

Only Early Learning Centre



Inclusion Policy

Policy Number 4

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Aim

Inclusion ensures that all children participate meaningfully while learning and interacting in programs that acknowledge each child's strengths and interests, so that they are supported to be active members of their community. Only Early Learning Centre aims to all children are provided inclusive access, participation and outcomes for all children. Children's rights will be supported, good professional practice is always upheld and an environment where educators build upon fostering diversity.

Who is affected by this policy

Children
Educators
Staff
Management
Visitors
Families

Inclusion Overview

Inclusion supports children's rights. Inclusion involves working with every child and not particular groups of children. Each child's strengths are built upon, and any barriers to learning facing a child are recognised and responded to. Children who may require or benefit from additional supports to participate fully and be included in early years services include - but are not limited to:

- Children with disability or developmental delay
- Children experiencing physical, medical or mental health conditions
- Aboriginal children
- Torres Strait Islander children
- Children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Refugees
- Gender-diverse or gender-fluid children
- Children from LGBTI families
- Children with complex social, emotional or behavioural needs
- Children who are gifted
- Children experiencing social, economic or geographic disadvantage
- Children at risk of abuse, neglect or family violence

When all children are meaningfully included in inclusive practices are implemented, the benefits for children include:

- Better understanding and appreciation of individual differences
- Acceptance and respect for and from others
- Learning with and from one another
- More opportunities for socialisation with peers
- Preparation for full participation in the community

Access

Community Inclusion

Only Early Learning Centre makes all reasonable efforts to enrol children with additional support needs. This includes ensuring that every child is able to attend the service and fully participate in the programs offered by the service. Only Early Learning Centre aims to ensure that all children are offered a position within the service, regardless of any additional support needs. All children and families will have access to the hours and days of attendance available to every family, regardless of any additional support needs. To ensure that community inclusion is embedded within the service, Only Early Learning Centre will also:

- Ensure that where required, additional support educators will be provided, and support funding will be accessed for children
- Develop an Acknowledgement of Country, which is displayed and will be used during service events and incorporated into the program on a regular basis

Inclusive Environment

Only Early Learning Centre will ensure inclusive environments are set up, and changes are made to programs so that all children can access areas, materials and activities. The physical environments of the centre will reflect and consider the unique needs of each child. All areas of each learning environment will be accessible to all children. Materials and equipment within the classrooms will be visible and at the children's level so that all children have the opportunity to access items independently. Adjustments will be made to routines and transitions where required to meet individual needs of all children. To ensure an inclusive environment, educators will also:

- Develop a program that reflects the cultural and social needs of all children
- Draw on the skills, talents and knowledge of families and children from all cultures
- Be a role model and actively encourage children and families to develop a positive approach to ward diversity
- Reflect an anti-bias approach in all aspects of the program and daily operations
- Where required, educators and Management will collaboratively carry out an audit of the physical environment to ensure that all children are able to access and participate fully in all aspects of the program, where safe to do so
- Ensure that all indoor and outdoor areas are arranged so all children can move freely and make choices based on their abilities, interests and needs

Participation

Meaningful Participation

Only Early Learning Centre will ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate in meaningful ways with their peers and educators. Experiences and routines will be adapted where required to achieve this. The development of strong and attached relationships and a sense of belonging will be encouraged by educators. Within the programs of each learning environment, respect for equality and inclusion will

be encouraged, children will be encouraged to work from each other and support for interactions with peers will be provided. To ensure meaningful participation, educators will also:

- Ensure that children are provided the opportunity to participate in social free play
- Ensure that children are provided the opportunity to be with other children and form friendships and develop other social skills

Individual Learning

Only Early Learning Centre will respond to the abilities and needs of each child. When planning for the children, each child's abilities will be considered, and individual needs will be met. Educators will use supportive approaches that build on each child's strengths and goals.

Support

Family-Centred Practice

Only Early Learning Centre will encourage and support all families to make decisions about their child. This will include decisions about early intervention and additional support opportunities. Educators will ensure that each child's development and needs are recognised and communicated so that all families can make the appropriate decisions. All family's priorities, decisions and ideas will be acknowledged and respected. To ensure family-centred practices are embedded into the service, educators will also:

- Ensure that opportunities for both male and female family members are provided within the program
- Create an environment that is welcoming to all families

Collaboration among partners

Both Management and Educators at Only Early Learning Centre will work closely with the families of children with additional support requirements and with professionals who assist children with these support requirements. Strong and trusting relationships will be built with these professionals based on trust and respect. Each professional will be recognised for the knowledge and expertise that they bring to the service and educators. Communication between professionals and educators will be open and honest.

Staff Supports

Only Early Learning Centre will ensure that supports are available for all staff members. Staff members who are directly or not-directly working with children who require additional support will be provided with training in flexible and responsive practices, where appropriate. The Management Team will support all educators in extending their knowledge and implementing new strategies for children with additional support needs.

Inclusion Support Program (ISP)

Only Early Learning Centre utilises the Inclusion Support Program (ISP) to assist our service to build upon our capacity and capability to include children with additional support needs in a mainstream environment, allowing children the opportunity to learn and develop alongside typically developing peers.

KU Children's Services manage the NSW Inclusion Agencies in partnership with other organisations. Inclusion Development Fund provides funding to assist eligible services to address a barrier to inclusion that cannot be addressed by the support of an Inclusion Agency. IDF can be used to subsidise an additional educator, which is the main form of funding used by Only Early Learning Centre.

Strategic Inclusion Plan

Only Early Learning Centre will collaboratively develop a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) for all environments where funding is being received for additional support. A SIP is a self-guided inclusion assessment and planning tool for services that includes strategies for improving and embedding inclusive practice. Each SIP is implemented and evaluated within a 12 month period.

A services SIP must identify:

1. The barriers that impact the services capacity to include children with additional support requirements
2. The proposed strategies and actions to address identified barriers to inclusion

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Inclusion

Only Early Learning Centre recognises the importance of educators feeling confident and passing on knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to all children in a meaningful and informed way. It is important that educators increase their own knowledge to be able to create accessible and inclusive environments to all children and families.

To promote access and inclusion within Only Early Learning Centre as assist educators to develop their knowledge they will:

- Have the opportunity to attend relevant training
- Have the opportunity to meet and talk with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Be involved in the service's Reconciliation Action Plan
- Provide programs for the children that recognise differences, encourage individual and group esteem, promote the development of social skills that foster participation and encourage families to contribute and participate in the programs to enhance awareness about culture

To ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families are included within Only Early Learning Centre, the service will:

- Use the Acknowledgement of Country at all meetings and important events
- Include Indigenous events within the service events calendar
- Network with local Indigenous communities and community members
- Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are considered throughout all programs and curriculums

Children from different Linguistic backgrounds

Only Early Learning Centre recognises the importance of being prepared with resources, skills and knowledge required to assist children and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

To ensure effective and open communication with families, educators will:

- Meet with all families regularly to exchange as much information as possible
- Be sensitive and attentive to information about each family's background
- Encourage families to attend the centre to read stories, translate materials or provide music in their language
- Work with families to provide a list of words or short phrases that the educators can use with the child
- Ensure the environment, procedures and learning experiences are culturally relevant and meaningful, and not stereotypical
- Learn key words in the child's language
- Promote the importance of maintaining the child's language

Gender Expression

Only Early Learning Centre recognises that children require a safe and nurturing environment to explore gender and gender expression. All educators will ensure that children are provided with a learning environment that encourages healthy gender development by:

- Offering a wide range of experiences and learning opportunities that expose children to diverse gender roles
- Provide dramatic play experiences that give children the freedom to explore and develop their own sense of gender and gender roles
- Ensure that all children are encouraged to be involved in and are given the opportunity to be involved in all activities
- Use inclusive phrases to address all of the children and avoid actions that force a child to self-identify as one gender
- Nurture flexible thinking in all situations

Supporting Gifted Children

Every child is unique and will develop at varying rates. Some young children will show behaviours that indicate they are developing more rapidly than usual. Advanced cognitive development can be referred to as being gifted. If children at Only Early Learning Centre show behaviours that are considered advanced, the service will:

- Provide opportunities through play for children to develop their interests and capabilities at a level that extends upon their developmental level
- Be flexible with time. Provide extra time for children to finish tasks
- Provide challenging programs for all children
- Stimulate high level thinking with all children
- Collaborate with families

Anti-Bias and an Inclusive Workplace

Only Education PTY LTD will employ educators who have a range of experience and qualifications. Only Education will show no prejudice or discrimination when considering candidates for employment. This may mean there is a diverse range of people employed, from varying genders, sexuality, cultural background and religious background. The following guidelines in relation to Equal Opportunity will be followed at all times with existing and potential staff members:

- All staff members will be recruited using the same Recruitment Process according to Equal Opportunity Guidelines
- All educators at the centre will have the same expectations in relation to complying with their role specific Employment Descriptions
- All educators will have the opportunity to apply for internal promotion opportunities, to be involved in Professional Development, to be involved in service events and community participation and be involved in all aspects of the centre routines and programs
- Educators will monitor and reflect on their own interactions for bias and reflect regularly on the language used with others

Only Early Learning Centre recognises the benefits of providing and giving educators the skills to achieve an inclusive workplace environment. This includes a workplace environment that is cooperative, collaborative, open, fair, curious and accountable. To support this, Only Early Learning Centre will:

- Ensure the educators have access to any resources required to effectively create an inclusive environment
- Give employees the opportunity to contribute to changes made within the service
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Sources

National Quality Standards 2018

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care www.snaicc.org.au

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually. Review will be conducted by management, employees, parents and any interested parties.

Reviewed By: Alex Jury **Date:** 27th April 2020

Approved By: Kelly Williams

Date for Next Review: April 2021