

## Policy Statement

This policy acts to ensure that:

- Each child is accepted as a unique individual living in a unique environment
- We recognise that we all come from diverse backgrounds which reflect different values and opinions
- An environment that supports, reflects and promotes equitable and inclusive behaviours and practices is created

## Explanation

All children and families have the right to be treated with fairness and equity, have the same opportunities for participation and decision-making, and to be accepted as valued members of the community. The Code of Ethics, developed by Early Childhood Australia and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, underpins the core values, beliefs and practices within Country Children's Early Learning.

Australia is a multicultural society where different ethnic groups coexist harmoniously, free to maintain and practice their language, religious beliefs and social customs, recognising that all are equal as individuals. We recognise the diversity of the Australian culture and will help to foster an awareness and acceptance of all children, through the thoughtful integration of a variety of culturally diverse and anti-biased activities in the program.

We advocate and celebrate diversity and an inclusive environment. We work together to provide an environment where every child feels respected and valued.

We respectfully acknowledge and share our knowledge of the traditions and customs of the custodians of the land on which we reside.

Children who experience relationships that are built on respect, fairness, acceptance, co-operation and empathy are given the opportunity to develop these qualities themselves. Quality interactions increase their knowledge and understanding of themselves and each other as unique individuals.

## Definitions

### Diversity

*"The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique and recognising our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual."* From <http://gladstone.uoregon.edu>

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### **Inclusion**

Inclusion takes into account all children's social, cultural and linguistic diversity. The National Quality Framework recognises all children as confident and capable learners with the capacity and right to succeed regardless of diverse circumstances including strengths, cultural background and abilities.

An inclusive service provides a wide range of learning opportunities, makes adjustments so that all children can participate in the program, values each child's individual strengths and needs.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Approved Provider**

- Support the employment of staff, and the selection of educators from both genders and a range of social and cultural backgrounds
- Ensure professional development and training is provided for staff and educators to extend their knowledge of social justice, inclusive and anti-bias practices
- Establish and maintain links with organisations that promote social justice and inclusion and /or provide specialist support or resources
- Ensure compliance with relevant state and commonwealth legislation to provide an inclusive and discrimination free environment
- Provide staff and educators with a copy of the Staff Code of Conduct
- Ensure CCEL follow appropriate cultural protocols when engaging with our community

### **Coordinator/Responsible Person/Educators**

#### **When Working with Children:**

- Undertake training and the sharing of information regarding various cultures and multicultural programming
- Respect the rights and dignity of each child
- Recognise that all children have the right to have their culture acknowledged and respected
- Provide an environment which meets individual's special needs
- Ensure all children have access to all learning experiences, to equally participate in the program and to succeed as a learner

- View all children as competent learners with many strengths and abilities, and as initiators and active social constructors of their own learning
- Support children to interact with the environment and equipment in ways that children can identify
- Provide an environment that is free from bias and prejudice in which children learn the principles of fairness and respect
- Create opportunities for children to learn about and celebrate the diversity that exists at the service and in the broader community
- Help children build connections with others and with their community
- Provide experiences that are complementary to children's home and community experiences
- Acknowledge the right of all children to maintain their language and culture while benefiting from good quality educational programs which consider the cultural, linguistic, financial and religious diversity of the community at large
- Acknowledge that cultural diversity is a positive aspect of our everyday lives and integrate cultural awareness throughout all activities in the program
- Reflect an attitude of respect and positive appreciation for the differences within our community and society at large
- Present children with a variety of positive experiences, which are not based on gender role or cultural stereotypes, and by using a range of materials and equipment
- Build children's positive sense of self through identifying and responding to each child's strengths and learning styles
- Develop respectful and trusting relationships with children, so they can feel empowered and more open and respectful of others
- Provide access to specialised equipment and resources and appropriate support services as required
- Support children to identify and take action against unfairness or to other biased behaviour
- Maintain a Strategic Inclusion Plan for each Service

### **When Working with Families:**

- Ensure all children and families are treated inclusively, regardless of their gender, culture, race, religion, ability, income, marital status or sexual preference
- Show sensitivity to, and respect for the range of family structures including same sex parents, social values and child rearing practices evident in the service and the wider community

- Incorporate information about each family's background in meaningful ways to help ensure families feel welcome
- Share and exchange information relevant to the child
- Respect each family's home language and communication styles, and use a range of verbal and written methods of communication, where possible, translate parent information into other languages
- Value multiple perspectives and empower families as decision makers about their child's learning and wellbeing
- Work through a family centred approach acknowledging families best know their child
- Provide a program that responds to the individual strengths and interests of all children

### **When Working with Children with Additional Needs:**

- Use an inclusive approach ensuring that all children, especially children with additional needs, have the same opportunities to participate in all experiences and all aspects of the program
- Seek specialised assistance/additional support to successfully include children with additional needs
- Maintain updated information relevant to particular disabilities, delays or giftedness relevant to the children attending the service
- Create an individualised Family Service Plan in collaboration with families and other professionals/ agencies, including Inclusion Support Agencies (ISA's)
- Plan experiences based on the child's strengths, talents, likes and dislikes and family priorities for their child
- Work collaboratively with other services to support the child's transition into the next learning environment
- Ensure ongoing training to adapt programs resources and environments to provide successful inclusion

#### **LINKS TO:**

- **Education & Care Services National Law**  
Section
- **Education & Care Services National Regulations**  
155, 156, 157, 168, 170, 171, 172
- **National Quality Standards/Elements:**  
1.1.2, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 2.2, 4.1.1, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1
- **Child Safe Standards**  
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10

## **Continual Monitoring and Improvement**

Continual improvement and monitoring will occur in the following ways:

- Incidental and planned consultation with families
- Approved Provider and Coordinators accessing current relevant information
- Approved Provider, Coordinators and Educators accessing current and relevant training
- Internal evaluation of incidences and the improvement of systems

### **SOURCES**

- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Education and Care Services National Law
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Guide to the National Quality Standard
- Implementing the Child Safe Standards: A Guide for Early Education and Outside School Hours Care Services, NSW Department of Education
- A Guide to the Child Safe Standards, NSW Office of the Children's Guardian
- ACECQA – FDC Approved Provider compliance responsibilities – October 2017
- Be You
- My Time Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia
- The Early Years Learning Framework
- ECA Code of Ethics
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- ACEQCA Inclusive Environments Fact Sheet QA3

**LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES:**

- Child-Safe Environment
- Communication
- Interactions with Children
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Parent Involvement
- Socialisation & Positive Behaviour Guidance
- Staff Code of Conduct