

Celebrations Policy

Rituals or traditions contribute to a sense of community and belonging, as do celebrations that are handled sensitively. These can be valuable for children, families and educators. Both the planning and preparation, and the events themselves, can be a satisfying and pleasurable experiences.

National Quality Standards (NQS)

Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice	
1.1	An Approved Learning Framework informs the development of a curriculum that enhances each child's learning and development.
1.2	Educators and coordinators are focused, active and reflective in designing and delivering the program for each child.

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety	
2.2.2	Physical activity is promoted through planned and spontaneous experiences and is appropriate for each child.

Quality Area 6: Partnership with families	
6.2	Families are supported in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about childrearing are respected.

Early Years Learning Framework

Learning Outcome 2	
2.1	Children respond to diversity with respect
	Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

Learning Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of identity	
3.2	Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

PURPOSE

Incorporating celebrations into children's services appropriately, can be used to strengthen the partnership with children and families, creating a feeling of belonging and developing a sense of community amongst families, educators and children.

Integrating celebrations delicately and courteously into the services program is an enriching experience for children, educators and families. Celebrations provide an opportunity for children to develop respect for diverse values and beliefs as they learn about practices which are different to their own.

It is imperative to recognise the array of celebrations, both religious and worldly, that take place through the year in our community and to have an understanding of, and respect for, cultural diversity in our services.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Management/Nominated Supervisor/Certified Supervisor will ensure:

- To incorporate relevant, culturally based experiences and celebrations in the children's program which address different learning opportunities which include: fostering a sense of belonging and inclusions for every child, family and staff member (EYLF, p.7), increasing children's understanding of, and respect for, diversity and differences (EYLF, p.13), Raising children's self-awareness and confidence, providing for children's holistic development and supporting a positive identity for every child and family (EYLF, p.2)
- Religious celebrations such as Christmas and Easter will be recognised within the Service and reflected in our programs.
- All cultural celebrations that are significant to our families and relevant to our broader community are implemented within the service
- Families are aware of the Celebration Policy during their orientation process and kept updated throughout the year via centre correspondence.
- If a cake is required for a child's birthday it is recommended that an ice cream cake or cupcakes be provided as this reduces the major allergy risks associated with most other cakes.
- Families discuss cake options with educators prior to the celebration
- Families are reminded of the allergies in the service prior to any celebrations
- Educators are aware and make alternate arrangements if families would prefer that their child does NOT participate in such celebrations.
- If this is the case we will respect the rights and feelings of this child and will provide an alternative experience for them to participate in so that they do not feel that they are being left out.
- The Service has an 'Events Calendar' that is used to support such events throughout the year. We ask that families add their celebration to the calendar so Educators can prepare the program
- Encourage families to be involved in the preparation and/or the celebration in the Service
- Educators remain current with the professional knowledge and skills that support planning for and engaging in culturally inclusive practice

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Educators will:

- Seek written approval from the Nominated Supervisor prior to any celebrations where food is provided to children
- Ensure the use of candles is carried out with the children's safety in mind and fully supervised. A full risk assessment will be submitted to the Nominated Supervisor prior to celebrations.
- Ensure each child is provided with a separate cupcake (with a candle, if they wish) for the child celebrating their birthday
- Ensure the child celebrating their birthday has a separate cake (with a candle, if they wish) and a large cake that can be cut and shared with the other children
- Be aware of cultural tokenism and stereotyping
- Encourage and supporting family members to be involved in sharing their customs and celebrations with your service
- Ensure children have the agency to make choices about the celebrations they would like to participate in engaging families to give advice on customs
- Ensure that children have the resources and time necessary to be able to celebrate effectively
- Provide young children and toddlers with materials which reflect a significant event or celebration which they have recently participated in.
- Ensure that families who do not wish to be involved in celebrations have an option to not participate
- Balance family values about receiving gifts and products from their children and Educators values about avoiding product based activities by developing creative and meaningful gifts for families
- Notify the community about the celebration e.g. taking photos to display on the service notice board, or displaying children's artwork and drawings about the celebration
- Provide opportunities for children to participate in 'open ended' celebration activities
- Provide a flexible program which enables children to have agency about the activities which they participate in
- Celebrate traditions and customs relevant to children and community
- Ensure that the same amount of time and energy is dedicated to ALL celebrations
- Invite Educators and families to share their own personal experiences of celebrations
- Ensure resources such as picture story books, images and music are reflective of contemporary celebrations which children can relate to

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Source

- ECA Code of Ethics.
- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2013).
- Guide to the National Quality Standard.
- Staying healthy in childcare. 5th Edition. (2013)
- Early Years Learning Framework

Review

Policy Review Date
February 2018