

	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Educational Program Development Policy</h2>
<b>Version No.</b>	Version 3.0 November 2021 (approved)
<b>Authorisation</b>	General Manager Community Services
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Policy to be reviewed by 1 December 2024
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Manager Families and Children
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Early Childhood Coordinator

### 1. Purpose

This policy will provide guidelines to ensure that the Educational Program and practice at Melton City Council children's services is:

- based on an Approved Learning Framework
- underpinned by Critical Reflection and careful planning
- stimulating, engaging and enhances children's Learning and development.

1.1. This policy has been adapted from *PolicyWorks* Manual - National Quality Framework released by the Early Learning Association Australia.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to services responsible for the direct education and care of children. It applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Person in Day to Day Charge, Responsible Person's, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the Melton City Council programs and activities.

### 3. Background

The *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (National Law) requires services to deliver an Educational Program based on an Approved Learning Framework.

In Victoria, Approved Learning Frameworks for the early childhood sector are the Early Years Learning Framework (Belonging, Being & Becoming), My Time, Our Place and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (refer to *Sources*). These documents are underpinned by practices and principles that encourage reflection and provide educators with a thorough understanding of the pedagogy of early childhood Educational Program in a contemporary context.

Part 4.1 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*, outlines the operational requirements for Educational Program and practice within services, including the requirements for documentation of assessments in relation to the Educational Program. There is no prescribed method in the National Law or National Regulations for documenting assessment of children's Learning. Each service must determine a method that suits their individual circumstances.

To meet the documentation requirements of the National Regulations, the assessment must include an analysis of children's Learning. Collecting this information enables educators to plan effectively for Each Child's Learning and development. It can also be used by educators to stimulate reflection on their own values, beliefs and teaching practices, and to communicate about children's Learning with children and their families.

The National Regulations requires the appointment of an Educational Leader to lead the development and implementation of the Educational Program at the service (National

Regulations 118). This person will have suitable qualifications and experience, as well as a thorough understanding of the Early Years Learning Frameworks and/or the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, enabling them to guide other educators in planning and reflection, and to mentor colleagues in implementation practices (*Education and Care Services National Law* and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* – refer to *Sources*).

The National Quality Standard is linked to the Approved Learning Frameworks “Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice” and focuses on “enhancing children’s Learning and development through the:

- pedagogical practices of educators and coordinators
- development of programs that promote children’s Learning across five Learning Outcomes”

(Guide to the National Quality Standard – refer to *Sources*).

The Educational Program must also be underpinned by the service’s philosophy.

#### 4. Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy and related procedures. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *Glossary of Terms*.

Word/Term	Definition
<b>Approved Learning Framework</b>	A document that outlines practices that educators and coordinators must use to support and promote children’s Learning. The Early Years Learning Framework (Belonging, Being & Becoming), My Time, Our Place and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework are Approved Learning Frameworks for use in Victoria (refer to <i>Sources</i> ).
<b>Critical Reflection</b>	Reflective practices that focus on implications for equity and social justice (Early Years Learning Framework – refer to <i>Sources</i> ).
<b>Each Child</b>	A phrase used in the National Quality Standard when an individualised approach is warranted and educators are required to modify their response to meet the needs of an individual child. An example is “Each Child’s current knowledge, ideas, culture and interests provide the foundation for the program”.
<b>Educational Leader</b>	The Approved Provider of an education and care service must designate in writing, a suitably qualified and experienced educator, coordinator or other individual to lead the development and implementation of Educational Programs at the service (National Regulations 118). This person must have a thorough understanding of the Early Years Learning Framework (or other Approved Learning Framework), be able to guide other educators in their planning and reflection, and mentor colleagues in the implementation of their practice.
<b>Educational Program</b>	All interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children’s Learning and development (Early Years Learning Framework, – refer to <i>Sources</i> ).
<b>Learning</b>	A natural process of exploration that children engage in from birth, as they expand their intellectual, physical, social, emotional and creative capacities. Early Learning is closely linked to early development.

Word/Term	Definition
<b>Learning Framework</b>	Refer to “Approved Learning Framework” above.
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	A skill, knowledge or disposition that educators can actively promote in early childhood settings, in collaboration with children and families.

## 5. Policy

Melton City Council children’s services is committed to:

- providing an Educational Program that is based on reflective practice, critical analysis and planning
- supporting Each Child to achieve Learning Outcomes consistent with the National Early Years Learning Framework and/or the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework - My Time, Our Place
- providing an Educational Program where children can learn through play and are supported to make decisions, problem-solve and build relationships with others
- creating an environment that supports, reflects and promotes equitable and inclusive behaviours and practices
- involving families in the development and review of Educational Program and practice.

## 6. Responsibility/Accountability

6.1. The Approved Provider, according to Regulations is responsible for the implementation of this policy. This will be achieved through the Leadership Group and their service staff:

- the Educational Program is stimulating and engaging, enhances children’s Learning and development, and is based on an Approved Learning Framework (refer to *Definitions*) (National Law Section 168)
- the developmental needs, interests and experiences, and the individual differences of Each Child are accommodated in the Educational Program (National Law Section 168) (refer to *Inclusion and Equity Policy*)
- the Educational Program contributes to Each Child (National Regulations 73):
  - developing a strong sense of identity
  - being connected with, and contributing to, their world
  - having a strong sense of wellbeing
  - being a confident and involved learner
  - being an effective communicator.
- designating a suitably qualified and experienced Educational Leader to direct the development and implementation of Educational Programs at the service (National Regulations 118)
- staff record includes the name of the Educational Leader at the service (National Regulations 148)
- the service philosophy guides Educational Program and practice
- assessments of the child’s developmental needs, interests, experiences and participation in the Educational Program are documented (National Regulations 74)
- assessments of the child’s progress against the outcomes of the Educational Program are documented (National Regulations 74)
- documentation of assessments includes reflection on the period of time the child is at the service, and how documented information will be used by educators at the service (National Regulations 74)

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- documentation is written in plain language and is easy to understand by both educators and parents/guardians (National Regulations 74)
- ensuring the Educational Program is accessible at the service and accessible to parents/guardians (National Regulations 75)
- parents/guardians are provided with information about the content and implementation of the Educational Program, their child's participation in the program and documentation relating to assessments or evaluations of their child (National Regulations 76)
- developing and evaluating the Educational Program in collaboration with the Educational Leader/Persons in day to day charge, educators, children and families.

6.2. The Nominated Supervisor, Responsible Persons /Educational Leader/Persons in day to day charge is responsible for:

- ensuring that the Educational Program is stimulating and engaging, enhances children's Learning and development, and is based on an Approved Learning Framework (refer to *Definitions*) (National Law Section 168)
- ensuring the developmental needs, interests and experiences, and the individual differences of Each Child are accommodated in the Educational Program (National Law Section 168) (refer to *Inclusion and Equity Policy*)
- access to the Educational Program at the service in a location accessible to parents/guardians
- ensuring that Each Child's Learning and development is assessed as part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documentation and evaluation
- ensuring that there is a record of Learning and development for Each Child, and that it is updated and maintained on an ongoing basis
- developing and evaluating the Educational Program in collaboration with the Approved Provider, educators, children and families
- ensuring regular communication is established between the service and parents/guardians in relation to their child's Learning and development.

6.3. Educators are responsible for:

- ensuring a Educational Program that is stimulating and engaging, enhances children's Learning and development, and is based on an Approved Learning Framework (refer to *Definitions*)
- considering the developmental needs, interests and experiences, and the individual differences of Each Child in the Educational Program (refer to *Inclusion and Equity Policy*)
- assessing and documenting Each Child's needs, interests, experiences, participation and progress in relation to the Educational Program in a way that is easy to understand for parents/guardians
- making information available to parents/guardians about their child's participation in the Educational Program
- communicating regularly with parents/guardians in relation to their child's Learning and development
- developing and evaluating the Educational Program in collaboration with the Approved Provider, Educational Leader/Primary Nominee, children and families.

6.4. Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

- completing enrolment and other information and documentation to support the successful planning and implementation of the program for their child

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- to communicate, in writing, upon enrolment to the Person in charge of the service if their child may require additional support. To do this before the child's attendance to the program will enable the staff to plan a full and safe participation for the child, other children attending and the staff
- communicating regularly with the service in relation to their child's Learning and development
- providing input to the development of the Educational Program in collaboration with the Approved Provider, Educational Leader/Responsible Person's, educators and children.

6.5. Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

### **Attachments**

Nil

## **7. References, Sources, Links to Legislation and Other Documents**

7.1. Please refer to Reference and Sources page located on the Melton City Council Website.

<http://www.melton.vic.gov.au/Services/People/Children/Childrens-Services-policies-and-procedures/Sources-and-References>

7.2. Related service policies:

- *MCC Child Safe Policy, Procedure and Code of Conduct*
- *Code of Conduct Policy*
- *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Nutrition and Active Play Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*
- *Water Safety Policy.*
- *Child Safe Standards – Standard 7*