

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM PLANNING POLICY School Aged Care

Policy Statement and Rationale

Using an approved learning framework, the Coordinator and Educational Leader, in consultation and collaboration with educators, children and families plans, designs and provides programs, catering to the children's age, developmental needs, skills, interests and abilities through a variety of challenging and recreational activities. In providing opportunities for children, the Service recognises the importance of play, relationships, collaborative decision making and respect for diversity.

The Service is committed to providing quality outcomes for children through ensuring that educators practices reflect the services philosophy and goals and quality principles as outlined in the 'My Time, Our Place' Framework for School Age Care. The service applies professional standards to guide educator's practices and decision making within the service and provides opportunities for educators to acquire the skills and knowledge to enable them to fulfill their role.

Aims

- The aim of the curriculum is to provide a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, language, social, emotional and cognitive development of young children while responding to the needs of families.
- To ensure all education is based on quality teaching practices and informed decision-making.
- To encourage parental input, and suggestions into the curriculum.
- To inform educators of the educational support provided to them by the Educational Leader.
- In order to ensure the Service programs are effective in delivering the objectives and learning outcomes as reflected in these policies and procedures, the Service regularly reflects on, and evaluates, the structure, process and content of its programs.

Strategies/Practices/Procedures:

Trudiann Marshall is the Educational Leader for the service.

The Educational Leader is responsible to oversee the written program plan prepared for each aspect of the Service. This program plan will be on display for everyone's information.

The Educational Leader shall direct and monitor staff in the planning, development and implementation of programs and experiences for the children consistent with this Policy and, in particular, which:

- Demonstrate that the five learning outcomes provide a focus for the activities and experiences planned for individuals and groups of children,
- Takes an holistic view of children's learning, focusing on their physical, personal, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing,
- Are built around routines, i.e. arrival, hand washing, eating etc.,
- Includes a variety of activities and experiences that promote effective hygiene practices, good nutrition and healthy lifestyles,
- Includes activities which would normally be a part of the life of children during hours outside of school (this is particularly relevant during Vacation Care where excursions become an important part of the program),
- Demonstrates flexibility in program delivery by incorporating children's ideas, culture and interests to ensure the experiences are relevant and engaging,
- Promotes the children's sense of belonging, connectedness and wellbeing by taking an interest in the individual needs, interests, diversity, views and abilities of the children,
- Provide a variety of indoor and outdoor experiences, open ended resources, natural elements and materials suited to the age, developmental ranges and diversity of all children attending the Service,
- Provide appropriate opportunities for children as individuals and small groups to follow and extend their interests,
- Provide appropriate opportunities for children to participate in physical play, accepting and acknowledging each child's level of participation according to their abilities and interest,
- Provide appropriate opportunities for children to express themselves through creative and imaginative play, including elements of music, dance, drama, etc.,
- Provide appropriate opportunities for children to develop a range of life skills such as establishing and maintaining meaningful relationships, working collaboratively with others and self-regulating their own behaviour,
- Takes account of necessary modification and enhancements as well as spontaneous child-initiated opportunities and moments of intentionality when required,
- Provides appropriate opportunities for children to broaden their understanding of the world in which they live by reflecting the broad multicultural and multilingual nature of the local community and demonstrating a positive approach towards diversity and Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage,
- Encourages and provides appropriate opportunities for families to participate in shared decision making and give feedback about the program and their child's learning,
- The principle of equal opportunity will be applied in this Service's program. Children, regardless of gender, cultural, racial, religious or other background, will be encouraged to participate in a wide range of activities.

The Coordinator is responsible, in consultation with the Educational Leader and educators, to continually recreate and adapt the indoor and outdoor environments to:

- Meet the needs and interests of all children, including their need for rest or sleep;
- Facilitate the inclusion of children with special needs;
- Respond to the developing abilities and interests of all children;
- Ensure that all children in a multi-age group have positive experiences.

Children are encouraged to participate in decision making, with their ideas and opinions listened to and if possible, acted upon. This facilitates children sharing ideas and questioning what happens at their service.

Where possible, the program allows and encourages children to complete projects they have commenced over a number of sessions.

Educators will regularly seek feedback and information from families in relation to their child/ren and their participation in the programs delivered by the Service. This information will be gained through face to face conversations, surveys and/or newsletters.

Through team meetings, the Coordinator, educators and other staff will draw on the diverse knowledge, views and experiences of each other when reviewing the experiences planned for children to ensure that all children have opportunity to achieve the learning outcomes.

Educators will be required to critically reflect on and evaluate activities, both planned and spontaneous, by using various methods including (but not limited to) observations, activity evaluations and learning stories, to ensure experiences provided meet the identified learning outcomes for the children involved. Critical reflection involves closely examining all aspects of events and experiences from different perspectives.

Children's learning experiences and activities are documented in a variety of ways to assist with ongoing reflection, evaluation and assessment of their strengths, interests, behaviours and relationships. Documented experiences will be collated and displayed for families and children.

Children's comments, suggestions and feedback are recorded in the children's individual scrapbooks, or in the daily program evaluation.

Families are invited to contact the Coordinator/Educational Leader at any time with any comments, complaints or suggestions relating to the programs provided by the Service.

The Coordinator will, on a regular basis at team meetings:

- Seek verbal comments from educators in respect to the effectiveness of the programs delivered by the Service to ensure that the service philosophy and goals is guiding the program and are achieved;
- Discuss with educators the ways in which the program could be modified or enhanced as a result of any feedback or experience encountered in the delivery of the program. Written minutes will be taken at these meetings.

The Educational Leader will, on a weekly basis and taking into account the written evaluations of educators, reflect on and evaluate the service planned and spontaneous activities to ensure the identified goals and learning outcomes were achieved. These evaluations will assist with further programming of activities in collaboration with all educators and children.

The Coordinator and educators will, through an ongoing process of self-evaluation, monitor, evaluate and review the program delivery in line with the National Quality Standard and to ensure they fulfill these policies and procedures and any other relevant obligations of the Service.

Taking into account all feedback received through these procedures, the Coordinator will regularly report in writing to the Nominated Supervisor on the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Service programs and the ways in which they have been modified or enhanced as a result.

In seeking feedback from parents or educators, the Coordinator will treat all complaints relating to program respectfully in accordance with the Dealing with Complaints Policy and, where necessary, will take appropriate steps to seek to address genuine complaints quickly and effectively.

The service will strive to ensure that Educators' practices:

- Foster children's self-esteem and confidence by allowing them to investigate, imagine and explore ideas as well as experiencing pride and confidence in their achievements,
- Empower children to make choices, guide their own play and extend their interests with enthusiasm, energy and commitment, through supporting them to understand, self-regulate and manage their own emotions in a way that reflects the feeling and needs of others,
- Promote children's sense of belonging, connectedness and wellbeing through consistently positive and genuinely warm and nurturing interactions,
- Support children's communication through engaging them in a range of methods from sustained conversations about their ideas and experiences to providing opportunities for music, books etc.,
- Respect the diversity of families within the community and allow opportunities for children to broaden their understanding of the world in which they live through the investigation of histories, cultures, languages and traditions,
- Demonstrate flexibility in program delivery, incorporating children's ideas, culture and interest to ensure experiences are relevant and engaging as well as being creative in the use of equipment and materials to stimulate children's interest and curiosity,
- Support children to explore different identities and points of view through play and everyday experiences, acknowledge each child's uniqueness and are aware of, and responsive to, children who may require additional assistance to participate,
- Allow and assist children to document their learning experiences using various methods such as photographs, journals and/or art and craft displays,
- Reflect on planning and implementation of activities in relation to the 'My Time, Our Place' Framework for School Age Care and their knowledge of the children's current learning and development through regular completion of activity observations and/or learning stories,
- Support all aspects of children's health, ensuring that their individual health and wellbeing requirements are met and supporting them to learn about healthy food, drink and lifestyle choices,
- Demonstrate a commitment to children's health and safety through role modeling hygiene and sun safe practices, complying with service policies and procedures relating to the environment and/or equipment

and supporting children to negotiate play spaces to ensure the safety and wellbeing of themselves and others,

- Support a balance of indoor, outdoor, planned and spontaneous physical activities and passive experiences for children by encouraging participation in new and/or unfamiliar activities and accepting the children's level of involvement according to their skill and ability,
- Demonstrate a commitment to ensuring children are protected through compliance with service policies and procedures relating to the safety and/or collection of children in the care of the service,
- Demonstrate a commitment to regularly review and update knowledge and/or skills and practices in line with current professional standards and/or guidelines through the development and implementation of a professional development plan, in conjunction with the service coordinator and in line with identified service needs,
- Support other educators to achieve the goals as outlined in the service philosophy and goals by sharing expertise, modeling best practice, providing feedback and leading discussions at regular team meetings,
- Support families through creating an inclusive and welcoming environment where sharing of information about their child is encouraged, concerns are responded to in a prompt and courteous manner, suggestions and/or ideas for improvement are acknowledged and additional support agencies are accessed if required,
- Support and encourage families and children's involvement in their local and wider community, through participation in appropriate projects and/or events and engaging children in sustainable practices within the service.

Measuring Tools:

Parent Surveys

Educational Leader meetings

References and Further Reading:

Education and Care Services National Law Act, 2010 and Regulations 2011

'My Time, Our Place' Framework for School Age Care

<http://walkerlearning.com.au/info/>

<http://earlylife.com.au/info/>

www.qcan.org.au

Links to Other Policies:

Dealing with Complaints Policy (2014)

Interactions with Children Policy (2014)

Nutrition, Food and Beverage Policy (2014)

Philosophy (2015)