

## POLICY: 3.1. EDUCATION PROGRAM AND PRACTICE

### Procedure: 3.1 Education Program and Practice

The following steps set out the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder involved in the design and delivery of the education program. General over-arching principles applied to the design and delivery of the educational program and practices include:

Staff and Educators work with families to ensure that the educational program and practices are stimulating and enhance children's learning and development

Staff (Educational Leader and Coordinators) and Educators will also consider:

- That each child's current knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities, and interests are the foundation of the educational program.
- How the daily routines are organised to maximise opportunities for children's learning.
- How they promote each child's agency by empowering them to make choices, consider their participation and are involved in curriculum decisions.
- How each child's learning and development is assessed as part of an ongoing cycle of planning, including documenting each child's experience of the program and progress towards the five learning outcomes.
- Making the program and process of children's learning available to their families.

#### **Definitions:**

**Curriculum (early childhood)** – 'curriculum means all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children's learning and development.' (p.9, EYLF)

**Curriculum (school age)** – 'in the school age care service, curriculum includes all the spontaneous and planned experiences for children at the service designed to support wellbeing and facilitate learning. It includes all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events.' (p. 42, FSAC)

**Pedagogy** – 'Educators' professional practice, especially those aspects that involve building and nurturing relationships, program decision-making, teaching and learning.' (p.6, FSAC)

**Documentation** – the range of methods used by Educators to gather information about children, identify and analyse learning, plan and evaluate the program.

**Assessment** – the process of gathering and analysing information as evidence about what children know, can do and understand. It is part of an ongoing cycle that includes planning, documenting and evaluating children's learning. (p. 17, EYLF)

**Principles** – the principles reflect ‘contemporary theories and research evidence concerning children’s play, leisure, learning and pedagogy.’ (p.10, FSAC, 2011)

**Practice** – quality practices are based on sound principles. Using a range of rich pedagogical practices enables Educators to promote children’s learning in meaningful ways.

### 3.1.1 Linking to Policy

This procedural guidance should be read in conjunction with the service **3.1 Education Program and Practice Policy** and will assist the Approved Provider, Management, Staff (Nominated Supervisors, Coordinators and Administrative Staff members) Educators, Educator Assistants and parents/guardians to implement the policy. The procedure covers:

#### [3.1.2 Roles and Responsibilities](#)

#### [3.1.3 Foundations of Planning and Programming](#)

#### [3.1.4 Development of Programs](#)

#### [3.1.5 Preparation and Display](#)

#### [3.1.6 Non-discriminatory Participation in Program Activities](#)

#### [3.1.7 Play Group/Session](#)

#### [3.1.8 Planning and Assessment Cycle](#)

#### [3.1.9 Intentional Teaching](#)

### 3.1.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Coordinators, Educational Leaders and Educators (and Educator Assistants) are knowledgeable about child development, early learning and, the principles and practices of the Early Years Learning Framework and are incorporated into the delivery of the educational program to promote children’s learning by:

- Engaging with the planning and assessment process;
- Implementing a play-based learning curriculum;
- Being Intentional (ensuring the plans are responsive to each child’s strengths, abilities, and interests) and recognising the teachable moments in spontaneous play episodes;
- Including leisure experiences, which enable fun and joy for children;
- Creating a safe learning environment where children can experience risk in a controlled space;
- Valuing transitions and routine experiences as learning opportunities;
- Assessment for learning through ongoing learning and reflective practices; and
- Respectful relationships and partnerships by demonstrating equality and diversity.

Coordinators and Educators will work together to provide children with a safe, healthy and pleasurable environment that can facilitate learning through play, and provides opportunities for children to explore, develop, grow and understand their world as well as developing their sense of themselves as an individual and as a member of a group and community.

**The Approved Provider will ensure:**

- During the recruitment of the Nominated Supervisor, that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to promote and lead an educational program across the service and capacity to lead and support the Educational Leader in their role.

**Nominated Supervisor will ensure:**

- When recruiting and in their ongoing support of the Coordinators and Educational Leader that they are aware of their role and responsibilities concerning the development of Educator's practices, skills and knowledge around providing a learning environment, planning and documenting for pre school (under school aged) and school age children's learning and development within the service.
- Coordinators and Educational Leaders understand the requirement for developing a plan for both preschool and school age children; this would include modelling for the Educator on how to engage with pre school (under school aged) and school age children to document their interest and their participation in the program.
- Convene regular meetings and ensure that the Coordinators and Educational Leaders have access to each Educator's records concerning their capacity to document and deliver an educational program, and assess each child's developmental progress.
- Educators are provided access to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and My Time Our Place (MTO) Framework for School Age Care before they commence providing care.
- All records related to a child who leaves the service are collected, this includes the Celebration and Accomplishment Chart of the child and will be kept on the child's file for a minimum of 3 years in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and is available for the perusal of the family at any time.
- Conversely, if an Educator leaves the Service, all the personal records for each child will be returned to the Service in accordance with the aforementioned Regulation.
- Where the Educator doesn't provide the above documents, the nominated supervisor will ensure a staff member go out to the Educator's residence to recover the records, and if after this action, no files were recovered, discuss what the next steps will be with the Approved Provider.

**Educational Leader will ensure:**

- They work with the Coordinators to ensure they have the competency to support Educators planning and documenting approach.

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- They can demonstrate a consistent approach and have the capacity to convey the Service expectations around the expected learning environment, Educator practice, leading a planned approach to curriculum and can assist Educators in the assessment of learning for children birth to 13 years.
- New Educators, with support of Coordinators, are be provided with training on the educational program based on the relevant approved frameworks and in an ongoing process of professional development.
- Educators are provided with templates outlining the Service expectations for planning and documenting assessment of learning.
- Training is provided to both Coordinators and Educators to enable competent and confidence in documenting the plan and assessment of learning.
- Each Educator will be assessed with support of the Coordinator to consider their capacity to record and deliver an educational program for children in their care annually.
- An Improvement Plan outlining the Educator's training, support and changes required is developed and highlights their needs in relation to planning and documenting children's learning.
- Educators have support and assistance in producing an educational environment that supports children's learning outcomes through training, mentoring and modelling, on how to set up the Educators environment,
- Other staff and all Educators understand that each child's learning and development is assessed as part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation and the documentation about each child's program and progress is available to families at all times.

**The Coordinator will ensure:**

- During each home visit, they will check the educational program and a record of children's assessment of learning designed and documented by the Educator.
- The educational plan/program is displayed at the Educator's residence in a prominent place for easy viewing and is up-to-date and relevant to the children in the care of the Educator at the time of the monitoring visit.
- The educational plan has a balance between indoor and outdoor experiences that promote learning dispositions and opportunities for child-led skills as well as intentional teaching led by the Educator.
- Each child's individual portfolio is easily accessible to parents, staff and Regulatory Authority and is up-to-date reflecting the time they spend in the Educator's care.
- The monitoring home visit to the Educator's residence occurs regularly and has a focus on assessing the health, safety, learning environment and teaching being offered to each child.
- Use of the Improvement Plan to ensure the Educator is demonstrating a commitment to

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the continuous improvement planning process in relation to planning and documenting children's learning and development against the five (5) learning outcomes.

- Educators have support and assistance in producing an educational program that supports children's learning outcomes by mentoring and modelling how an environment is set up during monitoring visits and training events.
- That during monitoring home visits that all children in care with the Educator are adequately supervised during indoor and outdoor play.
- Educators have adequate resources, equipment and art supplies that are age-appropriate and reflect the interests and strengths of the children using the setting.

**Educators will ensure in relation to the Educational Program**

Consideration is given to each child's individual developmental needs, strengths, interests and ability of each child, and:

- promotes a stimulating learning and supportive environment that extends on their current and emerging interests and development across the five (5) learning outcomes;
- provides a wide variety of learning opportunities, with access to learning resources, toys, and equipment both for indoor and outdoor play that promotes all areas of development;
- is responsive to all children's strengths, abilities (age appropriateness) and interests when considering the purchase and use of toys, resources and equipment they make available to the child each day;
- involves children as active participants in preparing the plan, and ensuring their transitions from one experience to another is smooth. Assisting children to feel motivated to contribute and become engaged with the activities within the setting;
- promotes children's agency by providing a balance between child-led, child initiated, and Educator-supported learning – consider how children contribute to the planned experiences and are provided with opportunities to reflect on their day;
- enhances children's curiosity to explore, problem solve, create, construct and make connections between prior experiences and new learning by listening to, linking and discussing the connections to make learning visible for each child;
- plan for routines and play experiences as an opportunity to interact with infant/children and recognise spontaneous teachable moments (hand washing – learning about personal hygiene) as they occur, using them to build on and enhance children's learning;
- considers each child's cultural background, languages and religious beliefs. Considering how these are incorporated into the planning process.

### 3.1.3 Foundations of Planning and Programming

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) – Being, Belonging, Becoming or My Time Our Place, Framework for School Age Care (FSAC) is used by all Educators as the basis for all curriculum development and planning processes. The program offered to all children is play-based, which encourages children to self-select, participate in the planning and evaluation of the program and in assisting in the selection of resources and activities that are of interest to them and which develops their knowledge and abilities across the five learning outcomes. Using the children's interests as a starting point, the Educators will then use intentional teaching techniques to facilitate and encourage the children to explore and extend their knowledge, thinking and skills.

*The Service also adopts the [Australian Government Department of Health and ageing \(2009\) Get Up & Grow - Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood](#) as a planning tool for Educators to consider when making curriculum decisions.*

#### **Educational Program Content**

The service follows the elements of the Early Years Learning Framework,

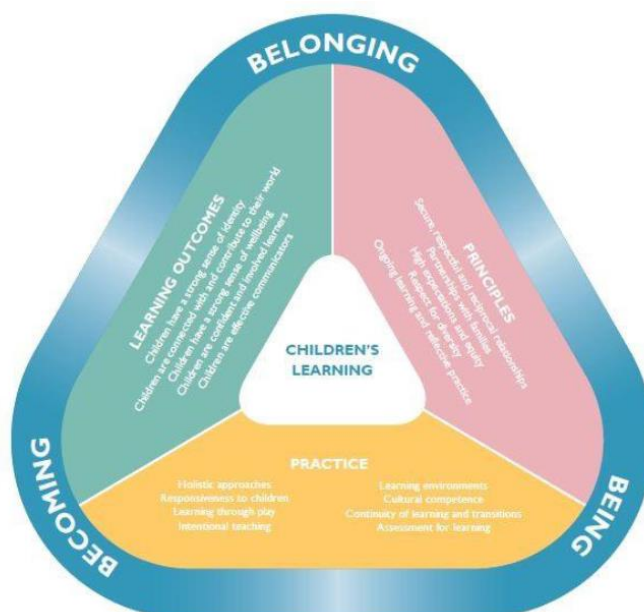
Programs will be developed, which are derived from the Early Years Learning Framework - "Belonging, Being and Becoming" and "My Time, Our Place."

Our educational program will contribute to the following outcomes for each child:

- children have a strong sense of identity
- children are connected with and contribute to their world
- children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- children are confident and involved learners
- children are effective communicators

Educators will endeavour to provide environments that encourage children to explore and play. Play is a context for learning that:

- allows for the expression of personality and uniqueness
- enhances dispositions such as curiosity and creativity
- enables children to make connections between prior experiences and new learning
- assists children to develop relationships and concepts
- stimulates a sense of wellbeing



### 3.1.4 Development of Programs

The program will be guided by observations on children and input from parents that have been reflected on and then followed up. Educators will develop a program that is responsive to the needs of children by collecting information gained from a variety of mediums, including:

- the initial interview,
- enrolment forms,
- discussions with co-ordinators
- observations of children,
- feedback from parents,
- conversations with children,
- surveys,
- suggestion boxes,
- notice boards
- relevant legislation policies and the Early Years Learning Framework (for birth to 5 years) and My Time Our Place (for School Age Children)

### School Age Care Program

School age children generally attend the service after school or in vacation periods. Educators are encouraged to engage school age children in the process of documenting their interests, strengths and abilities by:

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- Sitting with children and discussing what is of interest to them, what ideas do they have about the experiences, activities or excursions they would like to do.
- Children can document their own ideas and interests.

Educators will discuss the program with school age children to determine the experiences and activities they would like to be involved in while at the Educator's residence.

It is not a requirement to do an individual assessment of learning document for school age care children. However, the Educator will need to keep documentation of each child's participation in the program and will need to reflect on their experience and involvement. The program will demonstrate the ability to forward plan based on each child's interests. For further information about the requirements for school age care refer to the resource "Documenting Programs for School Age Care", a fact sheet available on ACECQA (2017) website.

#### **Families will ensure:**

- to communicate their child's needs and participate with the development of the educational program by providing the Educator with information about the child and the family context on an ongoing basis; through the following methods:
- Suggestion and input on ideas and activities that children/families enjoy
  - o Enrolment Form
  - o Face to Face Communication
  - o Telephone Communication
  - o Email Communication
  - o Survey Participation
- Provide insight into the child/children's likes and dislikes of food, activities, toys and books
- Highlight any fears the child/children might have.
- Inform Educators of any changes to the child's life at home (e.g. parents divorcing, or a death in the family) which may influence their behaviour or wellbeing
- Information on special events of the child's and or families (e.g. celebrating weddings, religious celebrations, special holidays)

### **3.1.5 Preparation and Public Presentation of Program**

Educators are responsible for having written document that describes the learning opportunities, routines, activities and experiences offered to children, including excursions within the program and make these available to parents, Coordinators, and regulatory authority personnel, and in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.



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For children under school age the Educator will:

- make an assessment and keep records of the child's developmental needs, interests, experiences and participation while in their care; and
- document the child's progress toward the five learning outcomes

When documenting the plan (program), consideration will be given to the period of time the child is being cared for and how the documentation will be used and will be prepared in a way that is readily understandable by the Educators and parents/guardians of the child.

**Display Information** about the contents and operations of the educational program in a place that is accessible to parents. A copy of the educational program will be made available for inspection on request.

**Educators will provide parents** with:

- Information about the content and operation of the program in relation to their child
- Information about their child's participation in the program
- Copies of documentation kept on the assessments for the learning of their child

See 3.2 Reflective Practice Procedure and reflect on the below information (Planning and Assessment Process)

#### **3.1.6 Non-discriminatory Participation in Program Activities**

The principle of equal opportunity will be applied in this Service's program. Children, regardless of gender, disability, culture, race, religious or other backgrounds, will be encouraged to participate in a wide range of activities.

#### **3.1.7 Play Groups/Sessions**

The Service offers playgroups regularly and Educators are encouraged to bring children in care along and also to access special events and excursions.

#### **3.1.8 Planning and Assessment Cycle**

**In relation to the assessment of children's learning Educator's will**

- produce and maintain an individual portfolio of learning for each child. Within this portfolio, Educators will aim to capture the following:
  - o observations of interest about the child and current and emerging skills and knowledge,
  - o artwork the child has produced,
  - o photos of children engaged in play and learning experiences,

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- children's learning stories which capture learning and development, and
- children's/families input.
- ensure the children's portfolios are easily accessible for the perusal of families, Coordinators, and Regulatory Authorities.
- maintain and update the Celebration and Accomplishment Chart for each child.

#### **In relation to the planning and assessment cycle Educators will**

##### **1. Collect Information**

- Consider what information is important to collect
- Context: Anything specific to a family, community and children's culture
- Children's interests, abilities and strengths
- Environment: Spaces, resources and materials available.
- Children's routines (from home, for example, sleep or mealtime).
- Relationships (important people in the child's life): Family expectations, the names of the family member(s) to discuss the child's learning and development with.
- Planned routine excursions and non routine excursions (which need to be built into the curriculum timeframe).
- Gather information through:
  - On-going discussions with children, families, educators and other professionals.
  - Observations (start with what children can already do and are interested in).
  - Samples of children's work: photos, art work, audio and video recordings.
  - Documentation – enrolment forms or family interviews

##### **2. Question / Analyse**

Educators will consider the following question as part of the process of analysing and questioning what you have noticed and what this means to your planning process.

- What does the information you have collected tell you about children's strengths, interests, and needs?
- What learning is being demonstrated?
- What activities and play opportunities might build on children's interests, strengths and abilities?
- How will children's cultural values be reflected in the service? (Think about how they might develop a sense of 'belonging')
- What resources and materials might extend children's play, learning and development?
- How are families going to be involved in their children's learning and development?

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- What communication methods could be used?
- How could the environment better support and extend children's learning and development?
- How are you supporting this play and learning?
- How are you going to listen to children's voices/opinions and use this information to inform the curriculum?
- What learning outcomes could be promoted?
- What intentional teaching strategies would enhance children's learning?

**3. Plan**

Planning is about Educators using their professional knowledge and understanding of children and families to plan for each child's play and learning.

- Use the EYLF and FSAC (MTO) to inform the curriculum planning and decision making.
- Make appropriate links to the principles, practices and / or learning outcomes.
- Consult with children and families on an on-going basis about the program, what is important to them?
- Plan environments, opportunities, and experiences to support play and learning.
- Plan for children to learn from each other – what experience could promote this?
- Use your interactions to promote play and learning.
- Plan intentional teaching strategies that will support and extend children's learning.
- Develop strategies and tools to monitor and assess children's play and learning.
- Develop methods to make the planning process visible to children and families.

**4. Act/Do**

This aspect of the planning cycle explores the role of Educators in setting up the environment and facilitating the learning and development of each child.

- Implement plans in collaboration with children and families – what role will you play?
- Create opportunities and environments that support play and learning.
- Actively engage with children to support and co-construct learning.
- Use the EYLF and FSAC to guide the way plans are put into practice.
- Use professional judgment to vary plans in response to children's needs and emerging interests.

## 5. Review/Reflect

3.2 Reflective Practice Procedure will provide additional information about this process. Consider:

- How do your observations and assessment of children's learning inform future curriculum plans?
- Critically reflect on how your curriculum could be improved (what worked well and what didn't).
- Evaluate children's learning, developing skills through play, and link them to the learning outcomes where appropriate.
- Reflect on your interactions and teaching strategies. How could they be improved?
- To what extent were children and families involved in curriculum development?
- Use the EYLF and FSAC as a lens for reflection of your own actions. Think about the principles and practices of the framework.
- Reflect on your processes for planning, documentation, and assessment. Do they reflect the learning frameworks?
- Make changes where appropriate to inform future curriculum plans

### 3.1.9 Educators will engage in Intentional Teaching

The practice of intentional teaching requires Educators to engage with children in meaningful ways that support and extend their learning. Intentionality requires you to use your professional knowledge to plan a curriculum that promotes intentional practices.

However, Educators also need to consider how to use 'teachable moments' and incidental opportunities to enhance children's play and learning.

Intentional teaching can include the following strategies and techniques (for example):

- Demonstrating how something works
- Role modeling acceptable behaviour
- Guiding a child on how to put on shoes
- Explaining the rules for crossing a road
- Scaffolding – building onto what a child always knows
- Listening to the child's ideas
- Affirming – responding positively to appropriate behaviour or takes a turn
- Questioning is about asking the 'what if'
- Challenging – "can you climb to the next level"
- Encouraging – "thank you.... for sharing the paints with.... "
- Collaborating – "What will we need to take on our excursion?"
- Negotiating – "Tom will go around the path once then it is your turn"
- Researching – "Let's see what we can learn about bees on the internet"

- Revising and revisiting – what worked well, what could I change?

## Review

|             | <b>Date</b> | <b>Details</b>                     |
|-------------|-------------|------------------------------------|
| Revision 00 | 07/2015     | Original Policy Issued             |
| Revision 01 | 12/2016     | Reviewed                           |
| Revision 02 | 08/2017     | Reviewed                           |
| Revision 03 | 10/2020     | Reviewed and separated from Policy |
|             |             |                                    |

## Related Documents

### Policies

3.1 Education Program and Practice

### Forms

Weekly Planner

Celebration and Accomplishment chart

All About me

### Other Documents

My Place Family Day Care Guide to Documentation

### References

Refer to 3.1 Education Program and Practice Policy

<https://www.echr.edu.au/docs/default-source/resources/ipsp/effective-curriculum-planning-and-documentation-methods-in-education-and-care-services.pdf?sfvrsn=8>