



## ADDITIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Related Quality Area	QA3: Physical Environment QA5: Relationships with Children QA6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
Related Policies	Anti-Bias and Inclusion Policy Code of Conduct Policy Educational Program Policy Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy Respect for Children Polict

### PURPOSE

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 inclusion. 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 Centre. Educators will remain encouraging, unprejudiced and supportive, 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 Centre.

In accordance with The National Quality Standard, our Centre positively responds to and welcomes children with additional needs including those who:

- Are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders
- Are recent arrivals in Australia
- Have a culturally and linguistically diverse background
- 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 with 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 differ significantly, because every child is unique.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### Management/Nominated Supervisor will ensure

- Families are encouraged to meet with the Educators who will be working with the child to ensure an understanding of the child's needs, appropriate methods for communication, and to ascertain that suitable resources and support is provided to both the family and the child.
- The indoor and outdoor environment and equipment is designed and will be 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 Centre works with external professionals and families to verify 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 colour is considered within the environment.
  - Children are encouraged to feel safe and secure during their education and care at the Centre by developing trusting relationships with educators, other children, and the community.
  - Support Educators through providing professional development and opportunities to network with professional agencies to ensure 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:

Our Centre wants children to develop to the best of their personal ability. Our philosophy highlights our commitment to equity and fairness for all children. Every child in our Centre is an individual and we aim to promote and encourage. We will

- Treat children equally and fairly.
- Create an inclusive program, which is adaptable and supportive of all children.
- Advocate for children's rights.
  - Conduct specific observations on the individual child, outlining their interests, strengths, and developmental needs.
  - Meet with families of children with additional needs to familiarise themselves with the specific communication needs of each child. Communication could include verbal and non-verbal communication skills and cues and may necessitate the use of things such as sign language, the use of images, and/or learning key words in the child's home language.
  - Establish a means for frequent communication with parents of children with additional needs through a communication book, verbal daily information exchanges, and/or formal and informal meetings.
- Develop an Inclusion Support Plan (ISP) for each child that will be kept on file at the Centre and shared with families, the child's medical practitioners and/or professional support services.
- 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.

- Create a flexible environment, which can be adapted to each child's needs within the Centre to support the inclusion of children with additional needs.
- Implement programming experiences and activities, encouraging all children to explore and participate.
- Listen carefully to all children's concerns and discuss issues of inclusion and exclusion, and fair and unfair behaviour.
- 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.
  - Making it clear to children through all educators that it is not acceptable for a child to say or do unfair thing to another person and that if this does occur an educator will step in to redirect the negative behaviour and role model positive behaviour.
- 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 all families to meet children's developmental needs in order to build strengths and capabilities.
- Work collaboratively with health professionals and families together to discuss and plan to support children.
- Talk to children about differences and acceptance.
- Provide opportunities for all children to play and learn together, promoting cooperative, caring, and pro social behaviours.

### INCLUSION SUPPORT PROGRAM (ISP)

To assist in the provision of an inclusive environment for children with additional needs, our Service may apply for additional support through the [Inclusion Support Program \(ISP\)](#) if the eligibility requirements are met.

The nominated supervisor and educators will refer to the *Inclusion Support Guidelines* and consult with families to submit an application. The objectives of the Inclusion Support Program include:

- supporting Early Childhood Education and Care Services to increase their capacity and capability to provide quality inclusive practices for all children
- to address access and participation barriers
- support the inclusion of children with additional needs
- provide parents or carers of children with additional needs with access to appropriate ECEC services

### HIGH POTENTIAL AND GIFTED CHILDREN

Our Service will collaborate with families to support the needs of high potential and gifted children.

We will:

- respect the uniqueness of each child
- acknowledge the characteristics of high potential and gifted children
- be sensitive to the social-emotional needs of gifted children and assist them to feel a sense of belonging
- develop our capacity to cater for the needs of gifted children through professional development
- support children's transition to school
- assist educators cater for gifted children who also have a disability- 'Twice Exceptional' children

**POLICY REVIEW:** This policy will be reviewed bi-annually unless there are any regulatory or legislative requirements and/or any feedback from staff, parents, and the community.

**REVIEW**

POLICY REVIEWED	August 2021	NEXT REVIEW DATE	August 2024
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No Modifications</li> </ul>		
POLICY REVIEWED	August 2024	NEXT REVIEW DATE	August 2026
MODIFICATIONS	<p><b>INCLUSION SUPPORT PROGRAM (ISP)</b>            To assist in the provision of an inclusive environment for children with additional needs, our Service may apply for additional support through the <a href="#">Inclusion Support Program (ISP)</a> if the eligibility requirements are met.</p> <p>The nominated supervisor and educators will refer to the <i>Inclusion Support Guidelines</i> and consult with families to submit an application. The objectives of the Inclusion Support Program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supporting Early Childhood Education and Care Services to increase their capacity and capability to provide quality inclusive practices for all children</li> <li>to address access and participation barriers</li> <li>support the inclusion of children with additional needs</li> <li>provide parents or carers of children with additional needs with access to appropriate ECEC services</li> </ul> <p><b>HIGH POTENTIAL AND GIFTED CHILDREN</b>            Our Service will collaborate with families to support the needs of high potential and gifted children.            We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>respect the uniqueness of each child</li> <li>acknowledge the characteristics of high potential and gifted children</li> <li>be sensitive to the social-emotional needs of gifted children and assist them to feel a sense of belonging</li> <li>develop our capacity to cater for the needs of gifted children through professional development</li> <li>support children’s transition to school</li> <li>assist educators cater for gifted children who also have a disability- ‘Twice Exceptional’ children</li> </ul>		