


# Policy

## Early Years Policy – Educational Program

<b>Date of Adoption</b>	November 2024		
<b>Adoption Method</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Council	<input type="checkbox"/> CEO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Director Community
<b>Director Signature</b>	Signed by:  <small>A4566C08D5B4450...</small>		<b>Date</b> 29-11-2024
<b>Responsible Officer and Unit</b>	Samantha Waymouth, Coordinator Early Years Services		
<b>Nominated Review Period</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Every 4 years	<input type="checkbox"/> Other ( <i>please specify</i> )
<b>Last Endorsement Date</b>	New		
<b>Next Endorsement Date</b>	November2025		

Macedon Ranges Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and waterways. Council recognises their living cultures and ongoing connection to Country and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. Council also acknowledges local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of Macedon Ranges for their ongoing contribution to the diverse culture of our community.

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## Purpose/Objective

This policy provides guidelines to ensure that the educational program at Council's Early Years Services is:

- based on an approved learning framework
- centred on child's learning, development, wellbeing and safety
- designed to take into account the individual differences of each child
- based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child.

## Values

Macedon Ranges Shire Council is committed to:

- supporting each child to achieve learning outcomes consistent with The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia and/or the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (refer to References)
- providing an educational program where children can learn through play and are supported to make decisions, problem-solve and build relationships with others
- creating an environment that supports, reflects and promotes equitable and inclusive behaviours and practices
- involving families in the development and review of educational program and practice

## Scope

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, families, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Council's Early Years Services, including during offsite excursions and learning experiences.

## Background/Reasons for Policy

The *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (National Law) requires services to deliver an educational program (curriculum) that is based on an approved learning framework. In Victoria, approved learning frameworks for the early childhood sector are Belonging, Being & Becoming - The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia<sup>1</sup>, the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework<sup>2</sup> and My Time Our Place - Framework for School Age Care in Australia<sup>3</sup>. The frameworks are underpinned by contemporary theory and research evidence and provide educators with a thorough understanding of the pedagogical approach to of early childhood curriculum in Australia.

Part 4.1 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* (National Regulations) outlines the operational requirements for the educational program and practice within services, including the requirements for documentation of assessments in relation to the educational program. There is no prescribed method in the National Law or National Regulations for documenting assessment of children's learning. Educators' daily practice and curriculum decision-making should be guided by an approved learning framework. An approved learning framework provides broad direction for educators to facilitate children's learning. Each service must determine a method that suits their individual circumstances. To meet the requirements of the National Regulations, the assessment must include an analysis of each child's learning. Collecting this information enables educators to plan effectively for each child's learning and development. It can also be used by educators to stimulate reflection on their own values, beliefs and teaching practices, and to communicate about children's learning with children and their families.

The National Regulations require the appointment of an educational leader to lead and support the development and implementation of the educational program (or curriculum) at the service (*Regulation 118*). This person will have suitable qualifications and experience, as well as a thorough understanding of The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia and/or the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, enabling them to guide other educators in planning and reflection, and to mentor colleagues in implementation practices<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/EYLF-2022-V2.0.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/edcare/veylframework.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/MTOP-V2.0.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-01/NQF-Resource-02-Guide-to-ECS-Law-Regs.pdf> p85

The aim of Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice of the National Quality Standard<sup>5</sup> is to ensure that the educational program and practice is stimulating and engaging and enhances children's learning and development.

## Gender Impact Assessment

In accordance with the Gender Equality Act 2020, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in relation to the subject matter of this policy.

## Definitions

Term	Definition
Approved learning framework	<p>A guide which provides a vision for learning, pedagogical principles, practices and general goals or outcomes for children's learning and how they might be attained. It provides a scaffold to assist educators to develop their own, more detailed curriculum relevant to their setting and the children and families attending. The following are approved learning frameworks for use in Victoria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u><a href="#">Belonging, Being &amp; Becoming - The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia</a></u></li> <li>● <u><a href="#">Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework</a></u></li> <li>● <u><a href="#">My Time Our Place - Framework for School Age Care in Australia</a></u></li> </ul>
Critical reflection	<p>A meaning-making process that assists in informing future practice in ways that demonstrate an understanding of each child's learning, development and wellbeing and implications for equity and social justice. It involves examining and analysing events, experiences and practices from a range of perspectives to inform future planning and decision-making.</p>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>

<p>Educational program</p>	<p>A program referred to in Section 168 of the National Law. An educational program is to contribute to the following outcomes for each child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● the child will have a strong sense of identity;</li> <li>● the child will be connected with and contribute to his or her world;</li> <li>● the child will have a strong sense of wellbeing;</li> <li>● the child will be a confident and involved learner;</li> <li>● the child will be an effective communicator.</li> </ul>
<p>Curriculum</p>	<p>In the early childhood setting, curriculum includes all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children’s learning, development and wellbeing.</p>
<p>Each child</p>	<p>A phrase used in the National Quality Standard when an individualised approach is warranted, and educators are required to modify their response to meet the needs of an individual child. An example is ‘each child’s current knowledge, ideas, culture and interests provide the foundation for the program’.</p>
<p>Educational leader</p>	<p>The approved provider of an education and care service must designate, in writing, a suitably qualified and experienced educator, co-ordinator or other individual to lead the development and implementation of educational programs at the service (<i>Regulation 118</i>). This person should have a thorough understanding of the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (or other approved learning framework), be able to guide other educators in their planning and reflection, and mentor colleagues in the implementation of their practice.</p>

Learning	The process of gaining knowledge, skills and dispositions. From birth children naturally use exploration to expand their intellectual, physical, social, emotional and creative capacities. Life-long learning is acknowledged as a self-motivated process that extends intellectual, vocational and personal horizons which begins in early childhood and is continued throughout life.
Learning framework	Refer to 'approved learning framework' above.
Learning outcome	A skill, knowledge or disposition that educators can actively promote in early childhood settings, in collaboration with children and families.

## References

- > Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/EYLF-2022-V2.0.pdf>
- > Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-01/NQF-Resource-02-Guide-to-ECS-Law-Regs.pdf>
- > National Quality Standard: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>
- > Marrung – Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026: [https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/aboriginal/Marrung\\_Aboriginal\\_Education\\_Plan\\_2016-2026.pdf](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/aboriginal/Marrung_Aboriginal_Education_Plan_2016-2026.pdf)
- > My Time Our Place, Framework for School Age Care in Australia: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/MTOP-V2.0.pdf>
- > Early Childhood Australia Learning Hub: <https://learninghub.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/>
- > Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework – Resources for Professionals: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-law-regulations/approved-learning-frameworks>

## Related Policies

- > Early Years Policy - Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- > Employee Code of Conduct (Council)
  
- > Early Years - Inclusion and Equity
- > Early Years - Interactions with Children
- > Early Years - Nutrition, Oral Health and Active Play
- > Early Years Policy - Road Safety Education and Safe Transport
- > Early Years Policy - Sun Protection
- > Early Years Policy - Supervision of Children
- > Early Years Policy - Water Safety

## Related Legislation

- > *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- > *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- > *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice*
  - *Standard 1.1: The educational program enhances each child's learning and development*
  - *Standard 1.2: Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development*
  - *Standard 1.3: Educators and co-ordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child*

## Responsibilities



Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
<p>Ensuring that the educational program is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>based on an approved learning framework (refer to Definitions);</li> <li>delivered in a manner that accords with the approved learning framework;</li> <li>based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child;</li> <li>is designed to take into account the individual differences of each child</li> </ul> <p><i>(National Law: Section 168)</i></p>	R	R	✓		✓
<p>Ensuring the educational program contributes to each child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>developing a strong sense of identity</li> <li>being connected with, and contributing to, their world</li> <li>having a strong sense of wellbeing</li> <li>being a confident and involved learner</li> <li>being an effective communicator</li> </ul> <p><i>(Regulation 73)</i></p>	R	✓	✓		✓
<p>Designating a suitably qualified and experienced educational leader to direct</p>	R	✓			

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
the development and implementation of educational programs at the service ( <i>Regulation 118</i> )					
Ensuring that the service’s philosophy guides educational program and practice	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that assessments of each child’s learning, development, needs, interests, experiences and participation in the educational program are documented ( <i>Regulation 74(1)(a)(i)</i> )	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that assessments of the child’s progress against the outcomes of the educational program are documented ( <i>Regulation 74(1)(a)(ii)</i> )	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring documentation of assessments includes reflection on the period of time the child is at the service, and how documented information will be used by educators at the service ( <i>Regulation 74(2)(a)(i)&amp;(ii)</i> )	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring documentation is written in plain language and is easy to understand by both educators and families ( <i>Regulation 74(2)(b)</i> )	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that there is a record of learning and development for each child, and that it is updated and maintained on an ongoing basis	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring a copy of the educational program is displayed at the service and accessible to families ( <i>Regulation 75</i> )	R	✓	✓		✓

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
Ensuring that families are provided with information about the content and implementation of the educational program, their child’s participation in the program and documentation relating to assessments or evaluations of their child ( <i>Regulation 76</i> )	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring regular communication is established between the service and families, and they are informed about their child's learning, development and progress	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Undertaking critical reflection on children’s learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation		✓	✓		✓
Developing and evaluating the educational program in collaboration with the nominated supervisor, educators, children and families		✓	✓	✓	✓

## Evaluation

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice

- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy, including parents/guardians, at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (*Regulation 172 (2)*).

## Attachments

- Attachment 1 - Educational Leader appointment form (D19-44076)
- Attachment 2 - Celebrations and Events Procedure (D24-3245)