

1.5 INCLUSION/CULTURAL DIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

This statement is based on the following meaning the term 'culture'

- Culture is acquired in families and communities
- Cultures belong to groups of people
- Culture is shared ways of believing, knowing and doing
- Culture is a dynamic entity
- Culture influences the way people meet their needs (both material and non-material)
- Language is a significant component of culture

PURPOSE

- To uphold the principle of fairness to all.
- To honour each individual and his/her cultural, religious, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, levels of an ability and disability, age, gender, sexual preference, personal traits and educational and social status.
- To recognise, appreciate and support the diversity that exists within our families, school, community and the wider world.
- To develop an educational programme that supports children's and adult's sense of worth, and pride in family, community, ethnicity and linguistic heritage.

OBJECTIVES

- To promote a sense of confidence and positive self-identity in all individuals so that they feel good about themselves.
- To promote the ability to relate to diverse range of people with empathy and acceptance.
- To enable children to feel comfortable and accepting of the similarities and the differences they discover in others.
- To promote the acceptance of individuals as members of a family within a large cultural network.
- To provide opportunities for children to experience a range of cultural experiences represented within the school and the community through various activities throughout the year.
- To develop an awareness of non-traditional gender roles and work opportunities through literature and play.
- To support positive communication between children, families, staff and communities.
- To help children (in age appropriate ways), staff, and families understand that prejudice, racism and discrimination act as barriers within the community.

STRATEGIES

Awareness and Acceptance

Australian society is culturally diverse and consists of people with a variety of beliefs, values and languages. Therefore, it is important that our programme supports:

- The awareness, acceptance and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, other cultural heritage identities and languages. Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders hold a unique place in Australian culture and special recognition and acknowledgement is to be given to an indigenous culture.
- The diversity of Australian culture through the school's program and practices.
- The development of positive attitudes toward self and others both in children and staff, to ensure the school is inclusive of culture language identities no matter what the culture makeup of the school may be.
- The principle that families have unique knowledge and understanding of their child.

Language, Acquisition and Learning

In acknowledging the significant role of language in learning and speaking of only English at our school. It is necessary that:

- The children can learn English in an encouraging and helpful environment.
- A range of language literacy and communication styles is recognised, respected and used.
- Children with language other than English are assisted to develop their language skills within the classroom environment.

Program Development

Cultural diversity will be included in the educational programme for the benefit of the children. Therefore it is necessary that:

- The educational programme reflects the cultural diversity of the community and broadens the children's knowledge of their own culture and the cultures of others.
- School programme, policies and practices are culturally inclusive and aim to avoid bias, discrimination, and stereotyping.
- Resources depict the range of contemporary cultures in Australia avoiding harmful stereotyping and discrimination.
- Staff endeavour to represent a variety of family structures.
- Staff become involved when bias arises and teach children about equity and justice.

Staff Development

Educators can have a significant impact on children's developing attitudes towards cultural diversity. Professional development needs to support staff in promoting positive attitudes. Therefore, professional development needs to:

- Consider and respond to the range of cultures that make up Australian society.
- Facilitate staff to consider their own values and beliefs regarding culture, race, socioeconomic status and gender, and how these may impact on their classroom practice.

Relevant Legislation	Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011. Reg. 73, 155, 156, 168 Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
Related to NQS QA	5 & 6
Related Policies	Anti-bias Children with additional needs
Sources & Further Reading	University Preschool and Child Care Centre Inc

POLICY REVIEWED	MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
January 2022	Checked regulations, updated copy	2024