

Quality Area 1.

Educational Program and Practice

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Curriculum and practice | 2 |
| Cultural Competence | 6 |
| Inclusion | 7 |

CURRICULUM AND PRACTICE

Curriculum: NOS QA 1

Introduction

To ensure the curriculum we provide for the children meets the individual needs of each child and family we will always consider the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012, The NQS and the Early years learning framework (EYLF) 2010. We have developed this policy in consultation with educators, staff and families as a guideline for our curriculum within the Centre.

What is curriculum? Curriculum in early childhood settings refers to all the things that children experience. The glossary in the EYLF defines curriculum as "all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children's learning and development."

Curriculum provided will include the following areas of focus: Identity, Community, Wellbeing, Learning and Communication as Identified in the Early Years Learning Framework 2010. It will also take into account that curriculum offered will be evaluated regularly and early child professionals will discuss and/or document reflections about the program on a daily basis.

Strategies

The curriculum will be emergent with child friendly learning environments that consist of routine, group developed rules and intentional teaching.

Educators will use observations to develop a deep understanding of each child and their family to support each child and their family in developing appropriate plans/goals for each child.

Educators will also be knowledgeable with reference to the Early Years Learning Framework, and the Learning Outcomes, Principles and practices which are all important to the framework.

The Principles include; Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships, Partnerships with families, High expectations and equity, Respect for diversity, ongoing learning and reflective practice.

Practice includes; Holistic approaches, responsiveness to children, learning through play, intentional teaching, learning environments, cultural competence, continuity of learning and transitions and assessment for learning

Curriculum planning

Educators plan programs in order to provide experiences which respond to the children's strengths, interests and needs and community contexts in which they live. In doing this educator act respectfully by being responsive to children's culture, social and individual diversity and differences. Educators planning formats may differ in presentation but will all include planned experiences, unplanned, forward planning, spontaneous activities, comments about experiences, reflections and where to next? These will be available for families to view each session.

Educators document and analyse children's play (record their journey) in order to know what and how they are learning as a basis for guiding future planning decisions.

Educators will act intentionally to encourage and promote children's learning through play by using specific teaching strategies.

As we have a child centered focus our planning allows us to be flexible and follow the children's needs and interests as they arise.

Intentional teaching occurs when educators;

Observe children's play in order to know when to move into the play to sustain, extend, scaffold, provoke or support children's thinking. In analysing play observations, an educator responds intentionally by planning strategies to teach a new skill, or concept or practice existing skills (The Early Years Learning Framework: Learning and teaching through play").

Creating secure, safe and challenging environments that promote play interactions and learning is fundamental for achieving and maintaining quality early childhood education programs and we recognise this at the Centre.

When planning the environments for learning, educators will need to consider;

- The components of the physical environment (which include furniture, resources, light and acoustics) and how physical elements such as these can support or hinder play.
- provocations for learning which invite sensory exploration and investigation using a range of resources, media and technologies.
- aesthetics or the beauty which will surround children and adults in the environment.
- positioning of equipment and resources so that children can access them safely and in ways that respect their agency and competency.
- providing equipment and resources which children can use in multiple ways to promote exploration and creativity.
- providing a safe physical, social and emotional environment so that children learn to take appropriate risks in learning and exploration.
- planning the daily routine so that children have large blocks of time to develop quality play themes and experiences
- collaborating with children and families and others to regularly assess the environment to ensure it promotes quality play based learning experiences.
- ensuring all children have daily access to natural materials in both indoor and outdoor environments
- making a variety of media available that children can explore and use to represent or express ideas.
- documenting play experiences around the room for children, families and others who are working with children to reflect upon.

How will educators record the children's journey, development and interests?

We use documentation across the Centre in a number of styles to record a child's journey.

We may use;

- Anecdotal observations of what the child is doing and which demonstrate growth, and learning,
- Art work,
- Photos,
- Learning stories (group or individual),
- Developmental checklists,
- Developmental summaries that relate to the outcomes in the EYLF at the end of terms,
- Daily diary at the end of the day (brief evaluation of the curriculum of that day),
- Documenting parent conversations,
- Reflection cycle, and/or
- Web diagrams

We will also maintain records that illustrate participation and achievements. In order to understand the child's personality, staff may document reflections about a child's behavior or reaction to an experience in order to plan effective experiences based on their interests, skill and emotional development.

All learning journals are available at all times children, parents and families to read. The children and families are given a Learning Journey portfolio that is a record of the child's journey at preschool. This is owned by the children and families and is built upon throughout the year. Families will be encouraged to add to this also. This is designed in different formats across the Centre.

We know that children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children's learning. (EYLF)

This will be done by;

- Informal talks,
- planned interviews,
- individual communication books,
- asking parents for feedback and resources
- to help with the programming via the newsletter,
- providing families with individual objectives and
- opportunities to view developmental records,
- inviting families to special organised events such as mother's day autumn walk,
- special grown up friend/fathers night,
- family BBQ's,
- general meetings,
- information sessions,
- helper's duty,
- And the opportunity to be helpers on excursions.

It is our intent to involve families at every opportunity.

The Approved Provider will;

- Ensure educators are given appropriate 'set up/preparation', end of day preparation and reflection time..
- Ensure it considers and encourages requests to further educators knowledge for working in Preschools e.g. training, webinars etc,.

The Nominated Supervisor will;

- Ensure current research is shared with educators
- Ensure all staff and educators are following this policy
- Ensure that documentation and curriculum decision making is authentic

Ensure teachers are given time to conduct pre-attendance interviews prior to children starting preschool at the beginning of the year to ensure appropriate information is shared between educators and families

The Educational Leader will;

- Provide regular support and resources to the educators for curriculum decision making.
- Support educators with curriculum planning
- Provide content/information at the monthly staff meeting.

The Educator will;

- Participate in collection of observations on the children,
- Analyse the information (What learning is taking place, how does it link to planning for the child or the group, what other learning outcomes or development are visible,
- Plan with other educators in the rooms (thinking about what is relevant from observations, intentional teaching etc. What might be relevant to think about what could be planned) and
- Reflect and review (in verbal or written manner) what happened? What was interesting? What might you think about changing? Think about this as holistic view - as a team, with children, parents and wider community.
- Be in partnerships with families and share information with regards to the child's journey travelled e.g. share portfolio, discuss an observation that is relevant.
- Provide families opportunity for feedback with regard to the curriculum

References: The Early Years Learning Framework: learning and teaching through play:
Research in practice series Early Childhood Australia Inc. Vol 17 No. 3 2010.

Cultural Competence

Link to Quality Area 1: NQS 1.1.1 & 1.1.2

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will;

- Ensure we are a centre where children realise their full potential regardless of gender, race, ability, or social origin.
- Ensure staff are culturally competent in the ways they treat individual children and families in regard to language, attitudes, assumptions and expectations.
- Ensure families are culturally competent in the ways they treat other families and staff at the Centre.
- Ensure enrolment policy is current
- Ensure we continue to build upon our resources and equipment to ensure we foster a sense of belonging to all children who attend the preschool

Educators and staff will;

- act professional and any personal beliefs, customs, or ideas of the staff those of the parents must be respected and abided by.
- Ensure they are contributing to help children realise their full potential regardless of gender, race, ability or social origin.
- Children should not be disadvantaged or made to feel different because of their parents' beliefs.
- We recognise and accept non-traditional family structures. We will help children to accept that there are many family structures and each child belongs to a family.

The Educators will;

- Providing multicultural and non-gender biased puzzles, stories, games and posters,
- Integrating various cooking experiences,
- Integrating this into songs and dances,
- Integrating this theme into group times,
- Celebrating other cultures or countries special days,
- Integrating this into imaginative play areas e.g. cooking utensils, dress ups,
- Integrating this into indoor and outdoor experiences and activities,
- Encouraging children to visit areas that were traditionally seen as gender biased/sex stereotypes e.g. boys at the blocks and girls at the house,
- Divide tasks evenly between girls and boys -encourage all children to express emotions e.g. it's okay for boys to cry.
- Where possible staff should reflect both sexes,
- Being aware of different family structures when dealing with special days such as mother's day, father's day and religious events,
- Always including cultural aspects of the community into the weekly program and not using a 'tourist' curriculum.
- Encouraging people from different cultures to become involved in presentations with the children and share their culture and beliefs.
- Including in the annual budget money allocated to buy specific cultural equipment and resources.
- Being aware of other organizations that can assist in providing resources that will help with communication to children and families and well as places to borrow/buy specific educational equipment.
- Where possible we will apply for Preschool Disability Support Funding (PDSP) to support the integration of these children at our Centre.

Inclusion Policy

The Approved Provider;

- Will ensure that all children at the Centre who have a disability are provided with an appropriate preschool program that supports their needs, interests and development.

The Nominated Supervisor will;

- Apply for Preschool Disability Support Funding (PDSP)
- Purchase relevant equipment pertaining to that child's needs from money allocated in annual funding or from successful PDSP applications
- Employ suitably quality additional needs workers to support that child's inclusion where money is allocated by Preschool disability support program.

The Educators will;

- Ensure programming includes that child's needs, interests and development,
- To keep in contact with other agencies/organisations involved ,
- To arrange regular meetings with families and other organisations,
- To ensure that parents are provided with ample information regarding the child's progress
- To keep weekly individual objectives for the child, with a summary evaluating these objectives, as well as up to date learning profile records.
- To provide information to parents about access and support services
- To ensure that equipment in the program is suitable for that child's disabilities

The Families will;

- Indicate in writing if known on Enrolment application forms and Confidential enrolment form any Inclusion, diagnosis the child may have,
- Provide educators with reports and documents from other agencies who work with that child