MULTICULTURAL POLICY

Australia is an increasingly multicultural society and as we recognise more cultural and ethnic diversity, it is imperative we lead children in recognising, respecting and accepting similarities and differences in cultures. The cultural beliefs, linguistic and religious diversity represented 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.

There were never in the world two opinions alike, any more than two hairs or two grains. Their most universal quality is diversity.

Michel De Montaigne, 1533–1592

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

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.
1.1.2	Child-centred	Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.
1.1.3	Program learning opportunities	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.
1.2.2	Responsive teaching and scaffolding	Educators respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback.
1.2.3	Child directed learning	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.
QUALITY AREA 3: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT		
3.2	Use	The service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play based learning.
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.
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 PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILIES		
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	Parents 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
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
6.2.2	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.
6.2.3	Community engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
73	Educational Program
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
157	Access for parents
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed

RELATED POLICIES

Additional Needs Policy Anti-Bias and Inclusion Policy Celebrations Policy Educational Programming Policy English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) Policy	Family Communication Policy Interaction with Children, Family and Staff Policy Orientation of Families Policy Physical Environment Policy Respect for Children Policy

PURPOSE

To develop affirmative attitudes, concepts, and beliefs towards the acceptance of diversity and knowledge of other 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. Our cultural diversity in Australia is one of our greatest strengths and part of our national identity. Facilitating a sense of identity is a key outcome from *My Time, Our Place Framework* for School Age Care in Australia (V2.0)

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the OSHC Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service values and celebrates multicultural diversity by building respectful partnerships with families and local communities. We promote and embrace cultural and linguistic differences and provide an inclusive and equitable environment for children to develop their sense of belonging and enhance their learning and well-being. We actively create environments where children and families feel safe to express their cultural identity without fear of discrimination, tokenism or marginalisation. Our OSHC Service maintains zero tolerance for racism, discrimination or exclusionary behaviour. All concerns relating to cultural safety will be addressed promptly in accordance with Service policies and procedures.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE:

- educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure
- all new employees are provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction process
- families are aware of this *Multicultural Policy* and supported to contribute to its implementation
- cultural diversity is embedded in our service philosophy, governance, curriculum decision-making and daily practice

- enrolment and orientation processes gather meaningful information about each family's cultural identity, languages spoken, traditions, aspirations and expectations to inform programming and practice
- equitable access to the Service is provided to all children and families and a culturally safe environment is maintained where everyone is respected regardless of race, ethnicity, cultural identity, language, religion, gender, family structure or ability
- inclusive teaching practices and intentional programming promote intercultural understanding, challenge bias and reflect the diverse cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds of children and families
- the Service communicates, engages and consults with our culturally diverse communities
- the unique cultural and social perspectives of each family is acknowledged and celebrated
- specific programming develops intercultural understanding and awareness, identifying similarities and differences, and learning about a variety of cultural celebrations
- inclusive teaching practices recognise and respect the cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds of all children and families
- all staff and educators display cultural responsiveness by learning about multiple perspectives and diversity such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, family and individual's diversity
- to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people about how to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into the philosophy of our Service and the planning and implementation of the curriculum
- the Service builds and maintains cultural resources to appropriately reflect cultures within the Service and community
- children, staff, and families' cultural backgrounds are reflected in developing routines and programs consistent with best practice and that foster positive outcomes for all stakeholders
- positive community relations are promoted and methods of communication with families are translated into home languages as required
- the capacity of staff to meet the specific learning and wellbeing needs of children from culturally diverse backgrounds is met through professional learning opportunities for educators
- cultural responsiveness is demonstrated by learning about multiple perspectives and diversity such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, family and individual's diversity
- all staff follow the principles of the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics (ECA)

- educators and staff critically examine their own assumptions and challenge stereotypes, prejudice and discriminatory behaviour

WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, STAFF AND EDUCATORS WILL:

- create and maintain an inclusive and culturally safe environment that enhances children's development, self-worth and dignity
- act in the best interests of all children and uphold their rights at all times
- demonstrate cultural responsiveness by valuing and respecting diverse backgrounds, beliefs, values, customs and family practices
- embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and perspectives authentically within the curriculum
- 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, gender, or ability
- work to ensure that the self-identity of each child is valued and respected
- encourage children to explore and accept diversity
- challenge bias and stereotypes and discriminatory behaviour, using intentional teaching strategies and inclusive language
- ensure own interactions are caring and responsive to all children and young people in the OSHC Service
- ensure learning materials, displays, posters, children's books, and other materials are monitored to ensure they are culturally inclusive
- engage parents and families as partners by inviting their contributions to cultural learning, celebrations and curriculum planning.

RESOURCES

Aboriginal Early Childhood Cultural Protocols

NSW Department of Education Learning and Teaching Using picture books for intercultural understanding. Learning across the curriculum

NSW Government Deadly Resources for Quality Services

Reconciliation Australia- Reconciliation Action Plans (RAP)

Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. Early Years Unit

Walking Together

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

To ensure sustained embedded practice, our *Multicultural Policy* will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management, and notification of any change to policies will be made to families within 14 days.

CHILDCARE CENTRE DESKTOP- RELATED RESOURCES

Multicultural Guide and Procedure	Reconciliation Action Plan Guide

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). *Guide to the National Quality Framework.*

Australian Government Department of Education. (2022). *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.V2.0.*

Australian Government. Department of Home Affairs. (2019) Harmony Day https://www.harmony.gov.au/about

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023).

NSW Government. Department of Education. Aboriginal Children's Early Childhood Education Strategy 2021-2025

Reconciliation Australia, Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education, (2019).
https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/about

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

Scarlet, R. R. (Ed.). (2016). *The anti-bias approach in early childhood* (3rd ed.). Australia: Multiverse.

Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Melina Strangio	Educational Leader	07/05/26
POLICY REVIEWED	MAY 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	MAY 2027
VERSION NUMBER	V13.03.26		
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy review • key sections condensed to remove duplication of statements and references to cultural responsiveness to create more succinct responsibility section • sources checked for currency and links repaired as required		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE

APRIL 2024	• annual policy review • inclusion of statements for diversity, cultural responsiveness from EYLF V2.0, 2022 • deleted/reworded statements to ensure consistency of policy • sources checked for currency and broken links repaired as required	APRIL 2025
MARCH 2023	• policy maintenance • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required • reference to ELYF updated to V.20 • minor formatting edits within text • continuous improvement/reflection section added • link to Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations added in 'Sources'	MARCH 2024
MARCH 2022	• policy reviewed as part of annual review cycle • links to resources checked • sources checked	MARCH 2023
MARCH 2021	• minor edits as highlighted • additional resource added- picture books • sources checked for currency	MARCH 2022
MARCH 2020	• Additional information added to points and implementation • Sources/references added updated	MARCH 2021
MARCH 2019	• Additional information added to points. • Duplicated information deleted. • Irrelevant information deleted. • Sources checked for currency. • Sources/references corrected, updated, and alphabetised.	MARCH 2020
MARCH 2018	• Additional statements added to 'Implementation' section of the policy	MARCH 2019
OCTOBER 2017	• Updated the National Quality Standards references to comply with revised standards	MARCH 2018
MARCH 2017	• Minor changes made to ensure compliance with regulations and National Quality Standards.	MARCH 2018