

# Inclusion Policy

## BELLA GRACE EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

### Background

---

Children's relationships and experiences in their first five years affect their learning and development throughout life. Adults working with children require commitment, knowledge and skills to support the children to form positive relationships with adults and other children, and to fully participate in the Service's activities. For all children to be treated equitably and fairly, those with additional needs, as defined by the National Quality Standard 2011 (p. 202), may require specific considerations and some adaptations to the environment.

As stated, these first five years are critical in the formation of attitudes and behaviours. Assumptions developed during this time usually continue into adulthood, and can affect a person's life choices and decisions. Creaser and Dau (1995) argue that adults working with children should understand the importance of supporting children to:

- construct a knowledgeable, confident self-identity (i.e. children are confident about who they are);
- develop comfortable, empathetic and just interaction with diversity (i.e. children are accepting of difference);
- develop critical thinking (i.e. children recognise injustice); and,
- learn how to stand up for oneself and others in the face of injustice (i.e. children act upon injustice).

### Policy statement

---

This Policy outlines how the needs of all children who attend the Service are met fairly and inclusively, and how children are supported to fully participate in the program.

### Strategies and practices

---

- The Service's philosophy is based on a commitment to equality and fairness for all children, particularly their right to fully participate in every aspect of the program. The philosophy, together with its Inclusion Policy, is reviewed regularly as part of the Service's self-assessment and quality improvement process, along with services Inclusion Support Plan.
- Information about the operations of the Service and what it provides is available in an easy-to-read format. When necessary and wherever possible, it is also available to parents in their first language.
- The Service is committed to working with families to best meet the education and care needs of their children. This commitment is communicated to parents at enrolment and reinforced throughout the time their children attend the Service.
- The Service's Enrolment Form requires parents to provide information about any additional needs their children may have. Parents are asked to update this information throughout the year and to pass on information from any professional support services accessed outside of the Service. Educators use this information to meet the education and care needs of the child.

# Inclusion Policy

- Parents are asked about their child's knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests at enrolment and throughout the time the child attends the Service. They are also asked about their child-rearing practices, lifestyle choices, culture, language and traditions. Educators use this information to help children feel secure, safe and confident, and to develop the program.
- Parents are welcome at the Service at any time. In addition, parents are encouraged to be involved in decision-making and consultative roles within the Service.
- The Service's physical environment and facilities are designed and, when necessary, adapted to ensure access and participation for every child in the service.
- The décor of the Service reflects the diversity of the children, parents, staff and educators in the Service. Where applicable, signs are displayed in languages other than English.
- Equipment and resources are selected to support and encourage the participation of all children. They reflect the lives of the children in the Service, their families and the cultural diversity of the broader community. Learning materials (e.g. books, puzzles, games, posters) support positive inclusion by providing children with accurate and appropriate information about their own and other cultures. They also depict people with additional needs as active and contributing members of communities.
- Information gathered about children with additional needs is used to develop an individual support plan, in consultation with parents. When appropriate, and with parents' knowledge and permission, this plan is shared with the child's medical practitioners and/or professional support services. The centre actively works with support services to implement and manage a Strategic Inclusion Plan, focusing on strategies to prepare, plan and reflect on all environments.
- Educators plan the program based upon their observations of children's play and the ideas, interests and opinions that the children share with them. When planning the program, educators reflect upon the effectiveness of their teaching strategies and the learning environments they provide.
- The Service works with families, external professionals and agencies (e.g. paediatricians, child welfare workers, early childhood intervention services, psychologists) to ensure that the learning environments are the optimum for each child with additional needs. The child's input is also obtained in this process. Copies of any goals for the children, specific plans or instructions provided by these external professionals and agencies are kept at the Service and are incorporated into the child's individual program.
- The Service provides parents with information about support and resources available in the community. Where appropriate, parents are assisted in making contact with the relevant professionals and agencies.
- The Service seeks support for any child with a disability or with ongoing high support needs through an Inclusion Agency (IA). An Inclusion Professional (IP) then visits the Service to assess the child and to collaborate with the Service in developing a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP). If appropriate, the Service will use their Auskey to submit an online application through the IA Hub Portal for subsidy for an Additional Educator. Families are included in and are asked to actively assist with the introduction of strategies and management of any additional needs and inclusive practices within the daily routine. Promoting an inclusive and positive relationship with the centre.

# Inclusion Policy

- The Service's rosters ensure continuity of care so that the children are with educators who know them well and are interested in what they think, feel and do. Further, the educators promote the children's wellbeing, self-esteem and sense of security by being responsive, warm, trusting and respectful.
- Educators are encouraged to attend professional development on inclusive practices. This professional development is based upon evaluation of the professional knowledge and skills of individual educators and the team. When appropriate, they receive training on how to meet the additional needs of any child in their care.
- Educators are encouraged to reflect, individually and as a team, on the way their own beliefs, attitudes, cultural background and attitudes to people may impact negatively upon their relationships with others, and educators' ability to promote inclusion and participation of all children in the program.
- Educators consistently model equitable and fair treatment in their everyday interactions with other adults and children, and intentionally teach children to do the same.
- Educators view children as competent and capable, and support the development of their autonomy, independence, competency, confidence and pride.
- Educators share their time equitably with children, and listen to children's interests and concerns. They ensure that they know the specific communication needs of every child so that they can communicate respectfully and meaningfully with them.
- Educators facilitate children's relationships with one another and support them to work collaboratively together. They help children negotiate their rights in relation to the rights of others. They intentionally teach children that it is not acceptable to speak or act unfairly to others, and to stand up for those who are being treated unfairly.
- The Service celebrates cultural traditions from around the world, especially those cultures represented by the children, staff and educators at the centre. Parents and community members are encouraged to share particular aspects of their cultures and traditions (e.g. songs, dances, recipes, creative arts) and to bring into the Service, items from their culture.
- The Service shares information with the relevant local schools to help transition children with additional needs.
- Parent information sessions are held regularly to promote understanding of topics such as inclusion, children with additional needs, and multiculturalism.
- English as a Second Language (ESL) support is given to children whose first language is not English. Children are also encouraged to talk to other children using their first language.
- The Service follows the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity when recruiting staff.

# Inclusion Policy

## Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Regs	77	Educational program
	74	Documenting of a child assessments or evaluation for delivery of educational program
	75	Information about the educational program to be kept available
	90	Medical conditions policy
	105	Furniture, materials and equipment
	155	Interactions with children
	156	Relationships in groups
	157	Access for parents
	162	Health information to be kept on enrolment record
	168	Education and care service must have policy and procedures
	177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider

QA	1.1.1	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	Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program
	1.3.3	Information for families are informed about the program and their child's progress
	1.2.2	Educators respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback
	1.2.3	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world
	1.3.1	Each child's learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection
	1.3.2	Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation
	3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child
	3.2.1	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, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning
	4.1.2	Every effort is made for children to experience continuity of educators at the service
	4.2.1	Management, educators and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills
	4.2.2	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships
	5.1.1	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included
	5.1.2	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained
	5.2.1	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other
	5.2.2	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts
	6.1.1	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions

# Inclusion Policy

6.1.2	he expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing
6.1.3	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing
6.2.1	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities
6.2.2	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program
6.2.3	The service builds relationships and engages with its community
7.1.1	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations
7.2.1	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place
7.2.3	Educators, co-ordinators and staff members' performance is regularly evaluated, and individual plans are in place to support learning and development

## Sources

---

- Early Years Learning Framework 2009
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011

## Further reading and useful websites

---

- Australian Multicultural Council – <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/settlement-and-multicultural-affairs/programs-policy/a-multicultural-australia/australian-multicultural-council> accessed 24 December 2017
- Boschetti, C. with Stonehouse, A. (2006). *A piece of cake: Inclusive practices in early childhood settings*. Yooralla, Victoria.
- Derman-Sparks, L. and Edwards, J. (2010). *Anti-bias education: For young children and ourselves* (2nd Edition). National Association for the Education of Young Children, Washington DC.
- National Disability Insurance Scheme – <https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/programmes-services/for-people-with-disability/national-disability-insurance-scheme> accessed 24 December 2017
- Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services – <http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/> accessed 24 December 2017
- Global Kids Oz – <http://www.globalkidsoz.com.au/>
- Global Kids Oz. (2017). *Multicultural Tips*. [http://www.globalkidsoz.com.au/multicultural\\_articles.php](http://www.globalkidsoz.com.au/multicultural_articles.php) accessed 24 December 2017
- Gonzalez-Mena, J. (2008). *Diversity in early care and education: Honouring differences* (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). McGraw-Hill Education, USA.
- KU Children's Services – <http://www.idfm.org.au> accessed 24 December 2017
- Yorganop, Indigenous Support Unit Western Australia – <http://www.ipсуwa.org.au/> accessed 24 December 2017

## Policy review

---

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

# Inclusion Policy

## REVIEW DETAILS:

<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Details of Changes</b>
January 2018	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 Feb 2018
April 2018	Reviewed. Minor wording changes made.
May 2018	Families inclusion regarding SIP and inclusive strategies.