

# Acorn Child Care Centres

## Policies and Procedures



## 5 Education Program and Practice

### Background

*“All children experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life” (Belonging, Being and Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia)*

The Australian Early Years Learning Framework informs and underpins the educational program and practice in our centers. The Australian Early Years Learning Framework principles and learning outcomes informs educators approach to children’s learning, including intentional teaching, decision making and an ongoing cycle of observation.

### Policy statement

This Policy sets out the Service’s expectations for educators’ documenting and guiding children’s learning. At Acorn the educational program and practice developed by educators recognises children’s agency from birth and demonstrates a commitment to listening to and respecting children (the pedagogy of listening).

Acorn is committed to social inclusion and participation of every child and their family within our early learning centres. Our educational programs and practices value and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, identities and connections to community and country. We recognise the important role families have in children’s childhoods and in supporting a child to identify with and make meaning of themselves and their world.

### Strategies and practices

- The Service’s wide variety of resources, materials and equipment meets the needs (e.g. age, development, culture) and interests of the children, and supports children’s learning and harmonious play. QA 3.1.1, 3.2.2
- The educational program is based on the knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests of each child as communicated to educators by their parents, observed by educators and contributed to by the children. Refer to the Service’s *Interactions with Families Policy*. In addition, each child’s learning and development are assessed as part of the programming cycle of planning, documentation and evaluation and reflective practices. QA 1.1.2, 5.1.3, 5.2.1, 6.1.2, 6.2.1, 7.3.5
- Educators engage in ongoing critical reflection of children’s engagement in the learning environment and of their own interaction with children to support their play so as to better understand the individual child as a learner.
- Both indoor and outdoor environments are used to engage children in learning and play.
- The Service has an Educational Leader who oversees the development and implementation of the Service’s educational program. QA 7.1.4

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- All group leaders will receive approximately two hours per week of paid time for the purpose of working on their group program. This time will be allocated by the centre director and will be convenient to both the centre and group leader. Assistant group leaders receive approximately half an hour per week for programming.
- The centre is required to keep observations and portfolios for individual children in care. Acorn is currently utilising online programming for records to be maintained and updated electronically. Individual portfolios are available online for families to access once written consent has been given. Acorn's educational programs for children are guided by the Early Years Learning Framework, My Time Our Place and the Queensland Kindergarten Learning guidelines.
- Acorn has three specific programs OSHC, kindergarten program and a full music immersion program.
- The Service conducts regular team meetings where educators become familiar with each other's strengths and weaknesses and learn how to work best as a team to achieve quality education and care outcomes for children. Refer to the Service's *Educator Professionalism and Ethics Policy*. QA 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 7.2.3
- Acorn recognises the benefits of staff training and is committed to providing opportunities for training and development to all staff. It is desirable that Acorn be recognised as a pro-training company with training being one of the advantages of employment at our centre.
- Educators devote time to babies, one-on-one, and are attuned to them. QA 1.1.1, 5.1.1
- The Service is committed to working in partnerships with parents to best meet the education and care needs of their children. Refer to the Service's *Interactions with Families Policy*. The communication between home and the Service is especially important when guiding children's learning and including family input into the daily program. QA 5.2.2, 6.1.2, 6.2.1, 6.3.3, 7.2.1
- The program has extended periods of uninterrupted play which accommodate child-initiated, educator-initiated and co-constructed activities. This blend provides children the opportunities to make choices, contribute their own ideas, thoughts and feelings – and to develop social competence. Children then know that they are valued as capable and competent. QA 1.1.3, 5.1.1
- Routines are unhurried, largely social occasions. Refer to the Service's *Educational Program Policy*. QA 1.1.1, 1.1.3, 5.2.3
- Educators collaborate with the children to construct simple rules (expressed in a positive way), and discuss with them how these rules help everyone feel safe and secure. QA 2.1.2, 2.3.2, 5.2.2
- Educators intentionally teach children to play and to complete projects together, and to resolve social conflicts that arise from time to time. QA 5.2.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.3

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- Educators encourage children’s efforts, rather than praise the child. QA 5.1.3

## Responsibilities

- This policy is to be implemented by educators, early childhood teachers, educational leader, and centre directors.

## Links to other policies

- Staffing Policy
- Educator Professionalism and Ethics Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Interactions with Families Policy
- Relationships with Children Policy
- Philosophy

## Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Regs	73	Educational Programs
	74	Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program
	75	Information about the educational program is to be kept available
	76	Information about educational program to be given to parents
	155	Interactions with children
	156	Relationships in groups
QA	1.1.1	Curriculum decision making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators
	1.1.2	Each child’s current knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program
	1.1.3	The program, including routines, is organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child’s learning
	1.1.4	The documentation about each child’s program and progress is available to families
	1.1.5	Every child is supported to participated in the program
	1.1.6	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions and influence events in their world
	1.2.1	Each child’s learning and development is assessed as part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation

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1.2.2	Educators respond to children’s ideas and play and use intentional teaching to scaffold and extend each child’s learning
5.1.1	Interactions with each child are warm, responsive and build trusting relationships
5.1.3	Each child is supported to feel secure, confident and included
5.2.1	Each child is supported to work with, learn from and help others through collaborative learning opportunities
5.2.2	Each child is supported to manage their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts
5.2.3	The dignity and the rights of every child are maintained at all times
6.1.2	Families have opportunities to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions
6.2.1	The expertise of families is recognised and they share in decision making about their child's learning and wellbeing
7.2.1	A statement of philosophy is developed and guides all aspects of the service's operations

### Sources

- Belonging, Being, Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (2009)
- My Time our Place, Framework for School Age Care in Australia (2011)
- Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority, Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- Gartrell, D. (1995). Misbehaviour or mistaken behaviour. *Young Children*. 50(5) 27-34.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011.

### Further reading and useful websites

- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority – <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/>
- Early Childhood Australia – <http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/>

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