

Ballina River Street Children’s Centre

Educational Program Policy

“A supportive active learning environment encourages children’s engagement in learning..... Active involvement in learning builds children’s understanding of concepts and the creative thinking and inquiry processes that are necessary for lifelong learning..... (Belonging, Being and Becoming, The Early Years Framework for Australia page 3).

Research accentuates that quality programs significantly influences children’s growth and development. We have the opportunity to 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 investigate their understanding of themselves others and the world around them.

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice		
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 co-ordinators 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

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law NSW	
73	Educational programs
74	Information about the educational program to be kept available
75	Information about educational program to be given to parents
76	Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program

PURPOSE

Ballina River Street children’s Centre aims to enhance children’s learning and development through the pedagogical practices of Early Childhood Teachers, Educators and families in a positive learning environment which is promoted across the five learning outcomes from Early Years Learning Framework. Educators will gather and interpret information about children as individuals to inform the preparation of the environment and implement experiences that are engaging and meaningful.

SCOPE

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

IMPLEMENTATION

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 taking into account the individual differences of each child.

The nationally approved learning frameworks in New South Wales which outline practices that support and promote children’s learning for children at Preschool is:

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

Our service is committed to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

Early Years Learning Framework

- Each child’s learning will be based on their interests and strengths and guided by educators.
- Educators work in collaboration with families to provide relevant learning experiences for each child, based on their interests, family experiences and child’s developmental learning requirements.
- Every child will be equally valued. Their achievements & learning will be celebrated.
- Educators will observe and record the strengths and learning of each child.

- Learning Outcomes will be linked to the curriculum through observations, evaluations in all areas of the preschool environment.
- The curriculum will be constructed on the children's interests, educators extending children's interests, spontaneous experiences and family contribution and through investigations that extend and develop of children's learning requirements.
- Where appropriate, the service will liaise with external agencies and support persons to best educate and care for children with additional needs.
- The Early Childhood curriculum (educational learning experiences) will build and develop each child's Learning and will be documented across the environment in daily programs, children individual or group Observations showing each child's strengths and development (Portfolio).
- The curriculum will be evaluated and reflected upon continuously by educators through meeting held each week with Early Childhood Teachers and Educators and at Staff meeting held each fortnight.

Management/ A Nominated Supervisor/ Certified Supervisor will:

- Ensure that a program based on Belonging, being and Becoming the early Years 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 service 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 blocks of unstructured time for child initiated play
- 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 society
- 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 and thinking, reasoning and hypothesising
- 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 BRSCC occurs and that the best possible care is provided
- Explore ideas and theories using imagination, creativity and play, during 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
- View children as active participants and decision makers, working with each child's unique qualities and abilities
- Further extend critical thinking skills through provocations
- Plan realistic curriculum goals for children based on observation and assessment of individual needs and interests.
- Seek opportunities within the routine for spontaneous play
- Ensure that all children's experiences are recognised and valued with equitable access to resources and opportunities to demonstrate their learning.
- Use a variety of methods to assist their reflection on children's experiences, thinking and learning
- Ensure critical reflection clearly exams all aspects of events and experiences from different perspectives, identifying children's learning, spontaneous play, teaching strategies and changes that may be needed in the environment.

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.
- 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)
- Revised National Quality Standard
- Childcare Centre Desktop www.childcarecentredesktop.com.au

Review

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
	Minor changes made to Educators roles and responsibilities to ensure a compliant and operative program –	
October 2017	Updated the National Quality Standard references to comply with revised standard	January 2018