**Preschool Curriculum and Pedagogy Policy**

**Introduction**


Active involvement in learning builds children’s understandings of concepts and the creative thinking and inquiry processes that are necessary for lifelong learning” (*Belonging, Being and Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* page 33)

The Education and Care services National Law Act 2010, and Standard 1.1 of the National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care requires that a program is delivered to all children being educated and cared for by the service that:

a) Is based on an approved learning framework; and  
b) Is delivered in a manner that accords with the approved learning framework; and  
c) Is based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child; and  
d) Is designed to take into account the individuality of each child (**Two guide to the National Law and National regulations** p.53)

The Education and Care Services National Regulations requires that the educational program contributes to the following outcomes for children:

a) the child will have a strong sense of identity;  
b) the child will be connected with and contribute to his or her world;  
c) the child will have a strong sense of wellbeing;  
d) the child will be a confident and involved learner;  
e) the child will be an effective communicator (**Two guide to the National Law and National regulations** p.53)

It is also required that relevant information about the program and their child’s participation in the program is shared with parents, and that the program is planned, documented and evaluated.
Goals – What are we going to do?

*Kemblawarra Public School, Preschool* will provide an educational program that is based on the approved learning framework and meets the developmental needs; interests and experiences of each child attending the centre.

Educators will draw on their professional knowledge and their in-depth knowledge of each child to choose appropriate teaching strategies and design a learning environment that will engage children in active learning through play.

Educators will work in partnership with children, families and other professionals to:

- Plan effectively for children’s learning and wellbeing
- Communicate with families about children’s development and wellbeing
- Evaluate children’s progress towards achieving intended outcomes
- Identify children who may need additional support.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Centre environment and the experiences offered, and the approaches taken by educators to achieve the best possible learning and developmental outcomes for each child.
- Reflect on their own professional practice and relationships with children and families and use this knowledge to improve the effectiveness of the program and teaching strategies.

Strategies - How will it be done?

Educators will:

- Be responsible for the development of an educational program that is based on the relevant approved learning framework, is developmentally appropriate to the needs of children attending the preschool and reflects the preschool’s philosophy.
- Be provided with opportunities to further their professional development and skills in childhood pedagogy and education and care practices.
- Continually reflect on children’s experiences, thinking and learning and document their observations and assessments using a variety of methods that may include: diary notes of children’s comments and conversations, examples of children’s work, photographs of children’s participation and spontaneous play, noting changes that may be needed in the environment, discussing alternative teaching strategies with their colleagues.

Planning Programs

- ensure programs are balanced and varied (i.e. will provide for indoor/outdoor learning experiences, quiet/active times, individual/small group/large group times, time for individual educator/child interactions, children’s individual and group interests, including activities that are physical, creative, exploratory, dramatic, musical, cognitive and involved construction), and be flexible enough to allow for spontaneity and the unexpected.
• Provide individual holistic programs that are responsive to children’s lives, interests and learning styles. Educators promote each child’s social, cultural, physical, emotional, intellectual, language and creative potential, and meet individual children’s play and relaxation needs. Educators will use observations of children’s participation, set-up a learning environment that stimulates children’s natural curiosity, encourage children to be actively involved in their own learning and decision making and use the partnership they have developed with families to enhance and individualise programs for children.

Involve children in planning programs through the following strategies:

a) seeking information about children’s interests, valuing children’s contributions and ideas and letting the child know they are appreciated;
b) providing a variety of resources and experiences, and setting up the environment so that shelving for equipment and toys is easily accessible, allowing children to make choices about their activities, and observing children’s preferred choices;
c) one to one discussions with children during which educators ask them what they like to do and what they think about their experiences;
d) Observing group interests and interactions;
e) Provide a variety of toys for all children to play with regardless of gender. Both boys and girls will be encouraged to explore a full range of experiences and emotions.
f) Will ensure that the educational program is child centred and will allow children to experience a variety of materials and pursue their own interests.

Educators will offer appropriate choices to children, talk to them about the choices available to them, and help them to decide what to do if needed. There will always be alternatives when a child does not wish to participate in a particular activity, or chooses to initiate their own experiences and play.

Challenge and encourage children to take ‘safe’ risks in order to:

a) Develop their problem solving skills;
b) Build resilience, confidence and social competence;
c) Extend their strength, fitness levels and coordination through physically challenging activities; and
d) Learn about taking safe risks by raising their consciousness of risks and consequences of particular actions or choices.
e) Ensure the supervision of children is in accordance with the Preschool’s Supervision Policy, is appropriate to the child’s stage of development and protects their safety and wellbeing at all times. Educators will join the children’s play, appreciate their attempts to acquire new skills, and encourage them to try new experiences. Children will be regularly reminded of the safety procedures for play equipment.
f) Use children’s real life experiences to engage children in learning opportunities. Families are encouraged to share their cultural traditions, customs and beliefs with educators so that children’s rights to have their cultures and identities acknowledged and valued can be upheld.
g) Develop flexible programs that can be adjusted to respond to spontaneous play, children’s interests, changes in the weather, visitors to the preschool etc.
h) Monitor noise levels in the environment and adjust activities with children to ensure noise levels are appropriate and do not interfere with purposeful play or activities.
Child Assessment

All educators will be responsible for working co-operatively to monitor the individual development of each child within their care, and for evaluating the program in relation to the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, the preschool’s stated philosophy and individual children’s learning and development.

Records of child assessments for the delivery of the educational program will be kept for 3 years in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations, and may be accessed by the child’s family at any time.

Daily Routines

Routines will be built around the regular events of the day i.e. arrival, snack/drinks, main meal, and departure, and will take into account the developmental needs of individual children, children’s attendance patterns, climate and physical environment, the numbers and ages of children within a given group, children with special needs, new children entering the group and family expectations.

Flexibility is built into routines so that children’s involvement in activities and any special needs are accommodated.

Grouping Children

Children will be provided with opportunities to interact and develop positive relationships with each other whilst being educated and cared for at the preschool.

When children are grouped the following will be considered:

a) available indoor and outdoor space;
b) educator’s experience;
c) staffing levels and required educator to child ratio;
d) number and ages of children;
e) children’s developmental level;
f) children’s social/emotional level;
g) children from the same family
h) group dynamics
i) children from ethnic minority groups
j) families cultural/social backgrounds;
k) continuity of care
l) children’s individual needs;
m) type of learning experience or play activity.
**Electronic Media**

Television programs and DVD’s (stories) will not be a regular part of children’s education or leisure program, and will only take place when a specific program enhances a particular learning or social experience for children.

Programs will be carefully vetted and chosen in accordance with the following criteria:

- a) the program was made specifically for children within the relevant age group;
- b) the program is entertaining and seeks to actively involve children;
- c) the program enhances children’s understanding and experience or encourages imaginative play;
- d) the characters in the program treat each other with respect; and
- e) the program does not include violence or scary images that are likely to disturb children.

Educators will always view programs with children and:

- a) invite children to ask questions, describe their feelings and make sense of what they have viewed;
- b) talk about the program, discuss activities, characters, stories, themes, likes and dislikes;
- c) encourage the extension of any program viewed by including suitable activities in future programs; and
- d) ensure a program is turned off if for any reason it is deemed inappropriate for young children.

Television viewing will be limited to 20 minutes per session

Children will always be encouraged to participate in active play after sitting and watching a television program.

Educators will implement the following strategies for the usage of Computers and IPADs within the preschool:

- a) each child’s computer/IPAD use will be of a specified time period;
- b) access will be carefully monitored to ensure developmentally appropriate, open ended non-violent games and software programs that reflect the centres philosophy are being viewed;
- c) all children are provided with equal opportunities to access;
- d) educators will plan extension activities for the most popular computer games or programs that extend children’s learning and encourage children to take part in active rather than passive activities
Collaborative partnerships with families

During the enrolment process families will be asked to complete information sheets about their child’s abilities and behaviours, to assist educators to assess the child’s current developmental level, and establish suitable routines for the child.

Educators will initiate and facilitate regular ongoing communication with families concerning their child’s participation. Families are informed promptly and sensitively of any issues or concerns in regards to their child. Recorded information will be available for discussion.

Programs will be displayed in each class room and in a position where families are able to see them and can discuss any aspect of the program with educators.

Families will be encouraged to have input into the program development especially in relation to their own child’s participation, and in sharing aspects of their culture, skills and interesting experiences. The extent to which families wish to be involved will be respected.

Educators will work with families to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of learning experiences for children.

The preschool will make information available to families on media use and early development of young children.

The preschool will survey families to obtain feedback on their expectations/views about children having access to electronic media and the preschool’s current policy. Educators are always ready to discuss any particular concerns a family may have in regards to their child watching electronic media at the preschool.

Evaluation

All people are treated equitably and with a level of mutual respect regardless of their background, ability or additional needs, gender, age, socioeconomic status, culture, language, beliefs and family structure or lifestyle.

All processes, policies and practices are designed to achieve the successful inclusion of all children.

Links to the National Quality Standards/Elements 1.1 & 1.2
References:

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations

The National Quality Standards for early Childhood

The Early Years Learning Framework

National Quality Framework

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010- section 68

Education and Care Services National Regulations: 73-76

National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care: Standards

Early Years Learning Framework for Australia – Principles: Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships; Partnerships with Families; High expectations and equity; Respect for Diversity; Ongoing learning and reflective practice-

Practice: Holistic approaches; Responsiveness to children; Learning through play; Intentional teaching; Learning environments; Cultural Competence: Continuity of Learning and Transitions; Assessment for Learning – Learning Outcomes: 1,2,3,4,5. Early Years Learning Framework for Australia – Principles: Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships; Partnerships with Families; High expectations and equity; Respect for Diversity; Ongoing learning and reflective practice- Practice: Holistic approaches; Responsiveness to children; Learning through play; Intentional teaching; Learning environments; Cultural Competence: Continuity of Learning and Transitions; Assessment for Learning – Learning Outcomes: 1,2,3,4,5.

*Acknowledgement to Ballina River Street Children’s Centre