

Sample Cultural Policy

Australia is an increasingly multi-cultural 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 helps to form the foundation of the program being implemented to ensure we are promoting an inclusive environment for all children.

National Quality Standards (NQS)

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice	
1.1	An Approved Learning Framework informs the development of a curriculum that enhances each child's learning and development.
1.1.1	Curriculum decision making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, and confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.
1.1.6	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions and influence events and their world.
1.2	Educators and coordinators are focused, active and reflective in designing and delivering the program for each child.

Quality Area 3: Physical Environment	
3.2	The environment is inclusive, promotes competence, independent exploration and learning through play.

Quality Area 5: Relationships with children	
5.1	Respectful and equitable relationships are developed and maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Interactions with each child are warm, responsive and build trusting relationships.
5.2	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults.
5.2.3	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained at all times.

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnership with families and communities	
6.1	Respectful supportive relationships with families are developed and maintained.

6.2	Families are supported in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about child rearing are respected.
6.3.1	Links with relevant community and support agencies are established and maintained

Education and Care Services National Regulations

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

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, staff, management and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Management/Nominated Supervisor/Certified Supervisor 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 and staff to respect and value others, including those who are different from themselves.
- Children, staff and families cultural backgrounds are reflected in developing routines and program consistent with best practice and positive outcomes for all stakeholders.
- Communication for families can be translated into their home language wherever possible.
- Encourage educators 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 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

Source

- 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

Review

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
March 2020	Minor changes made to ensure compliance with regulations and National Quality Standards.	March 2022

Multi-Cultural 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 Educators and families
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Resource Centre, Migrant and Ethnic Link Services (1800 648 598) which provide translation services and resources (Interpreter Service 131450).<input type="checkbox"/> For assistance with multicultural matters the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs can be contacted on 131 881 or www.immi.gov.au<input type="checkbox"/> Exploring Multiculturalism, Anti-Bias and Social Justice in Children's Services by Miriam Giugni<input type="checkbox"/> Raising Children Website - http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/multicultural.html