



Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Policy Number: 7
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Rationale and Policy Considerations

The principles relating to children's rights set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics, and Federal and State/Territory Equal Opportunity legislation will guide the service in determining the diversity and inclusion policy. The education and care service believes all children have the right to have their culture acknowledged and respected and recognises the importance of valuing the diversity of experience, perspectives, expectations, knowledge and skills that any community of people will encompass, and will actively support the inclusion of all children including those with additional needs.

Legislation and Government Requirements

- Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Needs

Children's

To feel accepted and valued for who they are; to have their individual needs recognised and met; to recognise discrimination and prejudice; to understand the value of diversity; to be treated fairly and equitably.

Families'

To be consulted about their own social and cultural backgrounds and feel confident that their culture will be reflected in the service; to have opportunities to participate in the service; to feel a valued member of the service; to know their child is valued and included.

Educators

Open communication with parents; that all staff and families value diversity and support the service policy; training and resources to support diversity and inclusion at the service.

Management

All staff to support the diversity and inclusion policy; relevant up to date information on community values and needs.

Scope

This policy is written for children, families, staff and visitors of Lifestreamers Childcare.

Policy Statement

Lifestreamers Childcare respects diversity in the social and cultural backgrounds and in the abilities of all people. We believe all individuals bring culture and diversity into the centre based on their beliefs, family background and life experiences.

The service aims to provide a child care environment which is free from bias and prejudice in which children learn the principles of fairness and respect for the uniqueness of each person. The service involves the community to assist educators/staff and children to understand and accept the range of cultures and abilities of members of the local community. Differences in backgrounds, culture and abilities are valued and families are actively encouraged to share their experiences with educators/staff and other families. The service will ensure that appropriate inclusion support services are accessed and referred to families in order to support children's well-being and full inclusion into the program.

Policy Principles

- Educators, the nominated supervisor and coordinators will actively seek 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.
- Issues regarding equity, bias and discrimination will be added into the program to develop children's understanding and awareness. The children will be encouraged to challenge unfair and biased views. Staff will role model appropriate language and behaviour. Staff will monitor their own bias' to ensure that they are not being passed on to other people.
- Educators work in partnership with families to provide care that meets the child's needs and is consistent with the family's culture, beliefs and child care practices. Specific requests will be honoured where practical to demonstrate respect and ensure continuity of care of the child.
- Educators will obtain and use resources that reflect the diversity of children, families and the community and increase awareness and appreciation of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and multicultural heritage.
- Educators, the nominated supervisor and coordinators will be sensitive and attentive to all children, respect their backgrounds, unique qualities and abilities, ensure that the service environment reflects the lives of the children and families using the service and the cultural diversity of the broader community, and ensure children's individual needs are accommodated at the service.
- Children with special needs will be provided with support so they can be included as equals within the service. This may require the assistance of social, ethnic or special needs services which the service will access in collaboration with the child's family, and/or adapting the environment, routines and/or educator/staffing arrangements in order to facilitate inclusion.
- Educators will treat all children equitably and encourage them to treat each other with respect and fairness.
- 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 to or better than others. Educators and children will discuss incidents of bias or prejudice in children's play or relationships with each other, to help children to understand and find strategies to counteract these behaviours.
- Parents/guardians will be consulted in the development of holistic programs that are responsive to children's lives, interests and learning styles, and reflect children's family, culture and community.
- Educators will create opportunities as an integral part of their daily programs for children to learn about, develop respect for, and celebrate the diversity that exists in the service and in the broader community by:
 - encouraging all families, children and other educators/staff 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 multi-cultural and multi-lingual resources) that reflect the diversity of children and families in the service and in the broader community.

Educator/staff Recruitment and Development

- The service will aim to recruit educators/staff from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds that reflect the cultural diversity of the community wherever possible.
- All educators/staff are fully oriented to the service's code of conduct/code of ethics.
- The nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators will attend professional development that builds awareness of their own cultural beliefs and values, increases their cultural competence and helps them to challenge discrimination and prejudice.
- Lifestreamers Childcare will not accept any discrimination or bias towards any of the children, families, staff or visitors attending the centre. Any staff who show signs of the above will be given a written warning and any visitors or families will be asked to leave the centre.

Inclusion Support Agencies

- The service will access the pool of bicultural support workers to assist communication with families from diverse cultural backgrounds and/or telephone translation services when required and provide brochures/information on aspects of the service in languages that are spoken in the local community.
- The service will access additional support, assistance and resources for children with additional needs including children from diverse cultural backgrounds and children with high ongoing support needs (including disabilities).
- Educators will talk to the relevant child's parents/guardians about any concerns and offer the family links to other support services within the community such as Inclusion Support Agencies; Community Health Services etc.
- Educators work with families, inclusion support agencies and other specialists working with the child to develop individual support plans for children with additional needs.

Related Documents

- **Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010** - Section 3 (3) (a), (c) & (d)
- **Education and Care Services National Regulations: 73, 74, 75, 76, 155, 168(2)(j)**
- **National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care** - Element 1.1.2; Element 1.2.1; Element 1.2.2; Element 4.2.1; Element 5.1.2; Element 6.1.2; Element 6.2.1; Element 6.3.1; Element 6.3.3
- **Early Years Learning Framework for Australia** - Principles: High Expectations and Equity; Respect for Diversity - Practice: Holistic approaches; Responsiveness to children; Cultural competence; Learning environments - Outcomes: 1, 2, 3
- **Framework for School Age Care in Australia** - Principles: High Expectations and Equity; Respect for Diversity Practice: Holistic approaches; Collaboration with children; Cultural competence; Environments - Outcomes: 1, 2, 3
- Enrolment procedure
- Grievance procedures
- Orientation checklists

Links to other policies

- Educational Programs
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Equal Opportunity
- Excursions and Transport
- Grievances and Complaints Management
- Interactions with Children
- Partnerships and Communication with Families
- Recruitment of Educators, Staff and Volunteers

Sources

www.pscalliance.org.au

Further Sources

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CS Central NSW PSC - Promoting cultural and linguistic competency - Retrieved 2 March 2012, from <http://www11.georgetown.edu/research/gucchd/nccc/documents/Checklist.EIEC.doc.pdf>

DEEWR Child Care Service Handbook 2011 - 2012. Section 3.9 Inclusion and Professional Support Program: 6.3 Priority of access - Retrieved 2 March 2012, from www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Programs/ChildCareforServices/Operation/Documents/CCS_Handbook.pdf

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Document History

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