



PENNANT HILLS WAR MEMORIAL CHILDREN'S CENTRE

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PENNANT HILLS WAR MEMORIAL CHILDREN'S CENTRE (PHWMCC) EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE POLICY

Aim

We are committed to providing an educational program which enhances children's learning and development through a play-based approach. We aim to achieve this by observing and analysing information about children as individuals to inform the provision of the learning environment and implement play-based experiences that are engaging and meaningful. The Early Years Learning Framework is embedded in the development of the educational program. The educational program and practice will also be influenced by educators' knowledge of child development, theoretical perspectives, ongoing professional development and current best practice.

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

- Each child's learning will be based on their strengths, ideas, interests and needs and guided by educators.
- Educators will work in collaboration with families to provide relevant play-based learning experiences for each child, based on their interests and family experiences
- Every child will be equally valued. Their achievements & learning will be celebrated
- Educators will observe and record the strengths, ideas, interests, needs and learning of each child
- Educators will work closely with children and families to develop the curriculum. Curriculum is defined as "all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children's learning and development" (EYLF, p9)
- The five Learning Outcomes of the EYLF will support the development of the curriculum and the development of children's individual learning goals
- The play-based curriculum will be informed by children's interests/ideas, educators extending children's interests/ideas, intentional teaching, spontaneous experiences and family contributions
- Where appropriate, the Preschool will liaise with external agencies and support persons to best educate and care for children with diverse learning needs
- The play-based curriculum will build on and inform documentation of each child's each child's strengths, ideas, interests, needs and development
- The educational program and practice will be critically reflected upon continuously by educators

The Educational Program and Practice

The educational program and practice is influenced by our belief that building relationships with children and families is at the core of all that we do, where children, families and staff experience a strong sense of belonging and connection to our community; by valuing extended blocks of time for children's deep engagement and open ended play-based experiences to foster learning; by placing a high value on natural materials, incorporating beauty and aesthetics; by viewing the environment as the 'third teacher' with great potential to inspire children; and the importance of collaboration between educators and families to support children to reach their full potential.

The program will offer a range of play-based experiences and materials that aim to support the following learning goals:

- Developing positive self-concept
- Developing 'social competence' and the ability to interact with others with care, empathy and respect
- Encouraging children to develop critical thinking skills
- Encouraging children to develop their communication skills
- Enhancing children's physical development and skills
- Encouraging and supporting children to develop their understandings of being healthy and their emotional and physical wellbeing
- Encouraging children to develop their creativity and imagination
- Respecting diversity among children, families and staff
- Embedding an Indigenous perspective
- Developing a social conscience (e.g. awareness of local community and global issues such as environmental sustainability, homelessness, etc.)
- Supporting children's agency and the ability to make choices and decisions in their learning and play

Each class will develop their own daily routine which will provide a general flow of the day. It will be flexible based upon the needs of each individual class and on specific needs on any given day.

We believe that there is learning potential in all aspects of the preschool day. As such, the daily routine for each class will ensure that children have time to engage in learning experiences during:

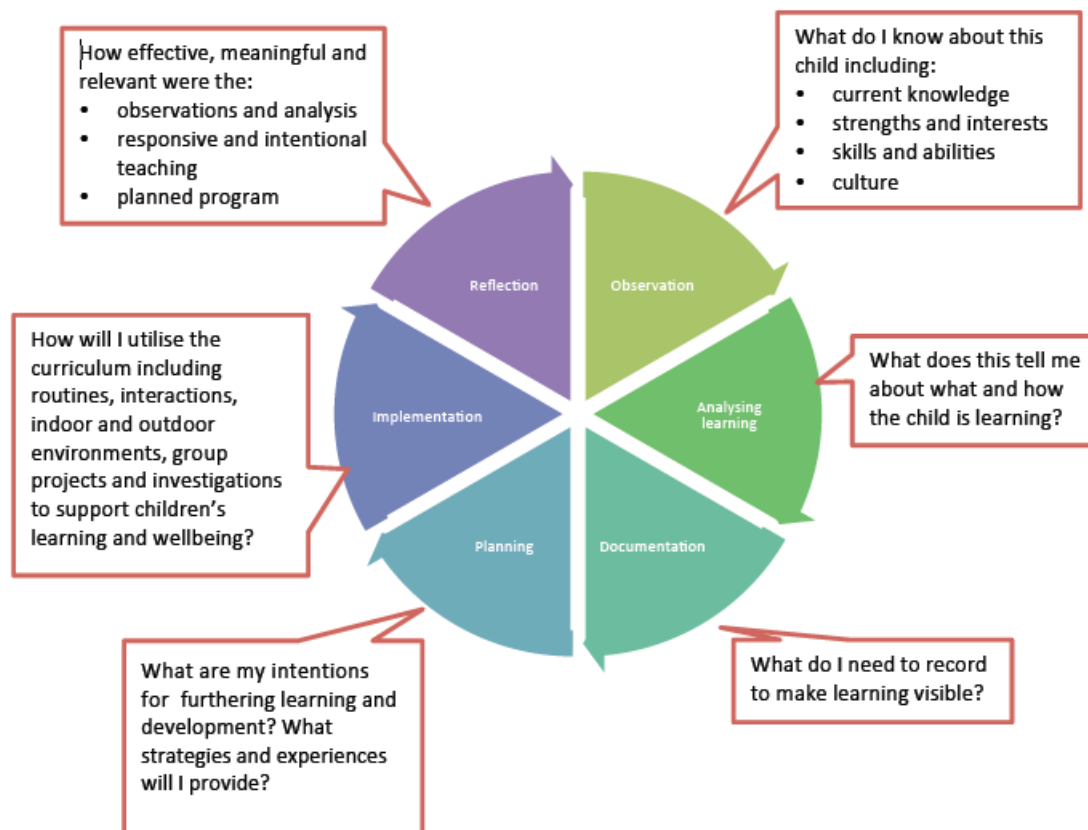
- Extended periods of play-based learning both outside and inside
- Routine and transition times
- Group times. Due to the diversity of learning needs of children, it may not be appropriate for all children to attend group times and these individual circumstances will be taken into consideration by educators

Documentation

As part of our commitment to providing a play-based educational program which enhances children's learning and development, educators observe and analyse information about what children know, can do and understand as part of an ongoing cycle of learning. These observations and evaluations inform the experiences and provisions we offer children to enhance their learning. By observing children, we aim to document 'the distance travelled' in children's learning and to celebrate both the 'giant leaps' and 'small steps' each child makes in their learning across time.

At our preschool, observations may include:

- Weekly class program, evaluation and critical reflections
- Individual
 - Jottings
 - Photos
 - Videos
 - Art samples
 - Language samples
 - Learning stories
 - Developmental summaries/ summative assessments
 - Transition to School Statements, and
 - Other forms of documentation



Guide to the National Quality Standard, p125

Roles and responsibilities

Approved Provider/ Nominated Supervisor

- Ensure that a suitable play-based program, grounded in the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), is delivered to all children
- Ensure all educators work as a team in preparing and implementing the play-based curriculum which is underpinned by PHWMCC Philosophy
- Ensure a conscious balance between indoor and outdoor experiences is planned for with large blocks of unstructured time for child initiated play and for children to practice and revisit learning experiences
- Ensure modifications are made in the environment for children with diverse learning needs. Early Childhood Teachers will make appropriate, professional referrals where necessary with family permission
- Support educators to be consistently aware of and responsive to children who may have diverse learning needs
- Ensure each child is acknowledged for their uniqueness in a positive way
- Gather information from families upon enrolment regarding the child's needs, interests and family backgrounds. This information is confidential and allows educators to provide play-based experiences that interest and extend children's current development. We believe that it is important to develop a partnership between parents and educators to ensure that consistency between home and PHWMCC occurs and that the best possible education and care is provided
- Ensure that educators communicate with families on a regular basis about the educational program and practice

Educational Leader

- Collaborate with educators and provide curriculum direction and guidance
- Support educators to effectively implement the cycle of planning to enhance play-based programs and practices
- Lead the development and implementation of an effective play-based educational program in the Preschool
- Ensure that children's learning and development are guided by the Learning Outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework and in line with NQS Quality Area 1

Early Childhood Educators

- Implement an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and critically reflecting upon children's learning and educator practice:
 - As part of a continuous improvement cycle
 - To support educators to focus on the rights of all children to become successful learners e.g. equity, social justice, inclusion, wellbeing, high quality experiences
 - To improve play-based learning experiences and outcomes for children
 - To respond thoughtfully and with integrity to complex situations and challenges
 - To make careful and well informed decisions and plans
 - To implement and evaluate changes to practices
 - To be accountable to families, colleagues and communities for the choices educators make about approaches and strategies
- Document children's experiences and their responses to the environment, making children's learning visible to children, educators and families
- Promote shared learning and collaboration, including group and individual learning within the curriculum
- Provide experiences that include spontaneous and intentional learning times catering for children's individual strengths, ideas, interests and needs
- Ensure materials and equipment reflect the diversity that exists in our society and community
- Ensure materials and equipment reflect our commitment to sustainability, are ethically sourced wherever possible, and place value upon the natural environment
- Respond to children's ideas and play and use intentional teaching to scaffold and extend each child's learning
- Intentionally scaffold children's understanding and learning by using a variety of teaching strategies such as acknowledging what children say and do, encouraging persistence and effort, giving specific feedback, modelling, demonstrating, creating or adding/reducing challenge as appropriate, asking questions to provoke thinking, giving assistance, peer teaching, providing open-ended materials, and being knowledgeable about when to provide explicit support and when to stand back and allow children to direct their own learning
- Notice and listen carefully to children's concerns and discuss diverse perspectives on issues of inclusion and exclusion and fair and unfair behaviour
- Provide play-based experiences that actively promote and initiate the investigation of ideas, complex concepts and thinking, reasoning and hypothesising
- Explore ideas and theories using imagination, creativity and play, during large blocks of uninterrupted time
- Use the EYLF Learning Outcomes to support their planning for children's learning
- 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 children's critical thinking skills through provocations
- Plan realistic learning goals for children based on observation and assessment of individual needs and interests
- Seek opportunities within the routine for spontaneous play
- 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 their reflection on children's experiences, thinking and learning
- Ensure critical reflection clearly examines 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
- Work in partnerships with families, recognising the important role families have as their child's first teachers and to support them in their parenting roles
- Engage families in professional conversations and communication about the curriculum and the assessment of learning for their children
- Ensure the educational program is available in an accessible location for families to view and understand

Families

- Openly and respectfully communicate with educators about their child's development, interests and family experiences which may influence learning at PHWMCC
- Be invited to contribute to the educational program to the extent that they feel comfortable
- Be invited to engage in communication with educators about their child's learning and development through a variety of means including, but not limited to, Enrolment Forms, conversations, Parent Teacher meetings, emails, phone conversations and documentation

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements, and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the preschool will review this policy every three years.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Preschools National Regulations, the preschool will ensure that families of children at the preschool are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the preschool.

Definitions

Regulatory Authority:	Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate
Approved Provider:	PHWMCC Management Committee
Nominated Supervisor:	Director of PHWMCC
Educational Leader:	an appropriately qualified and experienced educator, coordinator or other individual designated in writing by PHWMCC under regulation 118 to lead the develop and implementation of educational programs in the Preschool (<i>National Regulations</i>)
Responsible Person:	Nominated Supervisor or an Educator who has been placed in day-to-day charge of the Preschool
Early Childhood Educators:	Early Childhood Teachers and Child Care Educators

Related Legislation

Education and Care Preschools National Law and Regulations:

- Section 51(1)(b) Conditions on Preschool approval (educational and developmental needs of children)
- Section 168 Offence relating to required programs
- Section 323 Approved learning framework
- Regulation 73 Educational program
- Regulation 74 Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of the educational program
- Regulation 75 Information about the educational program to be kept available
- Regulation 76 Information about the educational program to be given to parents
- Regulation 155 Interactions with children
- Regulation 156 Relationships in groups
- Regulation 177(1)(a) Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by the approved provider – the documentation of children assessment or evaluations for delivery of the educational program as set out in Regulation 74

Related Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks

National Quality Standard

Standard/ Element	Concept	Descriptor
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, strength, 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	Educator 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.
1.3.2	Information for families	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.

Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF)

Code of Ethics Early Childhood Australia

UN Convention on The Rights of the Child

Sources

- Guide to the National Quality Standards 2020
- Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia 2009
- Educators Guide to Early Years Learning Framework for Australia 2010
- The Educational Leader Resource 2019
- Goodstart Educational Program and Practice Policy
- Trikki Kidz Educational Program Policy

Relevant Documents

- PHWMCC Mission Statement and Philosophy
- PHWMCC Excursion Policy
- PHWMCC Family Communication Policy
- PHWMCC Family Participation Policy
- PHWMCC The Indoor and Outdoor Environment Policy
- PHWMCC Interactions with Children Policy
- PHWMCC Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- PHWMCC Staff Professionalism Policy
- PHWMCC Staff Professional Development and Staff Meetings Policy
- PHWMCC Supervision of Children Policy
- PHWMCC Transition to School Policy
- PHWMCC Working Together Policy
- PHWMCC Interactions Between Children Procedure
- PHWMCC Privacy Collection Statement
- PHWMCC Enrolment Form

Policy Reviewed: Sept 2022

Next Review Date: Sept 2025