

## 55. Diversity, Inclusion and Participation



### Introduction

Australia is a diverse country. Diversity is reflected in gender, cultural heritage, practice, values and beliefs, abilities, sexual orientation and family structure. Inclusion can be affected by barriers relative to diversity. Inclusion is facilitated through genuine participation in decision making from all.

### Purpose

Tillys Play and Development Centre aims to facilitate inclusion for all and to provide a culturally safe and relevant learning environment for all peoples with which we engage in the delivery of our service.

### Goals – What are we going to do?

Create and maintain an organisational culture built on a foundation of inclusion and participation for all.

Create and maintain an organisational culture of embedded critically reflective practices so that constant examination and efforts for improvement underpin everyday practice.

Create and maintain an organisational culture that actively seeks and acts on the participation of children, families, support services and educators in decision making in the service.

Create culturally safe and relevant service environments. These environments will be reflective of the diversity within the service itself, but also of the diversity not represented in the service – but present in the wider Australian context.

Every learning space and communal area in the service will demonstrate recognition and value for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

### Strategies – How will it be done?

#### Definitions

**Inclusion:** The act of including or being included in a social group or structure.

**Diversity:** The range of human differences, including but not limited to race, gender, sexual orientation, age social class, physical ability or attributes, religion, nationality and political beliefs.

**Cultural heritage:** The expression of ways of living accepted by a group of people and passed down through generations. Each person has an individual cultural heritage. It is not limited to race or ethnicity.

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples:** A person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such in the community within which they identify from or live.

**Ability:** Possession of the means or skills to do something.

**Gender:** Is used to describe characteristics of people as constructed by society. Gender is accepted as identified by the individual and can be reflected as male, female, both or neither. Sex refers to characteristics that are biologically determined. Gender may not be reflective of assigned sex at birth.

**Sexual orientation:** The people/peoples a person is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to.

**Family structure:** The individual make-up of a family unit.

**Culturally safe:** An environment or context that is spiritually, emotionally, socially and physically safe, that does not threaten one’s identity or sense of self-worth.

**Culturally relevant:** contexts and pedagogy that require teachers and educators to have cultural competence in relating the learning environment and learning material to a child’s individual cultural heritage.

This policy relates to Quality Area 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 of the National Quality Standard – in particular:

Standard 1.1	Program	The educational program enhances each child’s learning and development.
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.
<b>Standard 6.1</b>	<b>Supportive relationships with families</b>	<b>Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.</b>
Element 6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
Element 6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
Element 6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.

<b>Standard 6.2</b>	<b>Collaborative partnerships</b>	<b>Collaborative partnerships enhance children’s inclusion, learning and wellbeing.</b>
Element 6.2.1	Transitions	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.
Element 6.2.2	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.
Element 6.2.3	Community engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider will:

- Have a zero tolerance for practices, communication or actions that are discriminatory, racist, or non- inclusive.
- Consult with service representatives to support critical reflection and change of practice that supports value for diversity and means of inclusion.
- Provide financial funding for resources, learning opportunities and professional development for educators to support an inclusive organisational focus.

Nominated Supervisor will:

- Have a zero tolerance for practices, communication or actions that are discriminatory, racist, or non- inclusive. Follow workplace performance management guidelines as appropriate to address for improvement.
- Understand the barriers to inclusion and work to find strategies to overcome them.
- Identify and communicate organisational barriers to inclusion with the Approved Provider
- Consult with families.
- Research ways to support access to care for each family.
- Share information with educators to support inclusion.

- Ensure the Educational Leader and all educators know of a child's diversity and if the child or family identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Seek and facilitate transdisciplinary support through other professionals and organisations.
- Maintain requirements for funding support for inclusion.
- Support the Educational leader in her role.

#### Educational Leader will:

- Seek and provide professional development opportunities for educators to support critically reflective practice with a focus on inclusion.
- Seek and support development of strategies for the inclusion of each individual child.
- Reflect on service pedagogy, practice, planning and intentional teaching to identify barriers and areas for improvement.
- Ensure that educator's own diversity is supported and celebrated in the service and that genuine opportunities are made available for that to be included in the service and shared with others.
- Ensure that educators engage in pedagogy and practice that build value for diversity within the service and are continuously engaging in pedagogy and practice that build understanding, recognition, and value for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people.
- Engage in own research and consultation with community members and organisations to support the development of such practice.
- Engage in direct support and consultation with any stakeholders in the service who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and follow their lead, suggestions & recommendations in providing a culturally safe and relevant service environment.

#### Educators will:

- Ensure that their learning environments always communicate respect for diversity.
- Ensure that their learning environment always communicate recognition of the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This should reflect both traditional and contemporary representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

- Engage in professional development to build own cultural competence. Seek to learn from families and community members. Be open to feedback from others, other points of view and understand that cultural capacity is a continual journey of new knowledge, reflection and change of practice.
- Know each child as an individual to appreciate and understand their diversity and that of their family. Seek conversation and involvement from children, families and community to guide teaching and learning experiences.
- Engage in intentional teaching experiences to provide opportunity for children to share their observations of their world and developing understandings. Use these moments to intentionally challenge bias, discrimination, and racism.
- Acknowledge children's thought and provide alternative viewpoints to build value and respect for diversity. Some children will have their only positive view of diversity come through their interactions with you.
- Support and encourage the use of other languages within the learning environment. Be aware and respectful of protocols relating to use of First Nations languages. Facilitate all children to learn to communicate in multiple ways.

### Families will:

- Share information to support their child's inclusion. This may be the sharing of reports, advice or contact from other professionals.
- Act in respectful ways toward all service stakeholders.
- Participate in service decision making to support their child's inclusion.
- Participate in service learning programs by sharing understandings, cultural customs, values and beliefs and making suggestions for educator pedagogy and practice.

### Children will:

- Be supported to engage in reflection of diversity and openly discuss difference.
- Be supported to engage with their peers and other people in the service environment with respect, empathy, and kindness.
- Be supported to express their own views, beliefs and ways of knowing and being.
- Be empathetically and respectfully provided with alternative views when expressing bias or stereotypes.

### 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: 73-76, 168

Links to National Quality Standards/Elements: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 6.1, 6.2,

### Sources

- Tillys Cultural Learning Squad
- ACECQA: [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- Guide to the National Quality Framework
- 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)