths
- Develop strong partnerships with families and children to extend their individual and communities' cultural competence
- Ensure children have opportunities to participate with a wide variety of resources from the daily life of a variety of families and cultures
- Where possible, engage educators that reflect a variety of cultural, national origin, and racial identities
- Affirm and foster children's knowledge and pride in cultural identity
- Foster children's curiosity, enjoyment and empathetic awareness of cultural differences and similarities
- Provide children with tools to respond appropriately to bias- build on children's strengths, interests and individuality
- Teach children to overcome any inappropriate responses triggered by cultural differences



- Encourage children to ask about differences in physical characteristics
- Enable children to feel pride, but not superiority, about their racial identity
- Help children to become aware of our shared physical characteristics – what makes us all human
- Encourage parent input into the program and to participate on a level that they feel comfortable with, sharing their culture, and, for example, their language
- Collect information from each family on enrolment and incorporate it into the program to meet individual family needs in regard to ethnicity and home language
- Where possible use both the educators and children’s first language as appropriate within the Centre environment
- Respect all cultures by presenting photographs, pictures, play equipment, books, posters, music, dramatic play resources, and dolls that will encourage open discussion and exploration of a variety of cultures
- Provide resources that include diversity and skin tone to foster respect and understanding for people of all backgrounds
- Develop an understanding of the needs, strengths, and attitudes of each culture represented at the Centre
- Challenge inappropriate or stereotypical conversations or remarks by children.

Diversity in Family Composition

The Nominated Supervisor and educators will:

- Create an environment that is welcoming to all families
- Respect each family, and work in partnership to support the child’s emergent identity as an individual, member of their family, our Centre, and the community
- Engage in simple discussions about families that focus on fact rather than values e.g. “*some children live with their mum and dad, some children live with their mum or dad, some with grandparents, and some with two mums or two dads*”.
- Be encouraged to seek awareness and reflect on his/her own feelings, beliefs and background and evaluate the effect these may have on their attitudes and interactions with families
- Respect family lifestyle choices
- Treat all families respectfully regardless of socioeconomic background
- Discuss how members of the community can support one another and less fortunate people through the provision of resources, donations of goods or time etc.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

The Nominated Supervisor and Educators will:

- Show respect and a commitment to reconciliation
- Reflect on the current level of cultural competence of our staff
- Promote the inclusion of children’s voices in all decisions that affect them
- Build and strengthen our knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and contributions
- Attend professional development to support our understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and perspectives
- Provide opportunities for professional reflection
- Identify and challenge our own cultural assumptions, beliefs and commitments to cultural competency
- Engage with local Aboriginal families and communities through Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups
- Invite Elders and Traditional Owners to speak to children, staff and families about the histories and cultures of the local area
- Develop an Acknowledgement of Country in collaboration with Elders, community members, children and families which will be displayed and given during special events and incorporated into the program on a regular basis
- Develop awareness and meaningful understanding about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as part of the cultural heritage of all Australians
- Encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities’ access children services



- Show sensitivity and respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages by incorporating verbal and visual languages into the Centre environment.

Ability

The Nominated Supervisor and Educators will:

- Provide an inclusive educational environment in which all children can succeed
- Promote acceptance, respect and appreciation for individual's varying abilities
- Consult with all families and other professionals to enable full participation in the program for children with varying abilities
- Evaluate and adjust the environment to provide access and enable all children to develop autonomy, independence, competency, confidence and pride
- Provide children and parents with developmentally appropriate information about varying abilities to foster understandings that we are all similar and different
- Empower children in their own learning to ensure that they gain a feeling of self-respect
- Treat all children fairly and develop an understanding that everyone has something important to contribute
- Find examples in books, movies and tv shows that reflect attitudes about diversity, ability and disability
- Observe all children and with family consultation, provide an individualised program to extend each child's interests and abilities
- Create an environment where all children can participate in activities and experiences.

Promoting Inclusion and Diversity into the Curriculum

The Nominated Supervisor and Educators will:

- Promote positive influences, modelling appropriate communication, non-bias or gender specific language and attitudes
- Develop appropriate expectations for each child based on their individual strengths, developmental needs, and interests
- Assist educators with the development of required skills and knowledge for working with all children and families.
- Work with Inclusion Support Professionals to assist in the inclusion of children with additional needs (see *Supporting Children's Individual Needs Additional Needs Policy*)
- Explore the values and uniqueness of the diversity within the Centre. These opportunities will form part of the curriculum.
- Treat children with respect by answering their questions honestly
- Adapt activities, interactions, communication, the environment, and documentation to ensure all children and families are actively included and supported to participate in the curriculum
- Provide children with a range of resources, equipment and opportunities to enhance their awareness of diversity
- Reflect on the curriculum ensuring inclusive practice and goals set for children are realistic and being met
- Involve families in the planning of learning opportunities reflective of their culture.

Promoting and Supporting Children's Home Languages

The Nominated Supervisor and Educators will:

- Acknowledge that the use of children's home language underpins their sense of identity and conceptual development (EYLF)
- Promote and support children's home languages in the Centre
- Present books that reflect different languages and children's first language
- Create an environment which supports natural language learning and interaction
- Assist parents to understand the value and importance both their home language and English
- Engage in professional development about cultural diversity and building linguistic capacity



Source: Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014). Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2009) *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016). Early Childhood Australia (ECA) (2016) *Statement on the Inclusion of every child in early childhood education and care* Early Childhood Australia (ECA), & Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA). (2012). *Position statement on the inclusion of children with disability in early childhood education and care*. http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/2014/06/ECA_Position_statement_Disability_Inclusion_web.pdf Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018). [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011). Family Matters - Our Way A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017-2037 Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017). Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2020). Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education Welcome to Country. <https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/> Revised National Quality Standard. (2018). Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (2011) Melbourne Graduate School of Education *Evidence Paper Practice Principle 4: Equity and Diversity* <http://www.resourcingparents.nsw.gov.au/ContentFiles/Files/diversity-in-practice-tipsheet-5.pdf> Equity Issues, Multicultural Resource Centre (FKA), Anti- Discrimination Act, Exploring Multiculturalism www.cscentral.org.au/Resources/Exploring_Multiculturalism.pdf

Date Implemented: 16/04/2012

Review Completed: 26/03/2021

Schedule for Review: 26/03/2022

Authorised by COM: Nov 2020

| National Quality Standard – NQS | | |
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| 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 |
| 5.2 | Relationships between children | Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships |
| 5.2.1 | Collaborative learning | Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other |
| Education and Care Service National Regulations | | |
| 73 | Educational program | |
| 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 | |
| Learning Outcome 2 - Children are connected with and contribute to their world | | |
| 2.1 | Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation | |
| 2.2 | Children respond to diversity with respect | |
| 2.3 | Children become aware of fairness | |
| Learning Outcome 4 - Children are confident and involved learners | | |
| 4.4 | Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials | |

