



POLICY:	LEARNING and DEVELOPMENT
1.04	

1. Policy Objective:

To create an inviting and engaging atmosphere at the Service that will encourage positive interactions and challenges providing a multitude of learning opportunities for young children.

2. Explanation:

When children feel safe, comfortable and encouraged in their surroundings they are able to build strong relationships and explore the learning opportunities offered.

The children within the Service come with a wide range of backgrounds, skills and knowledge. Staff will observe children's development, plan experiences that improve and extend their skills, and assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

3. Implementation:

3.1 Creating an Atmosphere for Learning:

- 3.1.1 Staff/educators will greet all children and families on arrival with warmth and friendliness, using their names.
- 3.1.2 The rooms at the Service will be safe, inviting, challenging, uncluttered and aesthetically pleasing. Experiences will be presented in an appealing way.
- 3.1.3 Staff/educators will encourage and support children to explore new experiences.
- 3.1.4 Staff/educators will consider the cultural needs, background and temperament of each child.
- 3.1.5 Staff/educators will provide experiences that reflect a variety of different cultures and that encourage creativity and choices.
- 3.1.6 Staff/educators will engage children in conversations about their day and the routines of the day.
- 3.1.7 The noise level will be minimal to allow many engaging experiences to occur simultaneously.
- 3.1.8 Staff/educators will allow siblings within the Service to spend time with one another.
- 3.1.9 The program will cover all areas of a child's development and curriculum areas such as, but not limited to: spirituality, technology investigation, language and communication, creativity, physical activity, health, thinking, investigating, exploring, problem solving, social and emotional, numeracy, making choices, sustainability and self-help skills.
- 3.1.10 Children are given adequate time on a regular basis to engage with nature and natural environments.

3.2 Encouraging Physical Development:

- 3.2.1 Outdoor equipment will be flexible so that variety, challenge and interest can be offered for children.
- 3.2.1 Staff/educators will encourage children to explore new skills, while ensuring that the challenge is within their individual capabilities.
- 3.2.2 Staff/educators will offer opportunities for children to practise balance, flexibility, climbing, skipping, crawling, eye-hand co-ordination, rolling, walking, grasping.
- 3.2.3 Staff/educators will offer games and music and movement experiences.
- 3.2.4 Staff/educators will offer experiences that allow children to have success.

3.3 Encouraging Language and Literacy Development:

- 3.3.1 Staff/educators will engage children in discussions about a wide variety of topics.
- 3.3.1 Staff/educators will interact and engage with children during routine times such as nappy changing.
- 3.3.2 Children will have a variety of experiences to allow creative expression.
- 3.3.3 A child's home language will be encouraged and supported.
- 3.3.4 Resource people will visit to assist with home language and settling in for new children with limited English language.
- 3.3.5 Written and spoken language, other than English, will be used to foster children's interest, where this is available.
- 3.3.6 Children are encouraged to participate in singing, chanting, rhymes, questioning and stories, to support language development.
- 3.3.7 Children are encouraged to listen and respond to the spoken word.
- 3.3.8 Staff/educators are encouraged to sit with children at meal times and utilise those opportunities to develop conversations about nutrition, dental and healthy eating practices.

3.4 Encouraging Social and Emotional Development, Creativity and Choices:

- 3.4.1 Staff/educators will know each child as an individual and provide experiences that will interest them and give them success.
- 3.4.1 Staff/educators will encourage emotional development by positively reinforcing the way children interact with others, respecting their choices and acknowledging their abilities and efforts. Staff/educators will also model this in their interactions with each other.
- 3.4.2 Emotional resilience will be promoted through staff modelling of acceptable behaviour/interactions and discussions about feelings.
- 3.4.3 Opportunities for dramatic play will be varied and interesting.
- 3.4.4 Children will have easy accessibility to play materials that interest them.
- 3.4.5 Children will be encouraged to play games together, share, negotiate, appreciate and co-operate with each other.
- 3.4.6 Children's work will be appreciated and thoughtfully displayed within the Service using photographs, models and recordings.

3.5 Encouraging Cognitive Development, Curiosity and Logical Thinking:

- 3.5.1 Children will be encouraged to think, reason, question, problem solve and try their solution.
- 3.5.1 Staff/educators will include children's ideas, suggestions and interests when planning the program.
- 3.5.2 Opportunities will be offered for children to practise numeracy, sequencing and predicting skills.
- 3.5.3 A variety of construction materials will always be on offer.
- 3.5.4 Staff/educators will ask open-ended questions so that children can explain and express their opinions.

3.6 Encouraging Independence:

- 3.6.1 Staff/educators will foster children's independence through providing appropriate opportunities and experiences, including meal times, hygiene routines, rest-time and daily routines.
- 3.6.2 Staff/educators will assist and provide children with opportunities to develop skills in decision making.

3.7 Understanding School Readiness:

School readiness can be described as:

- (a) social competence

- (b) emotional maturity including the ability to adapt to new experiences
- (c) age-appropriate fine and gross motor skill development
- (d) physical well-being
- (e) using language to communicate and comprehend in personally meaningful ways
- (f) general knowledge and cognitive skills.

3.8 How will the Service assist?

- 3.8.1 On enrolment, staff/educators will gather information about the family and child/ren to enhance understanding of the background, culture and family expectations in regard to developmental goals for the child/ren.
- 3.8.2 Staff/educators in the Kindergarten group will actively observe, plan and evaluate the children for skills and knowledge necessary for a smooth transition to formal schooling according to the recognized legislative framework.
- 3.8.3 Staff/educators may liaise with local schools to obtain relevant information and have this available for parents within the Service, via noticeboards and newsletters.
- 3.8.4 If possible, the Service Leader may organise an excursion to visit a local school that is within walking distance of the Service. Excursion Permission forms will need to be completed and sufficient staff/adult ratios organised. (*WHS.001, WHS.002*)
- 3.8.5 Staff/educators will liaise with parents/guardians about the child's development and readiness for transition to school.
- 3.8.6 A written 'transition statement' outlining information about the child's learning and development will be compiled through collaboration with staff, child and parent/guardian. Parents/guardians can share this with the school of their choice.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed and updated (if needed), at least every two years, by the Early Childhood Team, following input from all stakeholders.

Associated Documents:

All associated documents can be found in the Programming sections of the QLECS Forms and Documents

Related Policies:

1.02: Educational Programs, Documentation and Evaluation

References:

Legislation:

Education and Care Services National Law 2011: Section 168, 323

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2014: Regulation 73-76

Work, Health and Safety Act 2011

Books/Journals:

Early Years Learning Framework 'Belonging, Being, Becoming,'

Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline

'My Time Our Place'

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework

Websites: www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au