

Warradale Community Children's Centre acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land we live on today and we pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People past, present and emerging.



## Additional Needs Policy

### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 1: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE		
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.

  

QUALITY AREA 3: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT		
3.1	Design	The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.
3.1.1	Fit for purpose	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
3.2.1	Inclusive environment	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
3.2.2	Resources support play-based learning	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.

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**QUALITY AREA 5 RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN**

5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.

**QUALITY AREA 6 COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES**

6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
6.2.2	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.

**EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS**

155	Interactions with children
156	Relationships in groups
157	Access for parents

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## AIM

Warradale Community Children's Centre will be responsible for each child, irrespective of their additional needs and abilities, with a supportive and inclusive environment that allows each child to fully participate in its education and care at the service.

Supporting children with additional needs requires educators to extend upon the strategies they already use in providing quality education and care for children. It is imperative for educators to develop a comprehensive understanding of each child's interests and abilities and implement an inclusive and equitable learning environment that supports their individual needs.

Inclusion is stipulated in the Early Years Learning Framework as 'taking into account all children's, social, cultural and linguistic diversity (including learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographical location) in curriculum decision making processes.' *Belonging, Being and Becoming* (2009) p. 45.

Our Service will work in partnership with families and other professionals to ensure specific consideration and adaptations allow children with additional needs access and participation and achieve positive learning outcomes.

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## Implementation

We understand that additional needs may be temporary or permanent and ascend from diverse origins, which require different responses. Supporting children with additional needs enables them to participate and feel included; this also helps promote their strengths and may reduce their risk of developing mental health difficulties. Strategies for supporting children with additional needs can diverge significantly, because every child is unique. Educators will remain encouraging, unprejudiced and authentic, ensuring that all children are treated equally and fairly and have the opportunity to grow and develop to their individual potential.

## Scope

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Warradale Community Children's Centres

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In accordance with The National Quality Standard, our centres positively respond to, and welcomes children with additional needs who -

- Are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders .
- Are recent arrivals in Australia.
- Have a culturally and linguistically diverse background.
- Live in isolated geographic locations.
- Are experiencing difficult family circumstances or stress.
- Are at risk of abuse or neglect .
- Are experiencing language and communication difficulties.
- Have a diagnosed disability—physical, sensory, intellectual or autism spectrum disorder.
- Have a medical or health condition.
- Demonstrate challenging behaviours and behavioural or psychological disorders.
- Have developmental delays.
- Have learning difficulties.
- Are gifted or have special talents.
- Have other extra support needs.

We understand that additional needs may be temporary or permanent and arise from diverse origins, which require different responses. Supporting children with additional needs enables them to participate and feel included; this also helps promote their strengths and may reduce their risk of developing mental health difficulties. Strategies for supporting children with additional needs can diverge significantly, because every child is unique.

#### **Leadership will ensure:**

- That the indoor and outdoor environment and equipment is designed or adapted to ensure access and participation for all children to support the inclusion of children with additional needs.
- The program and curriculum are inclusive and meet the individual requirements of children with additional needs.
- The Centre works with external professionals and families to ensure the educational program and learning environment is suited to each child with additional needs and children and families from culturally diverse backgrounds. We will keep a copy of any specific plans or instructions provided by external resource providers and professionals who work with children with additional needs.

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- Children's sensorial sensitivities to pressure, texture, smell, noise or visual expectation of the environment or colour will be considered within the environment.
- Children are encouraged to feel safe and secure during their education and care at Warradale Community Children's Centre by developing trusting relationships with educators, other children and the community.
- Families are encouraged to meet with the educators who will be working with the child, to converse and understand the child's needs. This will ensure that suitable resources and support provided to both the family and the child is appropriate.
- Educators are supported through professional development and networking with professional agencies, to confirm educators are meeting the needs of each child with additional needs.
- Assistance, training and where possible, financial funding is sought from inclusive support agencies to promote the development of skills in children with identified additional needs.
- That confidentiality for children and families is maintained.
- Apply for Inclusion Support either Time Limited Funding or Inclusion Support Funding for a year depending on the needs of the child.
- That trusting relationships with educators, other children and the community are maintained.

#### **Educators will:**

- Treat children equally and fairly regardless of perceived dissimilarities.
- Create an inclusive program, which is adaptable and supportive of all children.
- Advocate for children's rights.
- Create a flexible environment, which can be adapted to each child's needs within the service and can support the inclusion of children with additional needs.
- Implement inclusive programming experiences, encouraging children to explore and participate.
- Listen carefully to children's concerns and discuss diverse perspectives on issues of inclusion and exclusion and fair and unfair behaviour.
- Work with other professionals who play a role in supporting the child's development.
- Seek specific professional intervention and training in order to meet the individual child's needs.
- Develop an Inclusion Support Plan (ISP) for each child that will be kept on file at the service and shared with families, the child's medical practitioners and/or professional support services.

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- Act as role models by displaying appropriate behaviour and language, being consistently aware of and responsive to children who may require additional support, attention or assistance.
- Discuss a wide range of emotions, thoughts and views, constructively, with the children within a supportive environment.
- Talk to children about similarities, differences and acceptance.
- Not judge or compare one child's development with another.
- Work with families to meet children's developmental needs, building strengths and capabilities.
- Work collaboratively with health professionals and families together, to discuss and plans to support children.
- The Inclusion Support person will be supporting the child with Additional needs in small group experiences and support the room program to be as inclusive as possible.
- Providing opportunities for all children to play and learn together, promoting cooperative, caring and pro social behaviours.

### **Inclusion Support Program (ISP)**

To assist in the provision of an inclusive environment for children with additional needs, our Service may apply for additional support through the Inclusion Support Program (ISP) if the eligibility requirements are met. The Nominated Supervisors and educators will refer to the Inclusion Support Guidelines and consult with families to submit an application.

The objectives of the Inclusion Support Program include:

- supporting Early Childhood Education and Care Services to increase their capacity and capability to provide quality inclusive practices for all children
- to address access and participation barriers
- support the inclusion of children with additional needs
- provide parents or carers of children with additional needs with access to appropriate ECEC services (See: Guide to Strategic Inclusion Plan)

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## Enhanced transition to school planning

Our Service will promote and support enhanced transition to school programs for children with additional needs by:

- starting the planning for transition to school aged care early
- liaising with key people at the school and other support services to ensure key dates for applications for support are noted.
- sharing information about the child's strengths and completing Transition to School Statements
- supporting reciprocal visits to strengthen the transition to school for children and families.
- provide continuity of learning between our Service and school aged care.

## Families will:

- work collaboratively with our Service.
- share information about their child's specific needs- their interests, things they do well, strategies that are used at home to support their child, identify routines or situations that may cause physical or emotional challenges.
- provide accurate information about their child's additional needs including relevant reports, documentation, NDIS plans, details about support services and other allied professionals.
- help to identify possible barriers for inclusion and reasonable adjustments that may be required.
- consent to our Service accessing external professional support if required to assist educators manage the diagnosed, or undiagnosed additional needs of their child.
- collaborate with external professional support agencies and educators to implement plans to support inclusion.
- provide written consent for information about their child to be shared on the IS Portal if accessing support under the Inclusion Support Program
- adhere to our policies that should the safety of other children and staff be compromised enrolment may be suspended or terminated.

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## Source

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2009)

Belonging, Being and Becoming:

The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2014) Continuity of Learning: A resource to support effective transition to school and school aged care.

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2020)

Inclusion Support Program (ISP)

Early Childhood Australia (ECA), & Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA). (2012).

[http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/2014/06/ECA\\_Position\\_statement\\_Disability\\_Inclusion\\_web.pdf](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/2014/06/ECA_Position_statement_Disability_Inclusion_web.pdf)

Early Childhood Intervention Australia National Guidelines for Best Practice in Early Childhood Intervention Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011).

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017)

Raising Children Supporting gifted and talented learning

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/playlearning/gifted-talented-children/supporting-learning> Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

## Record of Policy Adoption and Amendment:

Version	Date	Details	Author	Next Review Date
1.0	May 2020	Policy developed	Trish Cook	July 2021
1.1	23 July 2023	Added about Inclusion Support	Poornima Radhakrishnan	23 July 2024



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## Additional Needs Procedure

Children with additional needs require support by using specialised strategies catering for their specific needs or circumstances. When planning for children with additional needs Educators are required to focus on their abilities and interests. It is essential that the program is flexible and allows children to engage in ways that are meaningful for them. Warradale Community Children's Centre wants children to develop to the best of their personal ability. We aim to promote and encourage this by:

- Gathering information provided by families and other professionals who are working with the child, including psychologists, early intervention specialists, social workers and speech or occupational therapists.
- Meeting with families to gain information about the strategies that support their child's learning in the home environment.
- Conducting specific observations on the individual child, which outlines their interests, strengths and needs.
- Acquainting educators with, and share knowledge about, the specific communication needs of each child. This will include verbal and non-verbal communication skills and cues. This may include a communication book, verbal daily information exchange, formal and informal meetings etc. Where applicable, this may include things such as sign language and/ or learning key words in the child's home language.
- Developing an Inclusion Support Plan (ISP) with families and support agencies, which is a living document and continuously evaluated by all parties involved.
- Accessing external professional support services for children with additional needs.
- Networking with the Director to ensure the needs of each child are met throughout their education and care at the service.
- Attending professional development workshops to enhance their understanding about the additional needs and how to meet the child's needs.
- Encouraging families to update the service with information throughout the year, promoting the continuity of learning for each child.
- Working with local schools to help children with additional needs transition. We are open to sharing information about the additional needs of children to promote continuity of learning.
- Remaining positive, unbiased and authentic at all times.