

## 32. Educational Program and Practice



### Introduction

Tillys Play and Development Centre aims to ensure that the educational program and practice within its centres are stimulating and engaging, and enhance children's learning and development. For school age children the program aims to nurture the development of life skills and compliments children's experiences, opportunities and relationships at school, at home and in the community – NQS.

### Purpose

To plan and deliver a rich, positive, play based learning program that caters to the rights and strengths of every child from every family context.

### Goals – What are we going to do?

Develop a curriculum that enhances each child's learning and development, support children's participation and promote children's agency and design and deliver a program for each child.

### Strategies – How will it be done?

This policy relates to Quality Area 1 and 6 of the National Quality Standard

<b>Standard 1.1</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.</b>
Element 1.1.1	Approved learning framework	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.
Element 1.1.2	Child-centred	Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.
Element 1.1.3	Program learning opportunities	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.

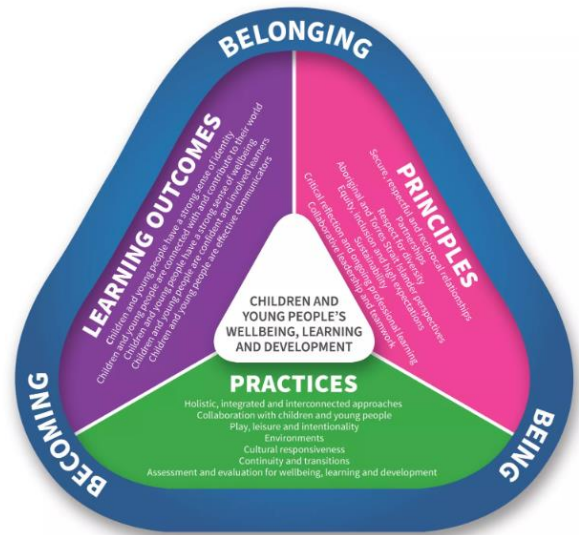
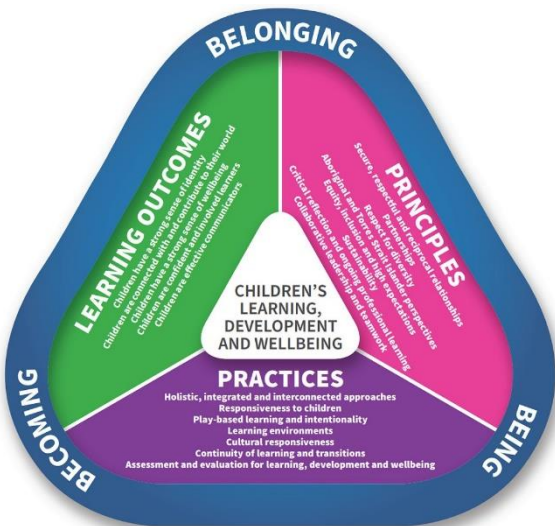
<b>Standard 1.2</b>	<b>Practice</b>	<b>Educators facilitate and extend each child’s learning and development.</b>
Element 1.2.1	Intentional teaching	Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.
Element 1.2.2	Responsive teaching and scaffolding	Educators respond to children’s ideas and play and extend children’s learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback.
Element 1.2.3	Child directed learning	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.

<b>Standard 1.3</b>	<b>Assessment and planning</b>	<b>Educators and coordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.</b>
Element 1.3.1	Assessment and planning cycle	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.
Element 1.3.2	Critical reflection	Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.
Element 1.3.3	Information for families	Families are informed about the program and their children's progress.

### Program and curriculum development

- Qualified Educators to develop, plan, implement, and evaluate the program under the supervision of the Nominated Supervisor and Educational Leader. Educators will receive non-contact programming time.
- Programs are informed by the Australian Early Years Learning Framework and My time, Our place – a framework for school age care and educator’s professional judgements are central to their active role in facilitating children’s learning.

- An educational program is to contribute to the following learning outcomes for each child—
  - (a) Children have a strong sense of identity;
  - (b) Children are connected with and contribute to their world;
  - (c) Children have a strong sense of wellbeing;
  - (d) Children are confident and involved learners;
  - (e) Children are effective communicators.
- An ongoing cycle of planning, documenting, and evaluating children’s learning that involves observing, gathering and interpreting information about children with reference to early childhood theorists and perspectives underpins the educational program.
- Educators engage in ongoing critical reflection of children’s engagement in the learning environment and of their own interaction with children to support their play so as to better understand the individual child as a learner.



## Children's development

- The centre aims to acknowledge the uniqueness and individuality of each child, to implement a plan for the child's individual development and to foster self-reliance and self-esteem in each and every child through the Early Years Learning Framework and My time, Our Place - a framework for school age care.
- Each child will be treated with respect regardless of gender, religion or culture.
- Children will be acknowledged throughout the day with genuine interest.
- Staff will be responsive to children's feelings and needs and engage in meaningful and stimulating conversations.
- Detailed individual developmental records will be maintained on each child and updated regularly.
- Communication between children, their families and educators will help identify areas that are not clearly understood or seen through documentation of the child's development.
- Educators recognise that families, children and the centre are a partnership in the child's learning and development.
- Educators will attend In-service training to assist them in developing or furthering their knowledge in assisting children in their individual needs.
- Educators will display empathy to each child's individual needs in relations to that child's life experiences.
- Educators will respect the child and family's needs to confidentiality as they plan for the child's individual development within the centre.

## Transition to School

- This policy has been devised to assist staff and children in determining if children are ready to progress to school and to assist children in a smooth transition from the centre to Kindergarten.
- A record of children's learning and development will be maintained throughout the year documenting all areas of children's development.
- The centre runs a specific "transition to school" program through terms 2, 3 & 4 for children commencing school or considering going to school the following year. Our transition to school programs exposes children to early phonics through songs, stories and small group experiences. The program also incorporates numeracy, cutting skills, prewriting/writing, sharing, turn taking, problem solving, name recognition, thinking and gross motor activities.
- Lunch Box Days – where the children have lunch on their laps from a lunch box or container.
- When possible we have walking visits to the local primary school to familiarise the children with the school situations such as canteen, library, assemblies etc. This may not necessarily be your child's enrolled school.

- Communication between parents and educators and staff will occur to discuss children's development and readiness for school on a regular basis, through these discussions parents will be assisted in making decisions about their child's readiness for school.
- A Transition to School Statement, which is a document summarizing a child's learning, development, and strengths as they prepare to start school will be completed by educators on all children enrolled in Kindergarten for the following year or for parents who are still forming a decision about sending their child to Kindergarten. Transition to School Statements are a collaborative effort, completed by early childhood educators with input from parents and sometimes the child themselves. The statement is shared with the child's new school to facilitate a smooth transition and continuity of learning.
- Children will be encouraged to attend school orientation days as planned by the schools or arranged by the centre. Principals or teachers from the local Infants/Primary schools will be encouraged to visit the centre and discuss children's/family's needs and or any special needs the child may have, close contact between the centre, school and families is encouraged to ensure a smooth transition to school.

### Cultural Diversity

- The centre recognises that Australia is a multicultural society composed of people from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, we aim to help foster within each child awareness and acceptance of other cultures through integrating multiculturalism into the program. The program actively attempts to counter much of the misinformation about different cultures that lead to racism.
- It is important that cultural awareness is not tokenistic but integrated throughout the program to reflect individual families.
  - This can be done at an obvious level through books, music, cooking, clothing, singing, equipment, posters, and photographs but also through less obvious means.
  - Where parents are from non-English speaking backgrounds they will be invited and encouraged to contribute knowledge of their culture to enhance the overall program.
  - Where possible parent information will be translated in to other languages.
  - Staff from non-Anglo-Australian cultures will be invited to share their knowledge with other educators, staff and parents.
  - Where possible the mix of cultural backgrounds of educators and staff should reflect the community in which the centre is placed. If this community is predominantly Anglo-Australian it is of benefit that at least one member of staff comes from a non-Anglo-Australian background to more broadly reflect Australian Society and to allow children access to the richness of other cultural backgrounds.

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness

- Australian society has had much misinformation about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their culture. This misinformation has led to racism, violence and trauma against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and sees a continuation of discrimination. The centre will value and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, identities and connections to community and country. This approach should attempt to foster understanding, respect and a positive appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture as it exists in Australia today with children and their families. Shared stories and information will be factual, concise and age appropriate.

- This can be done at an obvious level through books, art, singing, posters, and dance etc.
- The program in the centre should reflect an attitude of respect for Aboriginal people.
- Where possible staff and educators from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background will be employed.
- Where Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children attend the centre, parents will be invited to give advice to the educators and staff about appropriate programs.
- Each service will build relationships with local community members who can ensure cultural appropriation, whilst being aware of cultural load and its impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## Gender Equity

- The centre aims to develop, extend, and realise the talents and abilities and full potential of all children regardless of gender, race or origin.
- Educators and staff will be aware of the ways in which they treat individual children, in regard to language, attitude, assumptions and expectations.
  - Through presenting a program of positive experiences for the children which are not based on gender stereotypes.
  - Through positive role modelling through the use of resource materials which are not stereotypical e.g. puzzles, books etc.
  - Where possible educators and staff should reflect both gender and employment of men as child care workers will be encouraged.

## Inclusion

- 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.
- The Philosophy of this centre is to be inclusive of all children, families and educators as individuals, working together to develop children's skills in all areas and on their strengths to reach their full potential.
- Children with additional needs will be accepted into the centre. The family, the Nominated Supervisor of the centre and management if required will meet prior to the child starting to determine the child's needs and the parent's expectations of the centre and educators. Parents will provide any necessary documentation relating to the child's needs to assist educators in caring for the child.
- The Nominated Supervisor, educators and staff will work closely, with parents and other professionals to formulate a program or to follow an existing program for the child's ongoing development, at all times confidentiality will be respected between the parties. Written permission will be sought from the parent before information is exchanged between the parties involved with the child. Communication between all parties involved will be regular and will take a form that is acceptable by all; this may be verbal communication, written or other.
- The inclusive practises of educators and the partnerships they form with each child and their families have a significant effect on each child's access, participation and success in learning. Children thrive when families, educators, local schools and the wider community work together

in partnership to support their access, inclusion and participation (Guide to the national Quality framework, Element 6.2.2). Our centre will support each child's access, inclusion and participation in the program by learning about their individual context, as well as their interests, learning styles, strength and abilities.

The centre and educators will gain this information:

- On enrolment from enrolment forms
  - Through informal and formal meeting with families
  - Through questionnaire and surveys
  - From documentation from other support agencies e.g. speech therapists, occupational therapists, and paediatricians etc.
  - By building meaningful relationships with children and their families
  - Through the ongoing cycle of observation, planning and programming of each child.
- Once this information is gathered the Nominated Supervisor/Educational leader and educators will adapt aspects of the environment, routines, transitions and staffing arrangements to facilitate the inclusion of all children.

This will be done by:

- Accessing support agencies such as KU Children's Services – NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency
- Developing Strategic Inclusion Plans (SIP) which address barriers to inclusion
- Seeking professional development opportunities that supports inclusive practices.
- As required, provide families with information, contact details and referrals to other support agencies and services such as early childhood intervention agencies (Hunter Prelude, Early Links), NDIS, cultural support agencies (Ethnic Communities Council), family support agencies (Samaritans 'Brighter Futures Program') and health professionals.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider will:

- Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations.

Nominated Supervisor/Educational Leader will:

- Ensure programming time is allocated within the centres weekly roster.
- Ensure all programs and learning portfolios are checked on a monthly basis. A written report will be issued to educators after programs and portfolios have been checked and both educators and Nominated Supervisor/Educational Leader will sign the report.
- Support each child's access, inclusion and participation in the program by learning about their individual context, as well as their interests, learning styles, strength and abilities.
- Source appropriate professional development for educators.

Educators will:

- Support each child's access, inclusion and participation in the program by learning about their individual context, as well as their interests, learning styles, strength and abilities.
- Recognise children's agency and children's views and use these to inform and guide day to day practice.
- Evaluate programs on a daily basis.
- Listen to children and use a variety of observation techniques to document and record children's learning in individual learning portfolios.
- Ensure the daily program is displayed (online or printed format) for families and is accessible at all times.
- Acknowledge that all programs remain the property of Tillys Play and Development Centres. Programs that are not up to date or on the premises when requested will result in a performance review.
- Use allocated programming time to complete work associated with the program e.g. daily program, children's learning portfolios, observations and evaluations.

Families will:

- Inform the centre of any concerns they have with their child's development or any other areas of concern relating to their child.
- Inform the centre of any additional needs prior to commencing enrolment at the centre to ensure the centre is able to meet the needs of the child and family.
- Inform the centre of any agencies involved with the child and family and provide any reports from such agencies.

### Related Legislation

- Education and Care Services National Law Act: Section 168
- Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulations 73, 74, 75, 76, 168

### Links to other policies and documents

- The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
- My time, Our Place – Framework for School Age Care in Australia
- Interactions with Children
- Enrolment and Orientation

### Links to Education and Care Services National Regulations: 168(2)(h)&(a)(iii)

### Links to National Quality Standards/Elements:

1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 6.2

### Sources

- ACECQA: [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- Guide to the National Quality Framework
- Donna MacIntyre – Approved Provider
- The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia and My time, Our Place – Framework for School Age Care in Australia – [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)