

Educational Practice Policy and Procedure

Introduction

We provide educational programs for children that promote a passion for lifelong learning and equip them to transition successfully to new settings including school and other parts of the community.

Our educational practices enable children to be capable, confident, and engaged, and support them to realise their full potential.

We believe that preschool age children learn best through hands on involvement in play and through interaction with both their physical and social environments. By responding to children's interests and exploration we can support their learning and creativity.

This policy outlines how Learning Links delivers educational programs and curriculum reflective of best practice early childhood and early childhood intervention guidelines and research.

Policy

The Learning Links Preschool educational program and practices is governed and guided by The Australian Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) which puts children's learning at the core.

The Vision, Principles, Practice, and Outcomes based on sound research and evidence of Early Childhood Pedagogy of the EYLF are evident in all aspects of our Preschool program.

The Vision for Children's Learning encompasses:

- Belonging
- Being
- Becoming

The Principles encompass:

1. Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships
2. Partnerships
3. High expectations and equity
4. Respect for diversity
5. Ongoing learning and reflective practice

The Practice encompass:

- Holistic approaches
- Responsiveness to children
- Learning through play
- Learning environments
- Cultural competence
- Assessment for learning

Learning Outcomes are:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
4. Children are confident and involved learners
5. Children are effective communicators.

The Preschool program also encompasses and reflects:

- Strengths Based Approach
- Inclusive Educational Practice
- Family Centred Practice
- Collaborative Practice
- Ongoing Professional Learning and Reflective Practice
- Evidence Informed Practice
- A commitment to providing a Rich Learning Environment

The Preschool Program has a current Quality Improvement Plan based on the 7 quality outcomes of the National Quality Standards (NQS).

Learning Links has current registration to deliver NDIS Early Childhood Supports and our Preschool services are compliant with the Early Childhood Supports Module Practice Standards.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Early Years Learning Framework	<p>Our Preschool curriculum is guided by the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) for preschools and child care centres. The EYLF has five Learning Outcome areas designed to guide and capture the learning and development of preschool children.</p> <p>The learning outcomes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have a strong sense of identity • Children are connected with and contribute to their world • Children have a strong sense of wellbeing • Children are confident and involved learners • Children are effective communicators.
National Quality Standards (NQS)	<p>The NQS sets a high national benchmark for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services in Australia. The NQS includes 7 quality areas that determine quality outcomes for children. Learning Links is assessed and rated by the NSW Department of Education and Training against the NQS and given a rating for each of the 7 quality areas and an overall rating based on these results.</p>
Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)	<p>The QIP is a tool used to self-assess the Preschool's performance against the NQS to ensure we are delivering quality education and care, and to plan future improvements.</p>
Intentional Teaching	<p>Intentional teaching is deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful.</p>
Focus Teacher	<p>An Educator or Teacher in our education and care program who coordinates the child's individual learning program and is the main point of contact with the child's family. Every child in the Preschool program has an allocated Focus Teacher.</p>
Key Worker	<p>The Key Worker acts as the conduit for the expertise of the whole team relating to children with additional needs. The Key Worker focuses on working with significant adults in the child's life imparting information, knowledge and skills to them. The Key Worker focuses on the child's natural learning environments using the child's daily routines and activities to promote the child's development and participation.</p>
Team Around the Child (TAC)	<p>TAC is a way of coordinating early interventions for children with additional needs and their families who require interventions from several practitioners. Each child's key practitioners agree to work as a closely collaborative and well organised team, with the Key Worker the main point of contact for the family.</p>
Critical reflection	<p>Reflective practice is about learning from ordinary and interesting situations and from the issues and problems that are part of educators' daily experiences. It is a critical examination of not only what happened but why.</p>
Summative assessment	<p>Summative assessment describes assessment processes that 'sum up' what a child has learned by reviewing documentation gathered over time from a range of sources.</p>
Family centred practice	<p>Family centred practice is a way of thinking and acting that ensures that professionals and families work in partnership and that family life, and family priorities and choices, drive what happens in planning and intervention. Family centred practice builds on family strengths and assists families to develop their own networks of resources – both formal and informal.</p>
Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)	<p>IFSP is a planning process which ensures that everyone works in a coordinated way towards goals which reflect the families concerns and priorities.</p>

Eligibility

The Policy applies to all Learning Links Early Education and Care program staff. The term staff includes volunteers, students and interns.

Responsible

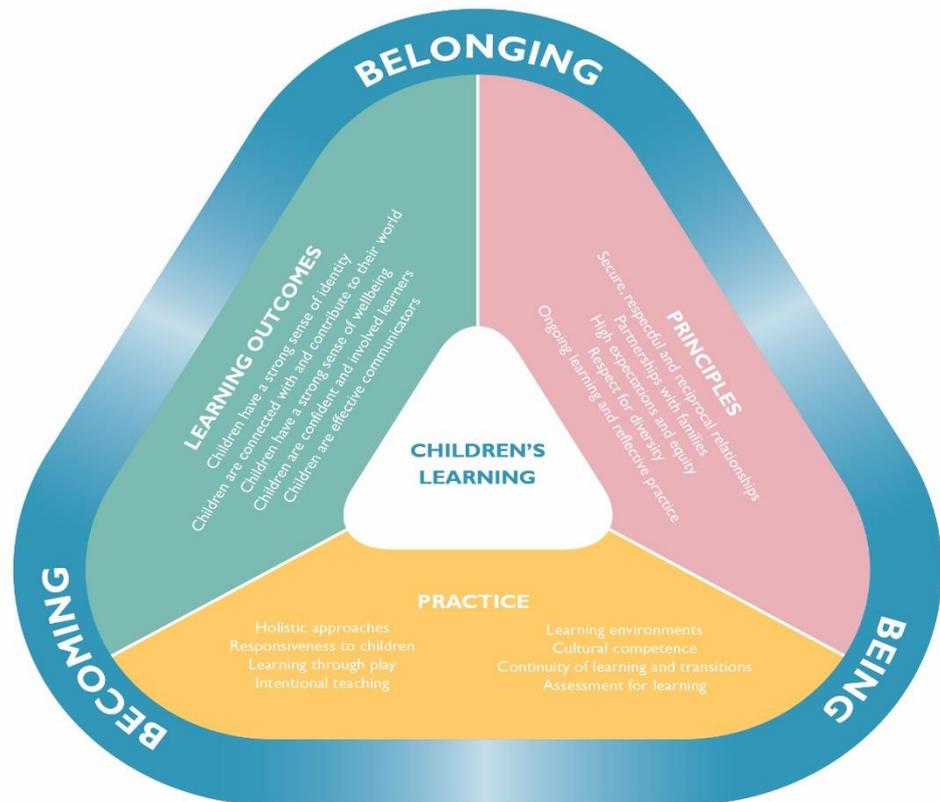
Responsibilities for the policy are:

Role	Responsibilities
Preschool Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading the Preschool. • Preparing and implementing a Quality Improvement Plan based on the NQS each year. • Facilitating continuous improvement within the Educational Program to achieve best practice. • Displaying information about the content of the program and the way it is delivered.
Educational Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading the Preschool in Educational Practice. • Implementing the Australian Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). • Collaborating effectively across the transdisciplinary team, families, and the community. • Building the skills and capability of the Preschool team through reflective practices.
Early Childhood Teacher / Room Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinating curriculum planning for the class group. • Initiating and leading reflective processes with the team relating to individual children and the group program.
Teachers, Educators, Child Care Workers and Therapists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnering with families. • Documenting all aspects of children's participation, progress and development in the program, particularly as relevant to the child's Individual Learning Plan (ILP). • Documenting regular summative assessment. • Providing regular feedback to families (including written feedback) relating to the child's ILP and any other areas of priority identified by the staff or child's family. • Planning and programming learning opportunities for individual and groups of children. • Engaging in reflective practices. • Preparing a Transition to School Statement for children transitioning to school.

Related documents/ Legislation and quality frameworks

Document/Resource
NDIS Practice Standards
Education and Care National Regulation and Law
National Quality Framework (NQF)
Early Years Learning Framework
Family Participation and Communication Policy and Procedure
Guidelines for Documenting Children's Learning, Information Sheet, ACECQA
Current Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

Australian Early Years Learning Framework



The Early Childhood Pedagogy underpinning the EYLF is evident in all aspects of our Preschool program.

Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

The Preschool have an active QIP that drives continuous improvement and focuses the work within the Preschool.

The QIP is an active document. There is ongoing review throughout the year and progress notes are entered.

At the beginning of each year the Preschool review the previous year's QIP and develop a new plan. The QIP is cascaded to individual performance plans for effective implementation.

The QIP is based on 7 quality areas as follows:

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice

Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety

Quality Area 3: Physical environment

Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements

Quality Area 5: Relationships with children

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership

NDIS Early Childhood Supports Module Practice Standards.

The Preschool program is compliant with the Early Childhood Supports Module Practice Standards including:

1 The Child

Each child participant accesses supports that promote and respect their legal and human rights, support their development of functional skills, and enable them to participate meaningfully and be included in everyday activities with their peers.

2 The Family

Each family receives family-centred supports that are culturally inclusive, responsive, and focus on their strengths.

3 Inclusion

Each participant accesses supports that engage their natural environments and enable inclusive and meaningful participation in their family and community life.

4 Collaboration

Each participant receives coordinated supports from a collaborative team comprising their family, the provider and other relevant providers, to facilitate their development and address the family's needs and priorities.

5 Capacity Building

Each participant receives supports that build the knowledge, skills and abilities of the family and other collaborating providers in order to support the child's learning and development.

6 Evidence – Informed Practice

Each participant receives evidence-informed supports from providers with quality standards and validated practice.

7 Outcome based approach

Each participant receives supports that are outcome-based and goal-focused.

Strengths Based Approach

Our practices and program build on each child's strengths, skills and knowledge to support their motivation and engagement in learning in the early years.

The educational practice and program

- Encourages and supports all children's capacity to succeed through opportunities to explore, investigate, create and problem solve.
- Provides opportunities through play for children to communicate, work cooperatively with others, develop confidence, and positive self-identity.

Staff actively and intentionally promote children's learning through worthwhile and challenging experiences and interactions that foster high-level thinking skills.

We respect each child's legal and human rights and incorporate these rights into our everyday practice.

A child's inclusive, meaningful and active participation in their family life, community life and natural environment is promoted.

We believe in children developing a strong sense of wellbeing. Children have the right to feel safe, secure and supported.

Inclusive Educational Practice

As an inclusive early education program, we:

- Value the rich diversity of culture, language, abilities and experiences of children and their families.
- Support the meaningful inclusion and participation of every child and their family.
- Encourage parent/carer contributions to their child's individual education plan.
- Believe that each child's family is unique.

Family Centred Practice

We implement family centred practice by providing meaningful and flexible opportunities for each child's family and support networks to be actively engaged in developing individual goals and learning plans.

We understand families know their child best. We encourage families to share their insights and perspectives about what works well and any other relevant information to ensure that our families have choice and control over their child's development, support and inclusion.

Information is shared with families in the way that suits each family best, is culturally sensitive and respects the family's cultural beliefs. With consent information is shared with other collaborating providers as required.

The family is supported to develop their own network of formal and informal resources, through Preschool parent events, information sharing, and skill development workshops.

The family is supported in gaining skills that will help them to understand how their family routines and everyday activities can promote their child's learning and development.

Collaborative Practice

Staff work as a collaborative and integrated team around the child, communicating and sharing information, knowledge and skills.

Our transdisciplinary team of teachers, educators, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, and provisional psychologists develop individualised programs for children designed to enhance every child's participation and learning.

Each child has an identified staff member who is responsible to ensuring effective collaboration with all staff members and each family.

The capacity of the child, family and collaborating providers is built through coaching, capacity building supports, and collaborative teamwork.

Feedback and learnings from the child, family and other professionals is used to improve support delivery.

Ongoing Professional Learning and Reflective Practice

We embrace ongoing professional learning and reflective practice to support staff development and children's learning.

Our educational program practice reflects an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting, reflection and evaluation.

Staff monitor and assess children's development and progress to identify strengths, skills and knowledge.

Staff continually seek ways to build their professional knowledge based on their interactions with children, families, colleagues, and the community.

Evidence Informed Practice

Our practice is based on explicit principles, validated practices, research, and relevant laws and regulations outlined in this policy.

Our processes and systems ensure staff have the information, knowledge, skills and expertise to deliver quality outcomes for children and their families.

Staff knowledge and skills are maintained through continuing professional development, ongoing self-reflection, self-assessment and monitoring of practices.

Children learn through hands on involvement in play and through interaction with both their physical and social environments.

Each child's documented individual learning plan describes goals, activities and strategies. The assessment, intervention planning and outcomes for the child and the family are measured, evaluated and reported in ways that are meaningful to, and understood by, the family.

A commitment to providing a Rich Learning Environment

The Preschool environment is a welcoming and stimulating space that supports learning and is responsive to the interests and abilities of each child.

We believe a welcoming and nurturing learning environment encourages and supports children to explore, investigate, create and problem solve.

We believe through play children have opportunities to communicate, work cooperatively with others, develop confidence and positive self-identity.

We create a safe environment for children by assessing and managing risk.

Document control

This table outlines the control details for this document.

Element	Details
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