

## Background

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Anti-bias is the practice of inclusion and underpins our Service 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.'* (2016).

Our Service 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.

## Policy statement

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This policy outlines how the needs of all children who attend the Service are met fairly and inclusively, and how children are supported to fully participate in the program including use of the mezzanine level.

## Strategies and practices

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- The Service's philosophy is based on a commitment to equality and fairness for all children, families, and staff, particularly their right to fully participate in every aspect of the program. The philosophy, together with its *Inclusion Support Including Mezzanine Level Policy*, is reviewed regularly as part of the Services self- assessment and quality improvement process.
- The *Inclusion Support Including Mezzanine Level Policy* is explained to all staff, educators, students, and volunteers before they commence at the Service, and to all parents when they enrol their children. At that time, they are given the opportunity to ask any questions necessary to clarify their understanding.
- Information about the operation of the Service and what it provides is available in an easy-to-read format. When necessary and wherever possible, it is also available to parents in their first language.
- The Service is committed to working with families to best meet the education and care needs of their children. This commitment is communicated to parents at enrolment and reinforced throughout the time their children attend the Service. Refer to the Services Interactions with Families Policy.
- The Service's Enrolment Form requires parents to provide information about any additional needs their children may have. Parents are asked to update this information throughout the year and to pass on information from any professional support services accessed outside of the Service. Educators use this information to meet the education and care needs of the child.
- Parents are welcome at the Service at any time. In addition, parents are encouraged to be involved in decision-making and consultative roles within the Service.
- The Services physical environment and facilities are designed to ensure access and participation for every child in the Service. The main ground floor playground spaces are accessible to children, families, and staff of all abilities.

- The mezzanine level of the Service offers an alternative space for children to engage in physical challenges and quite experiences, however, does not offer any features that are not accessible on the ground floor playground space. All children will be provided with equal opportunities within the ground level playground space.
- Equipment and resources are selected to support and encourage the participation of all children. They reflect the lives of the children in the Service, their families, and the cultural diversity of the broader community. Learning materials e.g., books, puzzles, games, and posters support positive inclusion by providing children with accurate and appropriate information about their own and other cultures. They also depict people with additional needs as active and contributing members of communities.
- Information gathered about children with additional needs is used to develop an individual support plan, in consultation with their parents. When appropriate, and with parents' knowledge and permission, this plan is shared with the child's medical practitioners and/or professional support services.
- Educators plan the program based upon their observations of children's play and the ideas, interests, and opinions that the children share with them. When planning the program, educators reflect upon the learning environments they provide, and the abilities of the children present. Program opportunities will be reflective of children's abilities and appropriate spaces will be selected for play and learning to occur in.
- The Service seeks support for any child with a disability or with ongoing high support needs through the Inclusion Development Fund Manager (IFDM) and/or Inclusion Agency (IA). An Inclusion Professional (IP) then visits the Service to assess the child and to collaborate with the Service in developing a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP). If appropriate, the Service will be provided with an Auskey to submit an online application through the IA Hub Portal for an Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) subsidy for an additional educator.
- All educators attend professional development on inclusive practices. This professional development is based upon evaluation of the professional knowledge and skills of individual educators and the team. When appropriate, they receive training on how to meet the additional needs of any child in their care.
- Educators consistently model equitable and fair treatment in their everyday interactions with other adults and children, and intentionally teach children to do the same.
- The Service follows the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity when recruiting staff. Upon induction all staff are informed of the Services *Inclusion – Mezzanine Level Policy* and are required to inform the Service of their ability or inability to access this space.

### **Additional safe practices for babies**

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- Babies will not access the mezzanine level for the safety of themselves and the Service staff. They will be provided with equal opportunities within the ground level playground space.

### **Responsibilities of parents**

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- To provide complete and accurate details about any additional needs their children may have, to update this information throughout the year and as details change, and to communicate information from any professional support services accessed outside the Service.

## Procedures and forms

- N/A

## Links to other policies

- Child Protection and Risk Management Policy
- Educator Professionalism and Ethics Policy
- Educational Program Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Interactions with Families Policy
- Relationships with Children Policy
- Students, Volunteers and Visitors Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy

## Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Regs	73	Educational program
	74	Documenting of a child assessments or evaluation for delivery of educational program
	75	Information about the educational program to be kept available
	90	Medical conditions policy
	105	Furniture, materials and equipment
	155	Interactions with children
	156	Relationships in groups
	157	Access for parents
	162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
	168	Education and care service must have policy and procedures
	177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider

QA	1.1.1	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	Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program
	1.2.3	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world
	1.3.1	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 on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation
	1.3.3	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress
	2.1.1	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation

	2.2.2	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented
	3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child
	3.2.1	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
	3.2.2	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning
	4.2.2	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships
	5.1.1	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included
	5.1.2	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained
	5.2.1	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other
	6.1.1	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions
	6.1.2	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	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing
	6.2.1	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities
	6.2.2	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program
	6.2.3	The service builds relationships and engages with its community
	7.1.1	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations
	7.2.1	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place
	7.2.3	Educators, co-ordinators and staff members' performance is regularly evaluated, and individual plans are in place to support learning and development

## Sources

- Early Years Learning Framework 2009
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2018
- Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines 2019

### Further reading and useful websites

- Queensland Department of Education – Inclusive Education: <https://education.qld.gov.au/students/inclusive-education>
- KU Children's Services: <https://www.ku.com.au> accessed 23 June 2025
- Australian Government Department of Education – Early Years Learning Framework: <https://www.education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework> accessed 23 June 2025
- NDIS Early Childhood Approach: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/families-and-carers/early-childhood-approach> accessed 23 June 2025
- Derman-Sparks, L. & Edwards, J. (2020). *Anti-Bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves* (2nd Ed.), NAEYC.
- Gonzalez-Mena, J. (2008). *Diversity in Early Care and Education: Honoring Differences* (5th Ed.). McGraw-Hill.  
<http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/> accessed 23 June 2025
- Gonzalez-Mena, J. (2008). *Diversity in early care and education: Honouring differences* (5th Ed.). McGraw-Hill Education, USA. accessed 23 June 2025
- KU Children's Services – <https://www.ku.com.au/childcare/about> accessed 23 June 2025

### Policy review

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The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

### Version Control

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Version	Date Reviewed	Approved By	Comments/Amendments	Next Review Date
1	10 February 2021	Kaylene Harper	Policy developed to reflect the unique physical environment at the Service.	February 2022
2	6 October 2022	Linda Hollard	Policy reviewed and sources checked and updated	October 2023
3	22 August 2023	Grace McKinstry	Policy reviewed and sources checked.	August 2024
4	1 July 2024	Tiffany Boeske	Policy reviewed and sources checked.	July 2025
5	23 June 2025	Gen Mahaki	Updated to align with NQF (2025), replaced outdated sources, revised resources section.	June 2026