

Multicultural Policy

Australia is an increasingly multicultural society and as we recognise more cultural and ethnic diversity, it is imperative we lead children in recognising and respecting similarities and differences in cultures. The cultural beliefs signified within the Service and wider community help to form the foundation of the program being implemented to ensure we are promoting an inclusive environment for all children.

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, confidence as learners, and effectiveness as communicators.
1.1.2	Child-centred	Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.
1.1.3	Program learning opportunities	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.
1.2.2	Responsive teaching and scaffolding	Educators respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback.
1.2.3	Child directed learning	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.

Quality Area 3: Physical Environment		
3.2	Use	The Service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play based learning.
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.

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.
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Quality Area 6: Collaborative 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.
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.
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.

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law	
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups

RELATED POLICIES

Additional Needs Policy	Educational Program Policy
Celebrations Policy	Service Philosophy
Service Values	Code of Conduct
Anti-Bias & Inclusion Policy	Interactions with Children, Families & Staff Policy
Respect for Children Policy	Enrolment Policy
Family Communication Policy	Orientation of Families Policy
Non-English Speaking Background Policy	Privacy & Confidentiality Policy
Physical Environment Policy	

PURPOSE

To develop affirmative attitudes, concepts and beliefs towards the acceptance of diversity and disparate cultures. Respect for diversity is a key element of quality care. Recognising, understanding and respecting cultural practices and beliefs are essential for the development of identity and self-esteem.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, Educators, staff, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor / Responsible Person will ensure:

- That child-rearing practices reflect cultural context.
- That all children and families are treated equally and fairly and with respect at all times.
- The Service creates and maintains links with local cultural diverse communities
- A sense of inclusion for all families will be embraced within the Service.
- There is specific programming and cultural awareness activities and experiences, identifying similarities and differences and learning about cultural celebrations.
- The Service builds and maintains cultural resources.
- Encourage children, families, Educators and staff to respect and value others, including those who are different from themselves.
- Children, families, Educators and staff cultural backgrounds are reflected in developing routines and program consistent with best practice and positive outcomes for all stakeholders.
- Communication for families will be translated into their home language wherever possible.
- Encourage Educators and staff to attend professional learning opportunities in order to develop a better understanding of cultural diversity.
- Acknowledge the unique cultural and social perspectives of each family.
- Ensure that all children and families have equal access to the Service, and are welcomed and respected regardless of race, culture, colour of skin, socioeconomic status, ability, family composition, belief systems or lifestyles.
- Encourage positive attitudes towards differences in appearance, culture and lifestyle.
- Adhere to the Code of Ethics.

Educators and staff will:

- Encourage children to respect and value others, including those who are different from themselves.
- Ensure children do not exclude others on the basis of differences such as race, sex or ability.
- Ensure that the self-identity of each child is valued and respected.
- Encourage children to explore and accept diversity.
- Challenge bias and stereotypes.
- Provide an inclusive environment.
- Address bias or comments about difference.
- Model inclusive practices.
- Ensure privacy and confidentiality is maintained.
- Use unbiased language – avoid racist, sexist, discrimination, stereotyped remarks.
- Ensure own interactions are responsive to all children in the Service.
- Demonstrate respect for all children and families.
- Ensure all displays, posters, children's books and other materials are monitored to ensure they are inclusive of all people.
- Be sensitive to specific cultural behaviour or dress, which may be different to their own beliefs.
- Ensure each child's current knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are consistently incorporated and actively drive all aspects of the program.

- The development of strong foundations in the culture and language of the Service families and in that of the boarder community, without compromising their cultural identities.

Sources

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Business of Childcare, Karen Kearns, 2004. • Education and Care Services National Regulation, 2015. • National Quality Standards. • The Anti-Bias approach in Early Childhood, Second Edition, Elizabeth Dau, 2001. • Early Childhood Australia. • Lady Gowrie NSW. • Revised National Quality Standard, 2018.
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Review

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
March 2017	Minor changes made to ensure compliance with regulations and National Quality Standard.	March 2018
October 2017	Updated references to comply with the Revised National Quality Standard.	March 2018
March 2018	Additional statements added to 'Implementation' section of the policy.	March 2019

Multicultural Procedure

There are many ways of living, being and of knowing. Children are born belonging to a culture, which is not only influenced by traditional practices, heritage and ancestral knowledge, but also by the experiences, values and beliefs of individual families and communities.

Respecting diversity means within the curriculum valuing and reflecting the practices, values and beliefs of families. Educators honour the histories, cultures, languages, traditions, child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of families. They value children's different capacities and abilities and respect differences in families' home lives (Early Years Learning Framework).

When Early Childhood Educators respect the diversity of families and communities, and the aspirations they hold for children, they are able to foster children's motivation to learn and reinforce their sense of themselves as competent learners. They will do this by:

1. Gathering background information during children's enrolment and orientation, giving insight into the child and family's beliefs, values and traditions.
2. Using information resources (internet, books etc.) to research cultures and traditions.
3. Making connections with local cultural groups/organisations.
4. Building centre resources, (including books, activities and experiences, wall displays etc.) as a means to intentionally teach the children about various cultures.
5. Pronouncing and spelling children's names correctly.
6. Finding out which festivals are important to children and families.
7. Using resources from the children and families.
8. Inviting families to volunteer their time to extend multicultural learning of children and Educators.
9. Advocating and supporting the maintenance of the family's home language in conjunction with their wishes.
10. Providing children with the opportunity to explore the multi-cultural resources at their leisure. Building on the children's knowledge through open discussions.

Additional Resources for families and Educators

- Lady Gowrie Resource Centre, Migrant and Ethnic Link Services (1800 648 598) which provide translation services and resources (Interpreter Service 131450).
- For assistance with multicultural matters the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs can be contacted on 131 881 or www.immi.gov.au
- Exploring Multiculturalism, Anti-Bias and Social Justice in Children's Services by Miriam Giugni
- Raising Children Website - <http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/multicultural.html>