

Ballina River Street children's Centre

Celebrations Policy

Rituals and traditions strengthen our partnership with children, families and community bringing a sense of belonging to our Service. We believe that celebrations and cultural traditions need to be handled sensitively. The value in educating children, families and Educators are fundamental to our inclusive program. Both the planning and preparation, and the events themselves, can be a satisfying and pleasurable experience.

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice		
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.

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.3	Healthy Lifestyles	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships		
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

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.

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. To ensure we are providing an inclusive program and environment, it is imperative to recognise the array of celebrations, both religious and worldly, that take place throughout 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, educators/staff, management and visitors of BRSCC.

IMPLEMENTATION

Management/Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will ensure:

- To incorporate relevant, culturally based experiences and celebrations within the children's program which address different learning opportunities, including: 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 are 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 our service.
- Families are aware of the Celebration Policy during their orientation process and kept updated throughout the year via Centre correspondence.
- Families discuss cake options with their child's Teacher prior to the celebration.
- If a cake is required for a child's birthday it is recommended that cupcakes be provided with a list of ingredients provided with the cakes, as this will reduce the major allergy risks associated with most other cakes (nuts, eggs, dairy, gluten).
- Families are reminded that we are an "Allergy Aware" service prior to 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.
- BRSCC participants in activities to support Cultural events as well as days that celebrate awareness such as Harmony Day, World Environment Day events throughout the year, we add these events to the Newsletter or our Facebook page. We ask that families to talk to us about their celebration so we can add them to our program.
- Families are encouraged to be involved in the preparation and/or the celebration at BRSCC.
- Educators remain current with the professional knowledge and skills that support planning for and engaging in culturally inclusive practice.
- Advance planning is adhered to if food or drink is provided for children at BRSCC. Additionally, all parents must be advised prior to the celebration. This allows for any feedback / concerns from parents which can then be taken into account as part of the normal planning involved in such activities.
- Safety issues are taken into account prior to the implementation of celebratory experiences.

- Our healthy eating policies are reflected when planning for celebrations.

Teachers/Educators will:

- Will discuss with 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 such celebrations.**
- Be aware of cultural tokenism and stereotyping
- Encourage and support family members to be involved in sharing their customs and celebrations with our 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.
- Ensure that families who do not wish to be involved in celebrations have an option to not participate.
- Notify the community about the celebration e.g. Educators take photos to display in children's rooms, 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 that enables children to have agency about the activities, which they participate.
- 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.
- Be respectful of all religions and cultural backgrounds.

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
- Revised National Quality Standards
- Childcare Centre Desktop – www.childcarecentredesktop.com

Review

Date Reviewed	Modifications	Next Policy Review Date
February 2016	New Format created and policy created	November 2017
October 2017	Updated the National Quality Standards references to comply with revised standards	November 2018