

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM POLICY

Research accentuates that quality programs significantly influences children’s growth and development. We have the opportunity to construct a supportive learning environment and program, with inspirations from the children and families. This contribution can encourage children to feel a sense of control over their actions, interactions, to explore, be curious and test out their understanding of themselves others and the world around them.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 1: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE		
1.1	Program	The educational program enhances each child’s learning and development
1.1.1	Approved learning framework	Curriculum decision making contributes to each child’s learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, and confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.
1.1.2	Child-centred	Each child’s current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.
1.1.3	Program learning opportunities	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child’s learning.
1.2	Practice	Educators facilitate and extend each child’s learning and development.
1.2.1	Intentional teaching	Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.
1.2.2	Responsive teaching and scaffolding	Educators respond to children’s ideas and play and extend children’s learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback
1.2.3	Child directed learning	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.
1.3	Assessment and planning	Educators and co-ordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.
1.3.1	Assessment and planning cycle	Each child’s learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection.

1.3.2	Critical reflection	Critical reflection on children’s learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.
1.3.3	Information for families	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.
QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.2.2	Educational leadership	The educational leader is supported and leads the development of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS

s.166A	Offences relating to inappropriate conduct [commencing 2026 Nationally]
S.168	Offence relating to required programs
Part 6A	Devices in education and care services [commencing 2026]
73	Educational programs
74	Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program
75	Information about educational program to be kept available
76	Information about educational program to be given to parents
118	Educational leader
148	Educational leader
155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures are to be followed
254	Declared approved learning frameworks
359A	Victoria - Programs for children over preschool age

RELATED POLICIES

Additional Needs Policy
Behaviour Guidance Policy
Celebrations Policy
Child Protection Policy
Code of Conduct Policy
English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) Policy
Environmental Responsibility Policy
Excursion/Incursion Policy
Family Communication Policy

Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy
Multi-Cultural Policy
Photograph Policy
Physical Activity Policy
Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
Professional Development Policy
Respect for Children Policy
Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy
Supervision Policy

PURPOSE

School age education and care programs are acknowledged in the National Quality Framework (NQF) as distinct from early childhood programs. Programs in school age education and care supplement children’s formal schooling. The program supports each child and young person’s continuity of learning by providing opportunities for active learning, social development and wellbeing and recreational or leisure activities. (ACECQA, 2023).

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers, visitors and management of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations, approved Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) services are required to base their educational program on an approved learning framework. The national approved learning framework which outlines practices that support and promote children’s learning is My Time, Our Place- Framework for School Age Care in Australia.V2.0, 2022

In school age education and care services, “the program has different formats depending on whether it is wrapping around the school day or vacation periods. The program is a group of experiences that underpin the achievement of the Outcomes”. (MTOF, V2. p.68). Planning for learning is a continuous cycle that involves: planning, implementation, critical reflection, assessment and evaluation.

THERE ARE ALSO JURISDICTION-SPECIFIC APPROVED LEARNING FRAMEWORKS, WHICH INCLUDE:

- Victoria: Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework

<https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/earlyyears/veyldf/Pages/Index.aspx>

THE APPROVED PROVIDER WILL ENSURE:

- obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met and understood by all staff and educators
- educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy
- the education leader selected is supported to lead the development, implementation and review of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle within the OSHC Service
- the educational leader has the skills, knowledge and attributes to mentor and work collaboratively with educators, fostering a shared responsibility and professional accountability of children and young people's learning, development and wellbeing
- to support educator's understanding of educational programming and practices for school aged children
- the staff record includes the name of the person designated as the educational leader
- the educational leader accepts the position of Educational Leader in writing (Reg. 118)
- the educational leader is aware of the regulatory requirements of the role and can explain the obligations associated with the position [mandatory for NSW]
- a high-quality educational program based on an approved learning framework is delivered to all children in accordance with the framework (outcomes, practices and principles)
- the educational program is displayed in an accessible place for families and is available upon request
- the program is evidence based, age-appropriate and supports and extends the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are meaningfully embedded within the program and daily practice
- to promote inclusive practices by ensuring reasonable adjustments are made for children with disabilities or additional needs and that appropriate professional referrals are made with family consent
- support is provided to the nominated supervisor and educational leader to embed continuous improvement and uphold quality teaching and learning practices
- all educators are provided with necessary resources, professional learning, and time to implement the program effectively.

THE NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/EDUCATIONAL LEADER WILL:

- ensure the program aligns with the approved learning framework and Service philosophy

- implement the Assessment and Planning Cycle that takes into account the unique nature of school age care as the 'ongoing process... to design programs that enhance and extend each child's learning and development' (MTOP. V2.0, p.131)
- base the educational program on an approved learning framework and deliver the program in accordance with the framework (outcomes, practices and principles)
- ensure they understand the regulatory requirements of the educational leader role and can explain the obligations associated with the position
- ensure the program contributes to the five learning outcomes for each child
- collaborate with educators to ensure they plan experiences and activities based on individual and group goals that maximise opportunities to extend emerging strengths, abilities and interests for each child and young person
- ensure all educators work as a team in preparing and/or implementing the curriculum based on the Service's philosophy
- gather information from families upon enrolment regarding the child's needs, interest and family backgrounds
- ensure family input and feedback are actively sought, recorded and reflected within the educational program
- document family input with the educational program to strengthen connections and partnerships
- ensure all children and young people have the access to a quality and inclusive educational program that celebrates and makes visible children's diversity (MTOP, V2.0)
- ensure the program is inclusive of all children and young people
- develop collaborative relationships with families to achieve quality outcomes for all children and young people
- monitor and support educators to critically reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching strategies, program implementation and environmental design
- display cultural responsiveness by learning about multiple perspectives and diversity such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, family and individual's diversity
- ensure the educational program is displayed in a place that is accessible to families
- ensure information regarding the content and operation of the education program is provided to families if requested (Reg. 76)
- provide information regarding the child or young person's participation within the program when requested by families (Reg. 76)
- ensure a copy of the program is available at all times (Reg. 75)

- ensure documentation related to the development of the education program are recorded (Reg. 74)
- consider the period of time a child or young person is being educated and cared for by the service when preparing documentation

EDUCATORS WILL:

- collaborate with children and young people to influence the development of the program in response to their own strengths, ideas, abilities and interests
- plan a contextual program that actively promotes or initiates the investigation of ideas, complex concepts and thinking, reasoning and hypothesizing the supports in learning, development and wellbeing of each child and young person
- use the learning outcomes to guide the planning for children and young people's learning
- provide play and leisure opportunities that are meaningful to children and support their wellbeing, learning and development
- assess and analyse play, leisure, learning and participation in a variety of ways
- document children's wellbeing and learning, utilising contemporary theories and research concerning children's play, leisure, and learning, and make this visible to children, educators and families
- include children and young people in the assessment process by encouraging them to select strategies to document their own learning
- ensure each child and young person is acknowledged for their uniqueness in a positive way
- provide unstructured experiences that take into account that school age children have had a structured and busy day at school
- ensure the curriculum reflects diversity and reflects the values and beliefs of children and families
- take responsibility to be culturally responsive
- provide experiences that actively promote and initiate the investigation of ideas, exploration, prediction, and hypothesizing
- support the development of dispositions such as confidence, curiosity, persistence, imagination, and creativity
- be intentional in the roles they take in children's play and leisure and the way they intentionally plan the environment and curriculum experiences
- make use of spontaneous 'teachable moments' to extend learning
- further extend critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills through provocations
- plan realistic curriculum goals for children considering the period of time the child is being educated and cared for by the service

- ensure documentation and evaluations are readily understood by parents
- record and document children's learning on Service-issued devices only, in accordance with the Safe Use of Digital technologies Policy and Procedures

The program will provide a variety of developmentally appropriate experiences and materials that are selected to achieve the following goals:

- Foster positive self-concept
- Foster high-level thinking skills
- Develop social skills
- Encourage children and young people to reason, question and experiment
- Support language development
- Enhance physical development and skills
- Foster independence and initiative
- Encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety and nutritional practices
- Encourage creative expression
- Respect cultural diversity of staff, children and young people
- Respect gender diversity
- Develop understandings of environmental, social and economic sustainability

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

From July 1 2023 services that educate and care for school age children in SA, TAS, VIC, NT, NSW and QLD are not required to keep documentation of individual evaluations of school age children.

Documentation will demonstrate children and young people:

- Showing themselves as active participants and decision makers
- Engaged in their skills, development and programs
- Providing feedback that has resulted in a decision to continue or extend on an aspect of the program
- Providing work samples such as drawings, reflections, or photographs of their thoughts and ideas about the program and their learnings.

Documentation will also demonstrate educator's reflections on their own practice and interpreting the feelings, thoughts and ideas of children, families and colleagues.

Services must ensure that evidence about the development of the program is documented. Documentation will provide evidence about the development and reflection of the program.

EXAMPLES OF DOCUMENTATION USED BY EDUCATORS MAY INCLUDE:

- Learning stories or narratives
- photographs with captions
- observations or reviews
- journals
- mind maps and surveys

CHILDCARE CENTRE DESKTOP - RELATED RESOURCES

Activity/Floor Plan Assessment and Planning Cycle Audit Assessment and Planning Cycle Guide and Procedure Assessment of Learning Summary Critical Reflection Template Educational Program and Practice Procedure Educators Program Resources Guide	Learning Development Register Management Programming Audit Observation Record Pre-Assessment Educational Program and Practice Checklist Program Template Special Days and Events Calendar 2026
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CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

The Educational Program Policy will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management, and notification of any change to policies will be made to families.

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Authority (2023) [Documenting Programs for School Age Services](#)
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
Australian Government Department of Education (2022). [My Time, Our Place- Framework for School Age Care in Australia. V2.0](#)
Australian Government Department of Education (2022). Information sheet- My Time, Our Place. [Cultural Responsiveness](#)
[Children \(Education and Care Services\) National Law \(NSW\)](#)
Early Childhood Australia. (2016). *Code of Ethics*.

[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010.](#)

[Education and Care Services National Regulations. \(Amended 2025\)](#)

NSW Government. Department of Health. Eat Smart Play Smart. A manual for out of school hours care. (2016)

[Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Law \(WA\) Act 2012](#) (For WA Services only)

[Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Regulations \(WA\) Act 2012](#)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	ANGELA STEVENS	BUSINESS MANAGER	27/04/2026
POLICY REVIEWED	FEBRUARY 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	FEBRUARY 2027
VERSION NUMBER	V12.02.26		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual policy maintenance • minor edits within policy • new regulation requirements for the educational leader to understand the role and be able to explain obligations of the position (commencing 2026 for NSW Services) • sources checked for currency and updated as required 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
FEBRUARY 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual policy maintenance • no major changes to policy • sources checked for currency and updated as required 	FEBRUARY 2026	