



# INCLUSIVE PRACTICES POLICY

Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Children

## INTRODUCTION

Our Service believes that children have the right to be treated equally and our goal is to develop children's identity and self-esteem in a trusting and supportive environment. We embrace diversity in all its forms to help develop positive and accepting attitudes in children, and to help them gain a better understanding of their environment, community, country, and the world.

## POLICY STATEMENT

We believe in the statement of inclusion as advocated by Early Childhood Australia (ECA) that *'Inclusion means every child has access to, participates meaningfully in, and experiences positive outcomes from early childhood education and care programs.'* (2016).

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 Service. This policy aims to assist children to form positive social relationships, develop their identity and self-awareness and to learn to accept the diversity of members within and outside of the Service community. Our Service embeds the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and promotes a culture of safety and wellbeing to minimise the risk of child abuse or harm to children whilst promoting children's sense of security and belonging.

## STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES

### 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 Service. 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 and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Inclusion involves taking into account all children's social, cultural and linguistic diversity (including learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographic location) in curriculum decision-making processes. (EYLF, p.24) (EYLF.V2.0, 2022. p.66)

We will ensure children are provided with equitable access to resources, 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

Orchard Early Learning 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.





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## **The Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor / Educators will:**

- Access information and professional development/awareness about other cultural and racial identities, especially those relevant within the Service
- 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 responsiveness
- 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
- Develop communication plans with families to ensure inclusion- use of interpreter/cultural support
- Where possible use both the educators and children's first language as appropriate within the Service environment
- Respect all cultures by presenting at different times 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 Service
- Challenge inappropriate or stereotypical conversations or remarks by children.

## **Diversity in family compositions**

### **The Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor / 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 Service, and the community
- Engage in simple discussions about families that focus on fact rather than values e.g. "*some children live with their mum or dad, some children live with their mum and 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





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- 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' perspectives**

#### **The Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor / Educators will:**

- Show commitment to reconciliation by developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)
- Reflect on the current level of cultural competence responsiveness 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
- Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into the curriculum
- Provide opportunities for professional reflection
- Create a culturally safe environment to ensure children have the ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights [Child Safe Standards]
- 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 children and 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 Service environment.

### **Ability**

#### **The Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor / 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





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- Observe all children and with family consultation, provide a 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 Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor / 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
- Explore the values and uniqueness of the diversity within the Service. 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 Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor / Educators will:

- Work collaboratively with culturally and linguistically diverse children and their families (EYLF)
- 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 Service
- 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
- Subscribe to [Early Learning Languages Australia](#) (ELLA) or other online programs to support children's learning with play-based language learning experiences.

### Families will:

- Talk to your doctor as soon as possible if you're concerned about your child's health or development.
- Understand that early diagnosis may prevent a condition becoming more serious, as your child can get the medical help and additional support they need.  
It's important to:





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- take your child for their regular health checks, so that delays in their development or learning can be detected early
- keep track of your child's development and help them learn key life skills
- talk to your local doctor or child and family health nurse if you have any concerns about your child
- get a second medical opinion if necessary.
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- Parents will need to consider getting additional support through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) agree to the strategies and goals for the child.
- Parents should consider what type of early childhood education and care setting will best suit their child's individual needs and talk to the Service Director to find out if the staff are specially trained.
- Work collaboratively with educators to discuss and develop a support plan for their child.
- In cases where strategies and goal are not meeting your child's needs, additional reviews and meetings are required at the centre with the Director and or educators. These meetings will examine what is currently working and what is currently not working with the focus on ensuring the best possible outcomes for the child. Any new strategies agreed will also take into consideration the centre environment and staff/educators specialised skills to ensure the needs of the child are met. Parent must be available to attend these evaluation meetings in person, via zoom or by phone.
- Parent must be aware of the OELC's duty of care for its staff and other children who attend the service. In situations where staff or other children are being physically harmed a different course of action is required. Please refer to the Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy for further information.

### LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

- Parent Conduct Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Interaction with Children, Family and Staff Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Children's Behaviour Guidance Policy

### RELATED LEGISLATION, GUIDELINES, STANDARDS, FRAMEWORKS

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.





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QUALITY AREA 3: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT		
3.1	Design	The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.
3.1.1	Fit for purpose	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
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.
3.2.2	Resources support play-based learning	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.

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.

QUALITY AREA 6 COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES		
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.
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.





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6.2.2	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.
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EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures are to be followed
157	Access for parents

## LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

- Interactions with children, families and staff
- Guiding children's behaviour
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Enrolment policy
- Medical conditions policy
- Child protection policy
- Students, volunteers and visitors
- Child safe environment
- Acceptance and Refusal

## RESOURCES

Getting support:

As well as the usual parenting challenges, those who have a child with disability or additional needs will also want to consider:

- if they can get support through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)  
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/life-events/starting-and-growing-a-family/parenting-young-children/if-you-have-a-child-disability-or-additional-needs/getting-ndis-support>
- what type of early childhood education and care will best suit their child's needs  
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/life-events/starting-and-growing-a-family/parenting-young-children/if-you-have-a-child-disability-or-additional-needs/your-early-childhood-education-and-care-options>
- the financial and other types of support available.  
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/life-events/starting-and-growing-a-family/parenting-young-children/if-you-have-a-child-disability-or-additional-needs/your-early-childhood-education-and-care-options>





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[children/if-you-have-a-child-disability-or-additional-needs#:~:text=the-financial%20and%20other%20types%20of%20support,-available.](#)

- Raising Children has information on:  
<https://raisingchildren.net.au/disability/guide-to-disabilities>

Care for Kids has information on:  
<https://www.careforkids.com.au/child-care-articles/article/65/choosing-child-care-for-special-needs-children>

## SOURCE

- Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW: <http://www.antidiscrimination.justice.nsw.gov.au/>
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. PSCA Fact Sheet. Exploring diversity and equity in education and care services.  
<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-01/ExploringDiversityAndEquityInEducationAndCareServices.PDF>
- Australian Government Department of Education Skills and Employment (2009) (2022). [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.V2.0](#)
- Australian Human Rights Commission (2020). *Child Safe Organisations*.  
<https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/>
- 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/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/ECA\\_Position\\_statement\\_Disability\\_Inclusion\\_web.pdf](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/wp-content/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 Queensland Our Way A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017-2037  
<https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/campaign/supporting-families/our-way.pdf>
- 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 2023).
- Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education Welcome to Country.  
<https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/>
- Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

## 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.







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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.

**Date(s) reviewed: June 2021 / January 2022 / July 2022 / March 2023**

