



# Additional Needs Policy

Including children with additional needs requires Educators to extend upon the strategies they already use in providing quality care for children. It is imperative for Educators to develop a comprehensive understanding of each child's interests and abilities and implement a program and environment that is receptive to their needs and inclusivity.

## National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice		
1.1.1	<b>Approved learning framework</b>	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 3: Physical Environment		
3.1	<b>Design</b>	The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service
3.1.1	<b>Fit for purpose</b>	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
3.2.1	<b>Inclusive environment</b>	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
3.2.2	<b>Resources support play-based learning</b>	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.

Quality Area 5: Relationships with children		
5.1	<b>Relationships between educators and children</b>	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	<b>Positive educator to child interactions</b>	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	<b>Dignity and rights of the child</b>	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities		
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6.1	<b>Supportive relationships with families</b>	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	<b>Engagement with the service</b>	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	<b>Parent views are respected</b>	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.2	<b>Collaborative partnerships</b>	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
6.2.2	<b>Access and participation</b>	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program

## Education and Care Services National Regulations

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law NSW	
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
157	Access for parents

## Related Policies

Anti-Bias & Inclusion Policy  
 Code of Conduct Policy  
 Educational Program Policy  
 Interaction with Children, Family and Staff Policy  
 Orientation of New Families Policy  
 Privacy and Confidentiality Policy  
 Respect for Children Policy

## PURPOSE

To be responsible for each child, irrespective of their additional needs and abilities. We aim to provide a supportive and inclusive environment that sanctions each child to fully participate in its education and care at the Service. Educators will remain encouraging, unprejudiced and authentic, ensuring that all children are treated equally and fairly and have the opportunity to grow and develop to their individual potential.



## SCOPE

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

In accordance with The National Quality Standard, our Service positively responds to and welcomes children with additional needs who -

- Are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders
- Are recent arrivals in Australia
- Have a culturally and linguistically diverse background
- Live in isolated geographic locations
- Are experiencing difficult family circumstances or stress
- Are at risk of abuse or neglect
- Are experiencing language and communication difficulties
- Have a diagnosed disability—physical, sensory, intellectual or autism spectrum disorder
- Have a medical or health condition
- Demonstrate challenging behaviours and behavioural or psychological disorders
- Have developmental delays
- Have learning difficulties
- Are gifted or have special talents
- Have other extra support needs.

We understand that additional needs may be temporary or permanent and ascend from diverse origins, which require different responses. Supporting children with additional needs enables them to participate and feel included; this also helps promote their strengths and may reduce their risk of developing mental health difficulties. Strategies for supporting children with additional needs can diverge significantly, because every child is unique.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### Management/Nominated Supervisor will ensure:

- The indoor and outdoor environment and equipment is designed or adapted to ensure access and participation for all children, supporting the inclusion of children with additional needs.
- The program and curriculum is inclusive and meets the individual needs of children with additional needs.
- The Service works with external professionals and families to certify the educational program and learning environment is most suited to each child with additional needs, including children and



families from culturally diverse backgrounds. We will keep a copy of any specific plans or instructions provided by external resource providers and professionals for children with additional needs.

- Children's sensory sensitivities to pressure, texture, smell, noise or visual expectation of the environment or colour is considered within the environment.
- Children are encouraged to feel safe and secure during their education and care at the Service by developing trusting relationships with educators, other children and the community.
- Encourage families to meet with the Educators who will be working with the child to converse and comprehend the child's needs and to certify the suitable resources and support provided to both the family and the child.
- Support Educators through professional development and networking with professional agencies to certify Educators are meeting the needs of each individual child
- Seek assistance, training and where possible, financial funding from inclusive support agencies to promote the development of skills in children with identified additional needs.
- Ensure privacy and confidentiality for children and families is maintained

#### Educators will:

- Treat children equally and fairly regardless of perceived dissimilarities.
- Create an inclusive program, which is adaptable and supportive of all children.
- Advocate for children's rights.
- Create a flexible environment, which can be adapted to each child's needs within the Service to support the inclusion of children with additional needs.
- Implement programming experiences and activities, encouraging children to explore and participate.
- Listen carefully to children's concerns and discuss diverse perspectives on issues of inclusion and exclusion and fair and unfair behaviour.
- Work with other professionals who play a role in supporting the child's development.
- Seek specific professional intervention and training in order to meet the individual child's needs



- Develop an Inclusion Support Plan (ISP) for each child that will be kept on file at the Service and shared with families, the child's medical practitioners and/or professional support services.
- Act as role models by displaying appropriate behaviour and language, being consistently aware of and responsive to children who may require additional support, attention or assistance.
- Discuss a wide range of emotions, thoughts and views constructively with the children within a supportive environment.
- Not judge or compare one child's development with another.
- Work with families to meet children's developmental needs, building strengths and capabilities.
- Work collaboratively with health professionals and families together to discuss and plans to support children.
- Talk to children about differences and acceptance.
- Providing opportunities for all children to play and learn together, promoting cooperative, caring and pro social behaviours.

#### Source

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations
- ECA Code of Ethics.
- <https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/early-childhood/about-mental-health/about-mental-health-and-wellbeing-children-additional-needs>
- Early Years Learning Framework
- National Quality Standards
- Putting Children First, Newsletter of the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) Issue 23 September 2007
- Children's Services Central – Early Identification of Children with Additional Needs
- Revised National Quality Standard



## Review

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
April 2017	Minor changes and additions made	April 2019
October 2017	Updated the National Quality Standards references to comply with revised standards	April 2019
April 2018	Minor terminology and grammatical adjustments Included the list of related policies	April 2019

# Additional Needs Procedure

Children with additional needs require support by using specialised strategies catering for their specific needs or circumstances. When planning for children with additional needs Educators are required to focus on their abilities and interests. It is essential that the program is flexible and allows children to engage in ways that are meaningful for them. Our Service wants children to develop to the best of their personal ability. We aim to promote and encourage this by:

1. Gathering information provided by families and other professionals who are working with the child, including psychologists, early intervention specialists, social workers and speech or occupational therapists.
2. Meeting with families to gain information about the strategies that support their child's learning in the home environment.
3. Conducting specific observations on the individual child, which outlines their interests, strengths and needs
4. Acquainting Educators with, and share knowledge about, the specific communication needs of each child. This will include verbal and non-verbal communication skills and cues. This may include a communication book, verbal daily information exchange, formal and informal meetings etc. Where applicable, this may include things such as sign language and or learning key words in the child's home language.
5. Developing an Inclusion Support Plan (ISP) with families and support agencies, which is a live document and continuously evaluated by all parties involved.
6. Accessing external professional support services for children with additional needs.
7. Networking with the Nominated Supervisor to ensure the needs of each child are met throughout their education and care at the service.



8. Attending professional development workshops to enhance their understanding about the additional needs and how to meet the child's needs.
9. Encouraging families to update the Service with information throughout the year, promoting the continuity of learning for each child.
10. Working with local schools to help children with additional needs transition. We are open to sharing information about the additional needs of children to promote continuity of learning.
11. Remaining positive, unbiased and authentic at all times.