

POLICY NO 43: CHILDREN’S LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVE PLAY

Key Policy Contact Person: Manager, Our Village Family Childcare

POLICY STATEMENT:

Our Village Family Childcare is committed to enhancing children’s learning and development through pedagogical practices, Educators and families creating a positive learning environment. This is promoted across Learning Outcomes within the Early Years Learning Frameworks. Educators will spend the time gathering and interpreting information on the children both individually and as part of a group. Using this information Educators prepare an engaging environment and can implement experiences that are meaningful and holistic. Each Educator holds responsibility in the development and promote children’s health and wellbeing within the service. This involves how the environment is set up, it takes thoughtful planning to offer a focused, creative, flexible, peaceful, and collaborative environment for each child.

All educational environments provide learning experiences which include physical active play opportunities as a part of their daily program with children. Physical activity is particularly vital for children’s health.

CRITICAL INFORMATION:

Children’s Learning and Development

The Educators will ensure the educational program and written information will be:

- Based on an approved learning framework and implemented ensuring consistency from within the framework:
 - The Early Years Learning Framework – Belonging, Being and Becoming (EYLF V2.0)
 - Victorian early Years Learning and Development Framework
 - My Time Our Place – Framework for School Age Children (MTOF V2.0)

Within these learning frameworks are principles, practices and learning outcomes, these areas guide the educators in their educational program and assist in the planning, delivering, and evaluating their programs.
- Follow the Education and Care Service National Regulations (current version July 1, 2023) Part 4.1 Educational Program the educational program and practice, Regulation 73 the educational program is to contribute to the following outcomes for children:
 - The child will have a strong sense of identity.
 - The child will be connected with and contribute to his or her world.
 - The child will have a strong sense of wellbeing.
 - The child will be a confident and involved learner.
 - The child will be an effective communicator.
- Prepared in a format that is of their own preference inclusive of written information, gather information and evidence using a variety of different methods about the children Diary notes, observations such as - narratives, anecdotal, photographic, artwork.
- Based on the development needs, interests, and experiences of each child, including considering the individual needs of the children when the program is planned on the interests and the development of the children.

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PURPOSE:

To ensure optimal health and wellbeing of all children who attend the service, and to promote healthy active behaviours in childhood, leading to lifelong good health.

SCOPE/RESPONSIBILITIES:

This document applies to all Educators, Families, Coordination Unit Staff, Volunteers and Students of Our Village Family Childcare Service.

STATEMENT OF DIVERSITY

Sunbury and Cobaw Community Health is committed to improving the health of our community and being accessible to all, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, people with a disability, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQA+) people and other socially vulnerable groups and supporting their communities across the lifespan from birth to older age.

DEFINITIONS:

<p>Active Play</p>	<p>Is essentially physical activity with regular bursts at a moderate to vigorous pace. Active play can occur indoors and outdoors, alone, or with friends and family. Active play is for every child. Even before children can walk, they will be active and engage in play. As they get older and learn more skills opportunities for active play should increase.</p>
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PROCEDURES:

Interactions:

The manner in which adults interact with children has a significant impact on children’s development.

Active Play:

Active play is important for a child’s health, growth, and development. Regular activity and play have many benefits for a child beyond just maintaining healthy weight and protection against diseases I later life; these include:

- Building strong hearts and bones
- Strengthening muscles and developing good posture
- Improving sleep
- Developing movement skills
- Improving concentration
- Developing self-esteem and confidence
- Improving physical skills
- Providing opportunities to learn social skills of leading, explaining and following.

The Play Environment:

A positive, safe environment is a very important factor in play. Play can take place both indoors and outdoors but being outdoors is particularly good because it usually gives children space to perform gross motor activities at different paces. Gross motor activities use large muscle groups during movements such as jumping, running, climbing, and leaping.

Babies:

It is important that babies are given plenty of time on the floor, where they can kick their legs, practice rolling, moving their arms and generally commence developing their basic gross motor skills. Babies can also spend time outdoors on a rug.

Toddlers:

Toddlers are still developing basic gross motor skills. They enjoy rolling, crawling, standing, and exploring new challenges. Simple, unstructured free play, outdoor play is ideal for toddlers. Play materials such as tyres, large soft beach balls, buckets and spades, and cardboard boxes encourage imagination and provide opportunities for learning and fun. Music and sounds are a great way to encourage movement and active play.

Kindergarten children:

At kindergarten age, children thrive on walking, jumping, running, and exploring. Encourage children to do at least 60 minutes (and up to several hours) of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day. The 60 minutes of activity does not have to occur all at one time, it can be accumulated through short bursts of activity over the day. Children at this age begin to showcase a variety of styles of play, these may include mimicking others, imaginative play, making up their own games or activities, and they enjoy movements such as climbing, pushing, pulling, spinning, and dancing. Educators provide simple, safe toys or props such as large wooden blocks; dress up materials and balls and beanbags (small hand-held bags for throwing activities) for outdoor play.

Primary school children (5 to 12 years):

As for kindergarten aged children, five to 12 years old need to be physically active for several hours a day. Opportunities for movement with stop/start patterns of activity are closest to children's natural play. At this age children will be improving basic movement skills via hand, eye and hand, and foot coordination, balance, speed, and agility. Educators will ensure outdoor free play is available.

Children's Learning and Development

The Educators will ensure the educational program and written information will be:

- Based on an approved learning framework and implemented ensuring consistency from within the framework:

- The Early Years Learning Framework – Belonging, Being and Becoming (EYLF V2.0)
- Victorian early Years Learning and Development Framework
- My Time Our Place – Framework for School Age Children (MTOP V2.0)

Within these learning frameworks are principles, practices and learning outcomes, these areas guide the educators in their educational program and assist in the planning, delivering, and evaluating their programs.

- Follow the Education and Care Service National Regulations (current version July 1, 2023) Part 4.1 Educational Program the educational program and practice, Regulation 73 the educational program is to contribute to the following outcomes for children:
 - The child will have a strong sense of identity.
 - The child will be connected with and contribute to his or her world.
 - The child will have a strong sense of wellbeing.
 - The child will be a confident and involved learner.
 - The child will be an effective communicator.
- Prepared in a format that is of their own preference inclusive of written information, gather information and evidence using a variety of different methods about the children Diary notes, observations such as - narratives, anecdotal, photographic, artwork.
- Based on the development needs, interests, and experiences of each child, including considering the individual needs of the children when the program is planned on the interests and the development of the children.
- Developed and available to coordination unit staff, an authorised officer, Department of Education (DET) and/or parents/guardians
- Ability to clearly demonstrate – with supporting evidence their understanding and implementation of the programming cycle.
- Ensure the documentation relating to the program plan is maintained, up to date, contains information on individual children’s records and assessments.
- Meets the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2023 in relation to:

74 Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program

1. The approved provider of the education and care service must ensure that, for the purposes of the educational program, the following are documented—

(a) for a child preschool age or under—

(i) assessments of the child’s developmental needs, interests, experiences, and participation in the educational program; and

(ii) assessments of the child’s progress against the outcomes of the educational program; and

(b) for a child over preschool age, evaluations of the child’s wellbeing, development, and learning.

2. In preparing the documentation, the approved provider must—

(a) consider—

(i) the period of time that the child is being educated and cared for by the service; and

(ii) *how the documentation will be used by the educators at the service; and*

(b) *prepare the documentation in a way that is readily understandable by the educators at the service and the parents of the child.*

75 Information about educational program to be kept available

The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that—

(a) *information about the contents and operation of the educational program for the service is displayed at the education and care service premises at a place accessible to parents of children being educated and cared for by the service; and*

(b) *a copy of the educational program is available at the following places for inspection on request—*

(i) *in the case of a centre-based service, at the education and care service premises;*

(ii) *in the case of a family day care service, at each family day care residence or family day care venue.*

76 Information about educational program to be given to parents

The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that a parent of a child being educated and cared for by the service is provided with the following information on request—

(a) *information about the content and operation of the educational program so far as it relates to that child;*

(b) *information about the child's participation in the program;*

(c) *a copy of the documents kept under regulation 74 in respect of the child.*

The Educators will ensure the planning and preparation of educational program and written information will be inclusive for each child by:

- Gathering information from the child's family.
- Completing observations on the child to determine his or her interests and skill levels.
- Ensure planning relating to activities/routines need to reflect the observations (interpreting what did you see and how this can be extended)
- The activities are to be put into actions as per the plan and where spontaneous events occur, these need to be recorded.
- Evaluations of activities/routines as per the plan – indicating “where to next?”
- Ensuring information about the child's participation within the program is acceptable for families.
- Ensure families are given information on a regular basis about their child and their learning progression.
- Ensure realistic/age-appropriate goals are planned throughout the educational program based on observations of the individual needs and interests of the children.

Outdoor Play:

Outdoor spaces help children experience their environment and connect with nature, energy release, refresh their lungs and mind. There is never a time where the weather is not appropriate to go outdoors even if it is to experience the rain, snow, mud, puddles etc. for a few short moments.

- Outdoor play should be part of the everyday program for children.
- Appropriate clothing needs to be considered when planning the outdoor curriculum Raincoats, woolly hats, gumboots, sunhats etc. are to be considered as part of program preparation for before children venture outdoors to engage in play.
- Many indoor experiences can be taken outdoors e.g., story reading on blankets, morning tea/lunch, block play, painting, drawing etc.

The National Early Years Learning Framework; Belonging, Being and Becoming v2.0, the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework and My Time My Place Framework for School Age Children v2.0 should both be referred to on a regular basis for linking curriculum and reflection.

Service and Coordinators will:

- Make sure that an appropriate educational program based on the approved learning frameworks provided to the children.
- Make sure the educational program is displayed and is both visible and accessible for parents and families.
- Make sure Our Village Family Day Care Educators prepare and/or implement a program that reflects the service philosophy.
- Make sure there is a balance of indoor and outdoor experiences – including blocks of time for uninterrupted child-initiated play.
- Support the educators in the promotion of children’s physical activity by incorporating activities that support gross motor development as well as fundamental movement skills through a range of intentional and spontaneous active play teaching practices.
- Assist the educators in supporting as well as also support the families using positive, respectful, and reciprocal relationships – ensuring regular communication.
- Assist and support the educators when collaborating with specialist support agencies (when required) to ensure inclusion of any child with an additional need.
- Coordinators can assist with ideas for planning style and resources.

Educational Leader will:

- Lead the development and implementation of the educational program including the assessment process and planning cycle within the service.
- Share their skills and knowledge to mentor and support the educators in understanding educational program and practice.
- Collaboratively work with both the coordinators and educators in the researching, development, and implementation of the educational program.

Educators will:

- Use opportunities during child-initiated play and during routines to provide “intentional teaching” i.e., child is sorting pegs, asks the child about the colours or how many there are?
- Position themselves at the child’s level wherever possible when communicating/playing.
- Use behaviour guidance strategies that encourage positive interactions.
- Listen and speak respectfully to children and allow time for responses.
- Create an atmosphere that is conducive to being relaxed and happy so that play is fun and fulfilling.

- Gather information from the families when the child starts at the service regarding needs, interests, and family backgrounds of the child.
- Ensure confidentiality when talking to families.
- Ensure a welcoming environment is created where families are welcome to participate within the program in turn able to contribute to their child’s learning and development.
- Ensure communicate with families on regular basis about their child’s progress and encourage feedback.
- Encourage and include all the children to be active every day, especially outdoors and limit the children’s sedentary time.
- Provide play environments that are positive, safe, and supervised.
- Support and encourage the children’s activity efforts by focusing on the process, not the product as well as respond to ideas and play and use intentional teaching to scaffold and extend each child's learning.
- Ensure children are wearing appropriate clothing to allow for ease of movement when being active.
- Ensure high expectations for all children, viewing each child as capable and competent learners.
- Collaborate with the educational leader when looking for curriculum advice and direction.
- Participate in ongoing critical reflection and thinking when reviewing and evaluating all areas of the educational program and their practices.
- Include time to offer activities that allow for structured and unstructured learning times enabling the opportunity to cater for individual needs and interests age appropriately.
- Ensure equipment and resources reflect cultural diversity and families’ values of the community.
- Scaffold the children; s learning and understanding intentionally.
- Use spontoons teachable moments to extend learning and further extend critical think skills through provocations.

REFERENCES:

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations, \(current version July 1, 2023\) Part 4.1 Educational Program and Practice](#)
- www.education.vic.gov.au
- www.raisingchildren.net
- www.ichild.com
- [ACECQA](#)
- <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-law-regulations/approved-learning-frameworks>
- [The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia 2009, Belonging, Being and Becoming](#)
- [Victorian Early Years Leaning and Development Framework 2009](#)
- [My Time Our Place Framework for School Age Children](#)
- [Transition: A Positive Start to School 2009, Every Child Every Opportunity](#)

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES/ WORK INSTRUCTIONS:

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- SCCH Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure
- SCCH Client Empowerment Policy and Procedure
- Monitoring, Support and Supervision of FDC Educators Work Instruction
- Our Village Family Childcare Playgroups Work Instructions

VERSION CONTROL AND LEGISLATION:

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