

Educational Program Policy

Research accentuates that quality programs significantly influences children’s growth and development. We will construct a supportive learning environment and program, with inspirations from the children and families. This contribution can encourage the children to feel a sense of control over their actions, interactions, to explore, be curious and test out their understanding of themselves others and the world around them.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 4: STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS		
1.1	Program	The educational program enhances each child’s learning and development.
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.
1.1.2	Child-centred	Each child’s current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities, and interests are the foundation of the program.
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.
1.2	Practice	Educators facilitate and extend each child’s learning and development.
1.2.1	Intentional teaching	Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.
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.
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.
1.3	Assessment and planning	Educators and coordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.
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.
1.3.2	Critical reflection	Critical reflection on children’s learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.
1.3.3	Information for families	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
73	Educational programs
74	Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program
75	Information about educational program to be kept available
76	Information about educational program to be given to parents
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
254	Declared approved learning frameworks

PURPOSE

MTOP is part of the Australian Government's National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care. It has been incorporated in the National Quality Standard to support consistent and quality school-age care. MTOP builds on the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

[MTOP] exists to ensure that children in school age care have opportunities to engage in leisure and play-based experiences that are responsive to the needs, interests and choices of the children attending the service and that contribute to their ongoing development. It provides guidance to educators working with school age children in outside school hours care.

SCOPE

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

IMPLEMENTATION

The Guide to the National Quality Standard states that, "Planning involves observing, gathering, and interpreting information about children to inform the preparation of environments and experiences that engage them and are meaningful for them. It also involves reflecting on and documenting children's experiences and learning"

Under the National Law and National Regulations, approved services are required to base their educational program on an approved learning framework. The program should focus on addressing the developmental needs, interests, and experiences of each child, while considering the individual differences of each child.

My Time Our Place

[MTOP] acknowledges the importance of play and leisure in children's learning and development and that their learning is not limited to any time or place. Children's learning in school age care settings complements their learning at home and at school. Developing life skills and a sense of enjoyment are emphasized and recognises the importance of social and emotional development and communication in learning through play and leisure, and it forms the foundation for ensuring that children in all school age care settings engage in quality experiences for rich learning, personal development and citizenship opportunities.

- Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia ('Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)')

- My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia ('Framework for School Age Care').

There are also jurisdiction-specific approved learning frameworks:

- Western Australia: The Curriculum Framework for Kindergarten to Year 12 Education in Western Australia.

Elements of MTOP

MTOP describes the principles, practice, and outcomes essential to support and enhance children's development.

1.1.1.1 Principles

- Secure, respectful, and reciprocal relationships
- Partnerships
- High expectations and equity
- Respect for diversity
- Ongoing learning and reflective practice

1.1.1.2 Practice

- Holistic approaches
- Collaboration with children
- Learning through play
- Intentionality
- Environments
- Cultural competence
- Continuity and transitions
- *Evaluation for wellbeing and learning*

1.1.1.3 Learning outcomes

- Children have a strong sense of identity.
- Children relate to and contribute to their world.
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
- Children are confident and involved learners.
- Children are effective communicators.

Management/ A Nominated Supervisor/ Certified Supervisor will:

- Ensure that a suitable program based on an approved learning framework is delivered to all children
- Ensure all Educators work as a team in preparing and/or implementing the curriculum which collaborates with the services philosophy
- Ensure modifications are made in the environment for children with special needs. Management will make appropriate, professional referrals where necessary with family permission
- Ensure a conscious balance between indoor and outdoor experiences is planned for with large blocks of unstructured time for child-initiated play

- Promote children's physical activity by supporting the development of their gross motor skills and fostering the emergence fundamental movement skills through a range of intentionally planned and spontaneous active play learning experiences.
- Ensure key physical activity recommendations are embedded into our curriculum
- Support families through positive, respectful, and reciprocal relationships through regular communication.
- Communicate with families on a regular basis
- Ensure each child is acknowledged for their uniqueness in a positive way
- Support children's efforts, assisting and encouraging as appropriate
- Be consistently aware of and responsive to children who may require additional support, assistance, or attention, noticing and listening carefully to children's concerns and discussing diverse perspectives on issues of inclusion and exclusion and fair and unfair behaviour.

Educators will:

- Implement an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting, and evaluating children's learning which will underpin the educational program and involves educators in critically thinking about what is obtainable and why
- Document children's experiences and their responses to the environment making children's learning visible to children, educators and families and promotes shared learning and collaboration
- Provide experiences that include both structured and unstructured learning times catering for children's individual needs, interests and are age appropriate.
- Ensure materials and equipment reflect the cultural diversity that exists in our centre
- Respond to children's ideas and play and use intentional teaching to scaffold and extend each child's learning
- Provide experiences that actively promote and initiate the investigation of ideas, complex concepts, thinking and reasoning
- Gather information from families upon enrolment regarding the child's needs, interest, and family backgrounds. This information is treated as confidential and allows Educators to provide experiences that interest and extend children's current development. We feel that it is important to develop a partnership between parents and Educators to ensure that consistency between home and the Service occurs and that the best possible care is provided
- Explore ideas and theories using imagination, creativity, and play, during large blocks of uninterrupted time.
- Use the learning outcomes to guide their planning for children's learning.
- Intentionally scaffold children's understanding and learning
- Make use of spontaneous 'teachable moments' to extend children's learning
- Respond to children's displays of learning dispositions by commenting on them and providing encouragement and additional ideas
- Further extend critical thinking skills through provocations
- Plan realistic curriculum goals for children based on observation and assessment of individual needs and interests.

The program will provide a variety of developmentally appropriate experiences and materials that are selected to achieve the following goals:

- Foster positive self-concept
- Develop social skills
- Encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment
- Encourage language development
- Enhance physical development and skills
- Encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety, and nutritional practices
- Encourage creative expression
- Respect cultural diversity of staff and children
- Respect gender diversity

Source

- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014). Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2015,
- ECA Code of Ethics.
- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2013).
- Guide to the National Quality Standard.
- Frith, John Dr & Kambouris, Nita & O’Grady, Onagh & University of New South Wales. School of Public Health and Community Medicine (2003). Health & safety in children's centres : model policies & practices (2nd ed). School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales on behalf of the Australian Early Childhood Association (NSW Branch), and the NSW Children's Services Health and Safety Committee, [Sydney]
- Tansey, Sonja. (2005, September 2005). Supervision in Children's Services. Putting Children First, the Newsletter of the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) Issue 15, p. 8-11.
- Programming with the Early Years Learning Framework (2014)
- Program and Planning in Early Childhood Settings 5th Edition (2012)

WESTERN AUSTRALIA (WA)

- Western Australia: The Curriculum Framework for Kindergarten to Year 12 Education in Western Australia.

Review

Policy Review Date
December 2021

Programming Procedure

The program will be guided by observations on children that have been reflected on and then followed up as per the planning cycle outlined in the My Time Our Place Framework

- Educators work together to produce an interest based, child serviced program. This program will be evaluated and extended upon daily and critically reflected.
- Through interacting with children during unstructured learning times Educators can discover the child's interests and extend upon these in a relaxed, spontaneous atmosphere. Educators will interact with children in a way that encourages and challenges them to extend their thinking and interests
- Educators will respect the child's rights to choose not to participate at times and provide them with another activity or experience
- The rooms UC/MH are set up with designated areas, which remain the same for consistency, only changing to support children's interests or safety.
- The children are provided with a range of choice of activities and are responsible for packing away these activities when they are finished with a particular project. We wish to instill in children a sense of care and respect for their equipment and environment.
- Educators will conduct smooth un-regimented transitions between activities. Transitions are to be integrated into the program as learning opportunities
- The environment and program will encourage children's choice in a selection of experiences
- Routine tasks will be incorporated into the program as a means of furthering children learning self-help and social skills
- The usage of technology will be implemented and introduced to suite the children's needs and not overshadow the program daily
- Appropriate staff/child ratios, according to the licensing regulations will always be maintained at the Service
- Staff will attend a two-hour staff meeting once a month to discuss in house matters and do training sessions as required