

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

A quality early childhood program enriches children's learning, and is based upon their interests, culture, strengths and existing knowledge. As such, careful planning is required that combines the professional skills and expertise of educators with the knowledge, skills, needs and interests of children and families.

We acknowledge that families are a child's first and most influential teachers and therefore value the input of families within the educational program and working together with families to provide the best early childhood environment and program for their child. We acknowledge that children are capable and competent to make decisions that affect them and their learning, and ensure that their input is central to the educational program.

GOALS

- For children to acquire the skills and knowledge for them to become:
 - successful learners
 - confident and creative individuals
 - active and informed citizens.
- To ensure that through play based experiences and quality teaching, children have the opportunity to be engaged in an early childhood program that encompasses interactions, experiences, routines, and events, both planned and unplanned to enhance their early childhood experience;
- To work in partnership with families and the community using the outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework to guide planning for children's learning with acknowledgement of each child's family culture and background and the culture and context of the wider community.
- To make curriculum decisions that uphold children's rights to have their culture, identity, ability and strengths acknowledged, valued and responded to.

EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

High quality educational practice is central to the educational program for children at Alstonville Community Preschool. All educators view children as competent and capable and strive to provide experiences that challenge each child's natural curiosity, inspire their creativity and instill a love of learning that they will carry with them through their lifetimes.

Planning for children's learning included thinking about relationships, routines and resources, as well as experiences. Educators have the responsibility to provide environments, materials and intentional interactions. Planning is a mix of what educators notice and what children are interested in pursuing. (EYLF PLP Planning for Learning).

STRATEGIES

The Approved provider will ensure that:

- an Educational Program and Practice policy outlines how the educational program reflects the outcomes, principles and practices of Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF);
- an innovative educational program is in place which contributes to the EYLF outcomes for each child:
 - Develop a strong sense of identity;
 - Be connected with and contribute to his or her world;
 - Develop a strong sense of wellbeing;
 - Be a confident and involved learner;
 - Be an effective communicator.
- assessments of each child's developmental needs, interests, experiences and participation in the educational program are continuously being developed and inform further program planning;

- In preparing assessments of learning, the Approved Provider should consider-
 - the period of time that the child is being educated and cared for by the preschool;
 - how the documentation will be used by the educators within the program, and
 - the need for documentation to be done in a way that is readily understandable by educators and the parents of the child.
- Information about the contents and operation of the educational program for the preschool is displayed at the preschool in a place accessible to parents of children enrolled;
- That parent(s) of a child being educated and cared for by the preschool are provided with the following information on request:
 - information about the content and operation of the educational program so far as it relates to that child;
 - information about the child's participation in the educational program;
- a preschool philosophy/statement of values is developed and regularly updated which reflects the beliefs of the children, families and educators with respect to the educational program and practice of the preschool.

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that:

- the National Quality Framework and the Early Years Learning Framework are the documents used to inform all educational programs and practices within the preschool
- educators are supported in their use of these documents within the daily educational programs and their interactions with children;
- each child's agency is promoted enabling them to make choices and decisions about their own learning;
- an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation/reflection is developed and maintained.
- daily reflections on the educational program include the "voices" of children and that all educators and children are actively involved in the implementation of this.
- educational programs are regularly reviewed with early childhood teachers/room leaders to ensure the inclusion of meaningful assessment and documentation of children's learning;
- a copy of the educational program is displayed along with information about each days' program and activities and is readily accessible to families at all times;
- information is sought from families using the "What's Important to Us" sheet on enrolment, to inform program practice, and better understand the family background, values and beliefs for each child;
- the preschool philosophy/statement of values is reviewed at least annually incorporating the views of all stakeholders in the preschool ie children, families and educators;
- approve planned excursions and incursions which support and promote children's leaning outcomes within the context of the educational program, ensuring these excursions and incursions meet the Excursion policy guidelines and regulatory requirements for excursions particularly in respect to conduct of risk assessments prior to the excursion.

Educators will:

- collaborate and contribute to a daily educational program reflective of children's interests, experiences and developmental needs; This collaboration is ongoing throughout the day, and specific time is provided during the end of day Educational Planning meetings in each group for this reflection and planning.
- empower children to make choices which are good for them and their peers, and to develop a range of skills for social responsibility and respect. These will be continuously reinforced through the educational program;
- recognise, reflect upon and respond to each child's participation in the program to extend, challenge, scaffold and provoke their learning by observing them during their time at preschool, in play, during group and routine times and in their interactions with peers and adults;

- use their observations, in the form of jottings, photos, magic moments, floor book entries, samples of artwork or anecdotal records, and their conversations with children, to document each child's development and progress within the program.
- **use child focus groups** to monitor and ensure effective ongoing individual planning for children;
- **contribute to educational planning meetings** to share observations and ideas which accurately reflect on and assist further planning. These meetings also monitor implementation of the educational program against longer term intentional goals, and current child interest and ideas;
- contribute to the maintenance of a record of assessment of each child's learning and development in the **individual Summative Profiles**, by documenting each child's progress and planning for learning against the five learning outcomes of the EYLF. This profile will also include samples of work, and educator analysis of observations and jottings. This Summative profile will form a complete and ongoing assessment of each child's learning journey at preschool.
- **develop a Learning book** with each child to be kept at preschool in an easily accessible place for continuous reference by children and families throughout each year. This book will contain the working copy of each child's summative profile, work samples, magic moments and evidence of planning and progress against individual goals in a format that is easily understandable by families, as well as any other input from the child or family. This book is part of a collaborative documentation process between the family and the preschool to share the evidence of each child's learning at preschool.
- ensure that children with inclusion support needs have an Individual Learning Plan in addition to the summative profile, which includes reports from team meetings with families and professionals working with the child, along with formal assessments and that this is used to set goals and monitor child progress through the program;
- share as a form of documentation of the days learning daily photos with families which can be viewed in the foyer each afternoon.
- be available to talk with families on arrival and departure about the program and children's participation in the activities of the day. This is also an opportunity to gain information from families to contribute to the program.
- encourage families to contribute to the program through the sharing of resources, and their skills and experiences;
- ensure the educational program is continually reflective of the preschool philosophy and Statement of Values as agreed by children, families and staff;
- assist in the development and review of the preschool philosophy.

Families will:

- be encouraged to contribute to the educational program by visiting and sharing skills or knowledge with the children
- Share photos and happenings from home with educators and add evidence to their child's learning book
- feel welcome to talk to educators about any aspect of their child's attendance at preschool, this can be a face to face meeting, phone call or via email.

EVALUATION

A high quality educational program is developed for each child, with the input of children, families and educators.

Relevant Links to the National Quality Standard (NQS):

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD		
	Concept	Descriptor
QA1		Educational program and practice
1.1	Program	The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.
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	Practice	Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development.
1.2.1	Intentional teaching	Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.
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.
1.3	Assessment and planning	Educators and co-ordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.
1.3.1	Assessment and planning cycle	Each child's learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection.
1.3.2	Critical reflection	Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.
1.3.3	Information for families	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.

Education and Care Services National Regulations:

73	Educational Programs
74	Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for the delivery of educational program
75	Information about educational program to be kept available
76	Information about educational program to be given to parents
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
254	Declared approved learning frameworks

Relevant legislation:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Key resources:

- The National Quality Framework 2011 – The National Quality Standard
- The Early Years Learning Framework 2009