EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM POLICY

Research accentuates that quality programs significantly influences children's growth and development. We have the opportunity to construct a supportive learning environment and program, with inspirations from the children and families. This contribution can encourage children to feel a sense of control over their actions, interactions, to explore, be curious and test out their understanding of themselves others and the world around them.

In school age education and care services, the educational program supports learning through play and leisure. Based on the nationally approved learning framework, My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care (MTOP), the educational program '*includes all the spontaneous and planned experiences for children at the Service designed to support wellbeing and facilitate learning. It includes all the interactions, experiences, routines and events*' (MTOP, p.42).

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, and 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 co-ordinators 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.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND 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
274A	Programs for children over preschool age
289A	Programs for children over preschool age
298A	Programs for children over preschool age

RELATED POLICIES

Additional Needs Policy	Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy
Behaviour Guidance Policy	Multi-Cultural Policy
Celebrations Policy	Photograph Policy
Code of Conduct Policy	Privacy and Security Policy
Cyber Safety Policy	Respect for Children Policy
Excursion Policy	Supervision Policy
Family Communication Policy	Record Keeping and Retention Policy

PURPOSE

To enhance children's learning and development through the pedagogical practices of educators and families in a positive learning environment which is promoted across the five learning outcomes from *My*

Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care in Australia. The program will nurture the development of life skills and complement children's experiences, opportunities and relationships at school, at home and in the community.

SCOPE

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

IMPLEMENTATION

The National Quality Framework focuses on outcomes for all children. It requires Out of School Hours Care services to deliver a tailored program catering to the children's age, skill, interests and abilities through a variety of challenging and recreational activities. Developing an educational program involves observing, gathering and interpreting information about children to inform the preparation of environments and experiences that engage them and are meaningful for them. It also involves reflecting on and documenting children's experiences and learning.

Under the National Law and National Regulations, approved services are required to base their educational program on an approved learning framework. The program should focus on addressing the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, while taking into account the individual differences of each child.

The national approved learning framework which outlines practices that support and promote children's learning is *My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia ('Framework for School Age Care').* The aim of the Framework for School Age Care is to extend and enrich the wellbeing and development of school age children in education and care settings. It acknowledges time and place as children engage in a range of play and leisure experiences that allow them to feel happy, safe and relaxed; interact with friends and practice social skills; solve problems; try new activities; and learn life skills. This Framework for School Age Care is strongly linked to the Early Years Learning Framework and extends the principles, practices and outcomes to accommodate the contexts and age range of the children and young people who attend school age care settings. Further it supports Goal 2 of the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians that all young Australians become:

- successful learners
- confident and creative individuals and
- active and informed citizens.
- (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009, p.5).

THERE ARE ALSO JURISDICTION-SPECIFIC APPROVED LEARNING FRAMEWORKS, WHICH INCLUDE:

- Victoria: Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
  https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/earlyyears/veyldf/Pages/Index.aspx

- Western Australia: Pre-primary to Year 10 Western Australian curriculum
  https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/teaching/curriculum-browser

OUR SERVICE IS COMMITTED TO MY TIME, OUR PLACE: FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL AGE CARE IN AUSTRALIA (MTOP)

- Each child's learning will be based on their interests, strengths, and capabilities, and guide educators to ensure a range of experiences across all outcomes are provided.
- Educators will work in collaboration with families to provide relevant learning experiences for each child, based on their interests and family experiences.
- Every child will be equally valued. Their efforts, achievements and learning, and those of others will be celebrated.
- Educators will observe and record children's engagement with learning life skills and engagement with learning.
- Educators will document and evaluate children's wellbeing, development, and learning.
- Educators will work closely with children and families to produce ideas for the curriculum and leisure activities.
- Learning Outcomes will be linked to the curriculum during and after each child's learning has occurred.
- The curriculum will be constructed on the children's interests; educators will build upon and extend on children's interests, spontaneous experiences and family contributions.
- Educators will assess, anticipate, and extend children's ideas.
- Where appropriate, the Service will liaise with external agencies and support persons to best educate and care for children with additional needs.
- Educators will use reflection and documentation to inform and evaluate programs and to support children in achieving learning outcomes.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER WILL ENSURE:

- the education leader selected is supported to lead the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle within the service

- the educational leader has the skills, knowledge and attributes to mentor and support educator's understanding of educational programming and practice
- the staff record includes the name of the person designated as the educational leader

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

- ensure that a suitable program based on an approved learning framework 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 based on the Service's philosophy
- ensure the program is inclusive of all children. Management will make appropriate, professional referrals where necessary with family permission
- communicate with families on a regular basis
- ensure each child is acknowledged for their uniqueness in a positive way
- support children's efforts and ideas, assisting and encouraging as appropriate
- be consistently aware of and responsive to children who may require additional support, assistance or attention, noticing and listening carefully to children's concerns and discussing diverse perspectives on issues of inclusion and exclusion and fair and unfair behaviour
- 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

EDUCATORS WILL:

- collaborate with children to influence the program in response to their own strengths, ideas, abilities and interests
- provide play and leisure opportunities that are meaningful to children and support their wellbeing, learning and development
- implement a planning cycle that takes into account the unique nature of school age care
- plan, document and evaluate children's learning which will underpin the educational program
- ensure the educational program is evidence based and built on information including evaluations, observations and parent feedback/suggestions
- document children's wellbeing and learning, utilising contemporary theories and research concerning children's play, leisure, and learning, and make this visible to children, educators and families
- promote shared learning and collaboration

- provide unstructured experiences that take into account that school age children have had a structured and busy day at school
- ensure each child's participation and engagement in the program
- ensure materials and equipment reflect the cultural diversity 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, exploration, prediction, and hypothesizing
- gather information from families upon enrolment regarding the child's needs, interest and family backgrounds. This information is treated as confidential and allows educators to provide experiences that interest and extend children's current development and learning. We feel that it is important to develop a partnership between parents and educators to ensure that consistency between home and the Service occurs and that the best possible care is provided.
- make sure information about the child's participation in the program is available for families
- ensure documentation includes evaluations of children's wellbeing, development and learning
- support the development of dispositions such as confidence, curiosity, persistence, imagination, and creativity
- respond to children's displays of learning dispositions by positively commenting on them and providing encouragement and additional ideas
- use the learning outcomes to guide their planning for children's learning
- intentionally scaffold children's understanding and learning
- make use of spontaneous 'teachable moments' to extend children's learning
- further extend critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills through provocations
- plan realistic curriculum goals for children considering the period of time the child is being educated and cared for by the service
- ensure documentation and evaluations are readily understood by parents

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

- Foster positive self-concept
- Foster high-level thinking skills
- Develop social skills
- Encourage children to reason, question and experiment
- Support language development

- Enhance physical development and skills

- Foster independence and initiative

- Encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety and nutritional practices

- Encourage creative expression

- Respect cultural diversity of staff and children

- Respect gender diversity

Jurisdiction specifications for each state

Services in South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia are required to document evaluations of children's wellbeing, development and learning. Documentation collected should be considered based on the time that the child is being educated and cared for by the Service. Quality of documentation and how this is used to enhance children's learning and development should be considered. Documentation must demonstrate analysis of children's learning to meet the requirements of the National Regulations.

Examples of documentation used by Educators may include:

- Learning stories or narratives

- photographs with captions

- observations or reviews

- journals

- mind maps and surveys

Services in Northern Territory, New South Wales and Queensland are not required to keep documentation of individual evaluations of school aged children.

They must ensure that evidence about the development of the program is documented.

Reflection of the program should include how and why the education program has been developed.

SOURCE

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Victoria State Government Education and Training *Guide to Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Provision* (2017)

https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/management/oshcprovisionguide.pdf

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	JANUARY 2021	NEXT REVIEW DATE	JANUARY 2022
MODIFICATIONS	• additional information and regulations re: educational leader • minor editing • sources and links checked for currency and edited where required		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
JANUARY 2020	• edits and modifications to content • links to learning frameworks added • inclusion of specific state and territory jurisdiction regarding evaluation information • sources checked for currency and alphabetised • additional sources		JANUARY 2021
JANUARY 2018	• minor modifications made to Education and Care Services National Regulations section • related policy section added • statements added to support operational delivery		JANUARY 2019