

INCLUSION & ANTI-BIAS POLICY & PROCEDURE

Regulations 155, 156, 157, 168(2)(h), 170-172

INCLUSION & ANTI-BIAS POLICY

Policy Statement:

Anti bias is the practice of inclusion and underpins our Centre philosophy. It is the acceptance that all children are valued and respected. 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."

Our Centre 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.

Background:

Tenison Woods College Early Learning & Community Centre has an Inclusion and Anti-bias Policy in place to comply with national regulations and uphold the standards set by the National Quality Framework (NQF). Under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, services must promote equity, inclusion, and diversity. The National Quality Standard (NQS), particularly Quality Area 5 (Relationships with Children) and Quality Area 6 (Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities), emphasizes creating a respectful and equitable environment for all children. An Inclusion and Anti-bias Policy ensures that every child, regardless of their background or abilities, has equal opportunities to learn, participate, and thrive in a supportive and respectful setting.

National Quality Standard (NQS)

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.
5.2	Relationships between children	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.
5.2.1	Collaborative learning	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.

Legislative requirements:

Regulation 155 – Interactions with children

- Approved provider must ensure the Centre is caring for children by:
 - Encouraging children to express themselves and their opinions;
 - Allowing children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem;
 - Maintaining at all times the dignity of children;
 - Giving each child positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour; and
 - Having regard to the family and cultural values, age, and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child at the Centre.

Regulation 156 – Relationships in groups

- The approved provider must ensure the Centre provides the children with opportunities to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other and with staff members and volunteers at the Centre.

Regulation 157 – Access for parents

- The approved provider and nominated supervisor of the Centre must ensure that parents of a child may enter the Centre at anytime that the child is being cared for at the Centre.
- The approved provider or nominated supervisor is not required to allow a parent to enter the Centre if:
 - They pose a risk to the safety of the children or staff at the Centre;
 - They conflict with any duty of the provider, supervisor or educator under law; or
 - The provider, supervisor or educator believes that permitting the parent's entry would contravene a court order.

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Regulation 168 – Education and Care Services Must Have Policies and Procedures

- Our Centre has policies and procedures as set out in sub regulation 2 in Regulation 168.

Regulation 170 – Policies and Procedures to be Followed

- Nominated Supervisors, staff members and volunteers have an understanding of all policies and procedures and ensure they are followed at the Centre.

Regulation 171 – Policies and Procedures to be Kept Available

- Digital copies of our policies and procedures are available via a QR code in our foyer, in our digital PowerQIP and in our handbook. A hard copy of our policies and procedures can be found in the ELCC Office.

Regulation 172 – Notification of Change of Policies and Procedures

- All families are notified and sent updated policies and procedures.
- If a change to policy is planned, significantly affecting families, they will be given 14 days' notice.

Principles to Inform Policy:

Our policy is guided by the following principles:

- **Equity and Inclusion:** Ensuring all children have equal access to educational opportunities, resources, and support regardless of their background or abilities.
- **Diversity:** Valuing and embracing the various backgrounds, cultures, and identities of children, families, and staff.
- **Respect:** Creating an environment where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect.
- **Positive Identity and Self-esteem:** Supporting the development of children's positive self-identity and self-worth.
- **Anti-bias Education:** Actively addressing and challenging biases, stereotypes, and discrimination in the learning environment.

Key Terms:

- **ACECQA (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority):** The independent national authority that administers the National Quality Framework.
- **Anti-bias:** Actively challenging and addressing biases, stereotypes, and discrimination.
- **Diversity:** The variety of backgrounds, cultures, and identities within the community.
- **Equity:** Fairness and justice in the treatment and opportunities provided to all children.
- **Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations:** Legislation governing the provision of education and care services in Australia.
- **Inclusion:** Providing equal access to learning opportunities and support for all children.
- **NQF (National Quality Framework):** The regulatory framework that ensures high-quality early childhood education and care in Australia.
- **NQS (National Quality Standard):** The standard that outlines the criteria for assessing the quality of early childhood education and care services.
- **Self-esteem:** The sense of personal value and self-worth developed through positive experiences and support.

Links to Other Policies and Procedures:

- Providing a Child Safe Environment
- Code of Conduct
- Educational Program
- Interactions with Children, Families and Staff
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Governance and Management

Inductions and Ongoing Training

- Upon starting employment at the Early Learning & Community Centre, all employees are sent policies and procedures of the Centre and in the first month given an induction on specific topics relating to 'Inclusion and Anti-bias.'
- At management discretion or when deemed required, training or PD will be put in place to ensure all staff are following best practice and understand the importance and are implementing inclusion and anti-bias practices.

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Policy Created/Reviewed:

This policy was created in August 2024 and will be reviewed every two years or as the Director deems necessary to ensure compliance with regulations and alignment with best practices.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review:

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated as needed to ensure compliance with regulations and alignment with our Centre's philosophy and goals. The Director is responsible for conducting these reviews.

References

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014). Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2009) *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*.
- 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/wpcontent/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).
- Reconciliation South Australia, 'Education, Action and Change' (2024) <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:AP:9307ccbb-1e35-431c-8602-c9a54fea9e9f>

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with regulatory requirements, but no less frequently than every two years.

Reviewed by David Meziniec
Tenison Woods College Principal



Signed:
Dated: 4.8.24

Reviewed by Fran Scanlon
Early Learning & Community Centre Director



Signed:
Dated: 1.8.24

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Procedure Statement:

Our Inclusion and Anti-bias Policy and Procedure underpins the philosophy of our Centre. 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 Centre. 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 Centre community.

“Educators who are culturally competent respect multiple cultural ways of knowing, seeing and living, celebrate the benefits of diversity and have an ability to understand and honour differences. This is evident in everyday practice when educators demonstrate an ongoing commitment to developing their own cultural competence in a two-way process with families and communities” (EYLF, p.16).

Procedure

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 Centre. 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.

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).

We will ensure children are provided with access to 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

Our 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.

A Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person /Educators will:

- Access information and professional development/awareness about other cultural and racial identities, especially those relevant within the Centre;
- 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;
- 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;

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- Where possible use both the educators and children's first language as appropriate within the Centre environment;
- Respect all cultures by presenting 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 Centre;
- Challenge inappropriate or stereotypical conversations or remarks by children;
- If inappropriate or stereotypical conversations or remarks are made by parents or staff, the Director is to be informed and the process of investigation, as set out in complaints and grievances, will be followed. If believed appropriate further training or information may be offered to staff or parents.

Diversity in Family Composition

The Nominated Supervisor and educators will:

- Create an environment that is welcoming to all families, embracing our catholic ethos and philosophy;
- Respect each family, and work in partnership to support the child's emergent identity as an individual, member of their family, our Centre, and the community;
- Engage in simple discussions about families that focus on fact rather than values eg "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;
- Respect family lifestyle choices;
- Treat all families respectfully regardless of socio-economic 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;
- All religious backgrounds should be acknowledged and explored, for example inviting families in to talk about their religion, celebrations and so on.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

The Nominated Supervisor and Educators will:

- Ensure ELCC has a sitting member of the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) committee, contributing to the direction of the College;
- Have members of the staff in the role of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Cultural Diversity, ensuring embedded practices and best practice is consistently occurring in the Centre;
- Reflect on the current level of cultural competence 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;
- Attend professional development to support our understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and perspectives;
- Provide opportunities for professional reflection;
- Identify and challenge our own cultural assumptions, beliefs and commitments to cultural competency;
- 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 Centre environment;
- All children and staff to understand our Centre is located on Boandik land and connection to country walks occur throughout the children's time at the Centre;
- Each day begins with an acknowledgement of country, with all staff meetings beginning in the same way.

Ability

The Nominated Supervisor and Educators will:

- Provide an inclusive educational environment in which all children can succeed;
- Promote acceptance, respect and appreciation for individual's varying abilities;

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- 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;
- Observe all children and with family consultation, provide an individualised 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 Nominated Supervisor and 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 Centre. 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 Nominated Supervisor and Educators will:

- 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 Centre;
- 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.

Implementation:

- The Director and Nominated Supervisors are responsible for ensuring all staff are trained and adhere to these procedures.
- Regular audits and observations will be conducted to ensure compliance and identify areas for improvement.