

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM POLICY

Research accentuates that quality educational programs significantly influence children’s development in all areas. Highland Grove Preschool provides a rich and engaging learning program, where experiences and environments encourage the children to feel a sense of control over their actions, be curious and investigate, and explore their understanding of themselves, others, and the world around them. Our educators provide a supportive learning environment and program, gaining inspiration from the children and families.

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, 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 coordinators 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.
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EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
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
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
254	Declared approved learning frameworks

PURPOSE

We aim to enhance children’s learning and development through the pedagogical practices of educators in a positive learning environment through which the five learning outcomes from the *Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)* are supported and promoted. Educators will gather and interpret information about children as individuals to inform the preparation of the environment, and implement experiences that are engaging and meaningful, supporting children’s holistic development.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, and management of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the National Law and National Regulations, approved services are required to base their educational program on the approved learning framework, *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia- Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)*: <https://www.education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework-0>. Highland Grove’s program focuses on addressing the developmental needs, interests, and previous experiences of each child, while considering the individual differences of each child.

Our Service is committed to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)

The EYLF includes principles, practices and learning outcomes that guide educational leaders and educators in their curriculum decision making, and assist them in planning, delivering and evaluating quality programs in early childhood settings.

In compliance with the Early Years Learning Framework and National Regulations, our program contributes to the following 5 learning Outcomes for each child:

- 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, and
- The child will be an effective communicator.

Our Service also supports the Early Years Learning Framework through the following:

- Each child's learning is based on their interests and strengths and guided by educators.
- Educators work in collaboration with families to provide relevant learning experiences for each child, based on their interests and family experiences.
- Every child is equally valued. Their achievements and learning is celebrated.
- Educators observe and record the strengths and learning of each child.
- Educators work closely with children and families to produce ideas for the curriculum.
- EYLF Learning Outcomes are captured twice per year in Child Profiles and regularly through observations.
- The curriculum will be constructed based on the children's interests, educators extending children's interests, spontaneous experiences, and family contribution.
- Where appropriate, the service will liaise with external agencies and support persons to best educate and care for children with additional needs.
- Each child's play, learning and development is the foundation of their individual Portfolio.
- The curriculum will be evaluated and reflected upon continuously by educators.

MANAGEMENT / NOMINATED SUPERVISOR / RESPONSIBLE PERSON/ EDUCATIONAL LEADER WILL:

- ensure that a suitable program based on a the EYLF is delivered to all children
- collaborate with educators and provide curriculum direction and guidance
- ensure all educators work as a team in preparing and/or implementing the curriculum which adheres to the service philosophy
- ensure modifications are made in the environment for children with special needs. Management will make appropriate, professional referrals where necessary with family permission.
- ensure a conscious balance between indoor and outdoor experiences is planned for with large blocks of unstructured time for uninterrupted child-initiated play
- promote children's physical activity by supporting the development of their gross motor skills and fostering the emergence and refinement of fundamental movement skills through a range of intentionally planned and spontaneous active play learning experiences
- ensure key physical activity recommendations from *Munch and Move* are embedded into our curriculum
- support families through positive, respectful and reciprocal relationships through regular communication
- ensure the educational program is displayed in a place that is accessible to parents and families
- ensure a copy of the program is available at all times
- ensure that planning time is provided to all Diploma and University-trained staff as is a requirement of the Modern Award.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- collaborate with the educational leader for curriculum direction and guidance
- implement an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluating children's learning which will underpin the educational program and involve educators in critically thinking.
- document children's experiences and their responses to the environment making children's learning visible to educators and families and promote shared learning and collaboration
- provide experiences that include both structured and unstructured learning times catering for children's individual needs and interests and, are age appropriate
- ensure materials and equipment reflect the cultural diversity and family values that exists in our society

- respond to children’s ideas and play and use intentional teaching to scaffold and extend each child’s learning
- provide experiences that actively promote and initiate the investigation of ideas, complex concepts and thinking, reasoning and hypothesising
- provide experiences that support and develop all developmental areas and curriculum areas including music, maths, and science
- plan and implement the intentional teaching of Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) to support the physical development of children of all ages
- gather information from families upon enrolment regarding the child’s needs, interests, and family backgrounds. This information is treated as confidential and allows educators to provide experiences that interest and extend children’s current development. We feel that it is important to develop a partnership between parents and Educators to ensure that consistency between home and Highland Grove occurs and that the best possible care and education is provided.
- ensure information about the child’s participation in the program is available for families
- ensure families receive a copy of children’s learning progress
- encourage communication with families about physical activity, gross motor, and fundamental movements skills development, which can then inform the centre’s program.
- explore ideas and theories using imagination and creative play
- allow large blocks of uninterrupted time to allow children to develop their ideas and play
- use the learning outcomes to guide planning for children’s learning
- intentionally scaffold children’s understanding and learning
- provide children with ongoing encouragement and positive reinforcement
- provide opportunities for children to be active and engaged daily through a balance of planned and spontaneous experiences within the indoor and outdoor environment
- make use of spontaneous ‘teachable moments’ to extend children’s learning
- respond to children’s displays of learning dispositions by commenting on them and providing encouragement and additional ideas
- view children as active participants and decision makers, working with each child’s unique qualities and abilities
- further extend critical thinking skills through provocations
- plan realistic curriculum goals for children based on observation and assessment of individual needs and interests
- seek opportunities within the routine for spontaneous play and experiences
- ensure that all children’s experiences are recognised and valued with equitable access to resources and opportunities to demonstrate their learning
- use a variety of methods to assist reflection on children’s experiences, thinking, and learning

- ensure critical reflection clearly exams all aspects of events and experiences from different perspectives, identifying children’s learning, spontaneous play, teaching strategies, and changes that may be needed in the environment
- assist children to develop daily habits, understanding, and skills that support health and wellbeing

Our Service aims to promote children’s participation in physical activity by:

- fostering children’s Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) including, running, galloping, hopping, jumping, leaping, side-sliding, skipping, overarm throwing, catching, striking a stationary ball, kicking, underarm throwing and stationary dribbling through role modelling skills
- providing active play experiences that encourage children to explore, be creative, and challenge their development
- providing space, time, and resources for children to revisit and practice FMS and engage in active play
- providing opportunities for educators to attend professional development to enhance their skills and knowledge about the importance of physical activity for children.
- providing positive instruction, role modelling, and advice to children as they develop and improve their FMS
- working in collaboration with families and professionals to provide active experiences that are inclusive of all children

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

- foster a positive self-concept
- develop and support social skills
- develop and support children’s cognitive skills such as the ability to think, reason, question, and experiment
- develop and support language development
- enhance physical development and skills
- support sound health, safety, personal hygiene, and nutritional practices
- support creative expression
- support respect for cultural diversity of staff and children

In NSW, our Service promotes and encourages the healthy development of children through the implementation of the Munch & Move Program (NSW Health initiative). This program supports the healthy development of children, birth to five years, by providing educators with the knowledge and skills to support physical activity, healthy eating and reduced screen time.

SOURCE

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Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

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