

Equal Opportunity Policy

Policy Number: 15

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Rationale and Policy Considerations

The education and care service supports equal opportunity principles and considers that where possible it has an obligation to promote equal access to the services it provides within Australian Government guidelines. The policy has been framed around equal opportunity principles as they are specified in both federal and applicable state or territory equal opportunity legislation.

Legislation and Government Requirements

- Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012.
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012.
- Federal and State Equal Opportunity Legislation
- Priority of Access Guidelines (Child Care Service Handbook 2011 - 2012)

Needs

Children's

Equal access to the education and care service regardless of gender, race, religion, impairment, family status, or age. The right as a child to safety, comfort and care.

Families'

Equal access and rights for their children regardless of gender, race, religion, impairment, marital status, political conviction, pregnancy, family responsibility, family status. Priority of access if within Australian Government Guidelines.

Educators

Equal employment opportunities regardless of gender, marital status, pregnancy, race, religion, political conviction, impairment, family responsibility or status and age, protection from harassment due to sex, race, impairment or any other reason.

Management

To reflect the community in which the service is located. To obtain an equal balance between sound management practises and individual rights.

Scope

This policy is written for children, families, staff and visitors of Merino Court Childcare Centre

Policy Statement

The education and care service is committed to the principles of Equal Opportunity in relation to community access to the service and the appointment of staff. Individuals will be treated with respect regardless of their gender, race, religion, age, impairment, marital status, political conviction, pregnancy, family responsibility or family status. The service will actively promote the positive aspects of diversity and encourage acceptance and appreciation of individual differences. Education and care will be made available to the community in accordance with the Commonwealth "Priority of Access Guidelines".

Policy Principles

- The service will have up to date information regarding Equal Opportunities Legislation.
- Families and educators/staff will be given clear instructions about the Australian Government "Priority of Access Guidelines".

- The service will endeavour to ensure that all policies and practices are inclusive.

Children

- Equal Opportunity principles will be an integral part of the service's daily programs and routines. Children will be given positive experiences which encourage equal opportunity. Programs will actively include opportunities for the children to experience diversity of culture, gender roles etc.
- Educators/staff will treat individual children and their families with respect. They will take into account individual differences in language, attitudes, abilities, assumptions and expectations.
- Children who have a disability will not be discriminated against and will be afforded access to the service where:
 - a place exists;
 - they meet the required priority of access;
 - the service is able to access and/or borrow appropriate resources to care for the child.
 - The educators have had the required training and feel confident in dealing with the child.

Educators

- All educators/staff will be selected and employed according to equal opportunity guidelines.
- Where the community in which the service is located comprises of a particular ethnic group, the approved provider/nominated supervisor will make every effort to include workers from that group at the service, provided they meet the required selection criteria and are considered to be the best person for the position.
- Applicants with disabilities who apply for advertised positions will be assessed according to the selection criteria and will not be discriminated against because of their disability.
- During orientation the service will provide relevant information to educators/staff concerning procedures to be followed in the event of harassment or discrimination in the workplace. Sexual harassment is any deliberate verbal or physical sexual conduct that is unwelcome and uninvited. All educators/staff will be provided with information which defines the range of behaviours that constitute harassment.
- Clear guidelines on grievance procedures will be developed in accordance with the state/territory and federal equal opportunity legislation and made available to educators/staff.
- The approved provider/nominated supervisor of the service will:
 - identify discriminatory and harassing conduct;
 - publicise equal opportunity policy and complaints procedures to all educators/staff;
 - train all educators/staff on steps as to reporting current complaints;
 - investigate and document complaints.

Living with HIV/AIDS

- No child, parent/guardian, staff member or potential staff member will be excluded from the service due to living with HIV/AIDS.
- Information about a child, parent/guardian or staff member living with HIV/AIDS will be kept strictly confidential at all times.
- Staff will follow universal hygiene procedures to eliminate any risk of HIV/AIDS transmission in the service.

Related Documents

- [Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010\(Vic\)](#) - Part 1 - Preliminary - 3 (3) (a) & (c)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations - 155-157](#)
- [National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care \(Nov 2010\)](#) - Element 1.1.2; Element 1.1.5; Element 1.2.2; Element 4.2.1; Element 4.2.3; Element 6.1.2; Element 6.2.1
- [Early Years Learning Framework for Australia](#) - Practice: Holistic approaches; Responsiveness to children; Cultural competence; Learning environments - Outcomes: 1, 2, 3
- [Framework for School Age Care in Australia](#) - Practice: Holistic approaches; Responsiveness to children; Cultural competence; Environments - Outcomes: 1, 2, 3
- Enrolment procedure

- Grievance procedures
- Orientation checklists
- Priority of Access Guidelines (Child Care Service Handbook)
- Procedure for dealing with harassment or discrimination
- Procedure for selection of educators/staff

Links to other policies

- Community Involvement
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Educational Programs
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Grievances and Complaints Management
- Guiding Children's Behaviour
- Health, Hygiene and Infection Control
- Interactions with Children
- Partnerships and Communication with Families
- Recruitment of Educators, Staff and Volunteers

Sources

www.pscalliance.org.au

Further Sources

Australian Human Rights Commission - Federal Discrimination Law - Retrieved 16 March 2011, from www.hreoc.gov.au/legal/FDL/index.html

Children's Services Central - Smyth, M -- Discrimination & Children's Services - Retrieved 16 March 2011, from www.cscentral.org.au/publications/childrens-services-central-publications.html

DEEWR Child Care Service Handbook 2011 - 2012; Section 6.3 Priority of access - Retrieved 9 May 2012, from www.deewr.gov.au

Early Childhood Australia (ECA). (2005). The Code of Ethics. Retrieved April 4, 2011, from http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/code_of_ethics/early_childhood_australias_code_of_ethics.htm

UNICEF (n.d.). Fact sheet: A summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Retrieved 16 March 2011, from http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf

Document History

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