

## DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

### POLICY STATEMENT

The Service will ensure all children, families and educators have the right to feel respected and be treated equitably. We encourage compassion, understanding, tolerance, acceptance and respect for all at the centre and aim to provide an environment where all are encouraged to develop to their full potential.

We are committed to implementing high quality, inclusive practices and ensuring quality programs respond to the individual abilities and needs of each child. We aim to work closely with families, school community and other professionals to achieve this, particularly for children with additional, or high support needs.

Our service philosophy encompasses the following principles:

- Provide a safe, happy, inclusive, caring, fun and creative environment for children
- Encourage respect, honesty, tolerance, kindness, equity and appreciation of others
- Value diversity, and encourage acceptance, tolerance, understanding and respect from and for all children
- Acknowledge that all children have individual talents, personalities, interests, needs and abilities that must be nurtured and encouraged to flourish

### CONSIDERATIONS

Education and Care Services National Regulations	73, 74, 75, 155, 156, 168
National Quality Standard	QA1, 4.2, 5.1, QA6
Other Service Policies/Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gender Equity policy</li> <li>● Cultural Relevance/Anti-Bias policy</li> <li>● Programming &amp; Evaluations policy</li> <li>● Enrolment, Orientation &amp; Bookings policy</li> <li>● Providing A Child Safe Environment policies</li> <li>● Confidentiality/Privacy policy</li> <li>● Interactions with Children policy</li> <li>● Risk Minimisation Plans</li> <li>● Inclusion Support Plans</li> <li>● Family Handbook</li> <li>● Philosophy</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Anti-Discrimination Act 1977</li> <li>● My Time, Our Place</li> <li>● UN Convention on the Right of the Child</li> <li>● Inclusion Support Program</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● KU Children's Services</li><li>● Australian Government Department of Education and Training funding</li><li>● Inclusion Support Portal</li></ul>
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## PROCEDURE

### a) Inclusive practices

- Educators will treat all children equally and encourage them to treat each other with respect, fairness and kindness.
- Educators welcome information from children, families and the community about their cultural traditions, customs and beliefs and use this information to provide children with a variety of experiences that will enrich the environment within the service and nurture each child's sense of identity.
- Families will be consulted in the development of holistic programs that are responsive to children's lives, interests, learning styles, genders and reflect children's family, culture and community.
- Educators will work in partnership with families to provide care that meets the child's needs and is consistent, where appropriate, with the family's culture, beliefs and child rearing practices. Specific requests will be acknowledged where practical, to demonstrate respect and ensure consistency of care of the child.
- Educators will be sensitive and attentive to all children and respect their backgrounds, gender, unique qualities and abilities.
- The service will ensure that the environment reflects the lives of the children and families using the service and the cultural diversity of the broader community and ensure all children's individual needs are accommodated at the service.
- Children with additional needs will be provided with the necessary support and resources to allow them to fully participate in the service. This may require assistance from specialty services, adaptation to the environment, changes to routines and educator arrangements to facilitate inclusion. We will achieve this in collaboration with the child's family, allied health professionals and Inclusion Agency (KU Children's Services).
- Educators will create opportunities in the program for experiences that are not based on gender role stereotypes. They will act as positive role models by encouraging all children to be involved in a variety of activities, regardless of gender, and challenge stereotypical views.
- Our programming will reflect the varied backgrounds and cultures of our community. This will be done by programming a wide variety of activities that reflect the diversity of the children, families and educators within the service as well as the broader community. This will not only be reflected in the activities at the service but also the menu. We will aim to have a multicultural undercurrent throughout our programming and avoid tokenism.
- Educators will role model appropriate ways to challenge discrimination and prejudice, and actively promote inclusive behaviours in children.
- Children will never be singled out, or made to feel inferior or superior to others.

- Educators and children will discuss incidents of bias or prejudice in children's play or relationships with each other to help children understand and find strategies to counteract these behaviours.
- Resource materials and equipment used in the service will be non-stereotyped.
- We will consider professional support recommendations (e.g. psychologists, doctors, inclusion support staff) where possible and incorporate their goals into the care of the child.
- Educators will create opportunities for children to learn about, develop a respect for, and celebrate the diversity that exists in the service and in the broader community by:
  - Encouraging all families, children and other educators to share their experiences, skills, cultures and beliefs.
  - Inviting community members to the service to share their stories, songs, experiences, skills, cultures and beliefs.
  - Accessing and using a range of resources (including multicultural and multilingual resources) that reflect the diversity of children and families in the service and in the broader community.
- We will regularly assess the needs of our community by:
  - Evaluating enrolment forms
  - Family & child surveys
  - Contact with local community groups
  - Liaising with our local schools
  - Family and child feedback and suggestions

**b) Educator recruitment and professional development**

- Wherever possible, our service will aim to recruit educators from both genders, from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds that reflect the cultural diversity of our community.
- All educators will be provided with a copy of our Code of Ethics.
- Educators will attend regular staff meetings to promote the delivery of quality, consistent inclusive practices. Staff meetings will be used to encourage reflective conversations around values, attitudes, and beliefs in relation to inclusion, diversity and gender equity.
- The Nominated Supervisor and educators will attend professional development that builds awareness of their own cultural beliefs and values, increases their cultural competence and help them to challenge discrimination and prejudice
- Where approved, management will provide and pay for opportunities for educators to engage in training related to the inclusion of children with additional needs and make this part of regular training offered throughout the year.
- Educators will share knowledge they have gained through training workshops with the rest of the staffing team and support each other to grow and develop.

c) **Inclusion of children with additional needs**

- When offering positions to families of children with additional needs, availability, safety, inclusive capacity and current daily enrolments and child dynamics are taken into consideration
- In order to enrol children with diagnosed additional needs the following steps will be taken:
  - Families will be asked to inform the service of any additional needs/medical conditions the child may have at the time of enrolment. This information will be recorded by the family on the child's online enrolment and *Special Needs Data Form* that assesses their individual needs.
  - On receiving this information, the service will contact the family to request a meeting to discuss further information regarding their child.
  - Service enrolment numbers will be assessed to see if places are available, and the child with additional needs can be supported; if not the family will be waitlisted.
  - Access to care will focus on the needs of the child and the service's ability to meet these needs while maintaining centre-wide safety and delivering a high-quality program. Our *Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation Plan* will be used to determine if appropriate care can be provided based on barriers and risks across our entire service/program.
  - Enrolment may be subject to approval of Government funding which may take up to 5 weeks to arrange. Prior care arrangements will be at the discretion of the Director in consultation with families, educators and Management Committee.
  - If places are available, the family will be asked to authorise the school and child's class teacher to consult with the service, the purpose of this is to create and put a child profile/plan in place with strategies and other information relevant to the care of the child.
  - There will be an orientation process where the child visits the service with parents/caregivers to meet the Directors and other educators and become familiar with the environment. We encourage a parent/caregiver supervised visits with their child to familiarise them with the environment and the educators.
  - Management and educators will work with the families, inclusion support agencies and other specialists associated with the child to develop individual support plans.
  - Regular policies apply once the child is enrolled.
- We will make every effort to allow access for children with additional needs. If support needs of the child cannot be met with the assistance of support agencies and educators are not qualified to support the child's inclusion, alternative arrangements will be made.
- In cases where the level of support required cannot be provided for the child, we will refer the family to local support agencies.