

1.1 Educational Program, learning and development

Applies to: All Koorana staff working in Preschools, families attending Koorana Preschools and visitors.

Purpose

1. To ensure a program is delivered based on the EYLF and compliant with Quality Area 1 as part of the National Quality Standard.
2. To ensure the children's learning, development and safety are the primary consideration in the provision of the program.
3. To foster a love of learning through the program, interactions and environment.
4. To provide a supported learning environment rich with opportunities and experiences.
5. To provide a program that is based on the latest research and trends in early childhood education.
6. To provide an appropriate school readiness program within our daily curriculum to enhance the learning and development of skills for children transitioning to school the following year.

Version: 2

Date approved: 22/8/2016

Next review date: 22/8/2018

Approved by: CEO

Policy context: This policy relates to

Standards or other external requirements

National Quality Standards – Quality Area 1

<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/Educational-program-and-practice>

Legislation or other requirements

Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010

<http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/2010/104>

Education and Care Services National Regulations [Regulations 73 – 76]

<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-regulations>

Contractual obligations

N/A

Resources	<p>The Early Years Learning Framework</p> <p>http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/educators_guide_to_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia.pdf</p> <p>Early Childhood Australia – Supporting Best Practice</p> <p>http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/every-child-magazine/every-child-index/every-child-vol-19-1-2013/pursuing-best-practice-take-drive-continuous-improvement/</p> <p>The Nest Action Agenda – A national plan for child and youth wellbeing, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth</p> <p>https://www.aracy.org.au/publications-resources/command/download_file/id/300/filename/The-Nest-action-agenda-2nd-edition-March-2014.pdf</p> <p>National Outcome Measures for Early Childhood Development – Phase 2, Australian Government (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare)</p> <p>http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=60129550049</p> <p>5 Year Strategic Plan 2012 – 2017, NSW Education and Communities</p> <p>https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/about-us/how-we-operate/strategies-and-plans/corporate-plans/fiveyrs-strategic-plan.pdf</p> <p>Australian Early Childhood Development Census</p> <p>https://www.aedc.gov.au/</p>
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Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	<p>1.2 Use of Electronic Media</p> <p>2.11 Guiding Children’s Behaviour</p> <p>2.13 Excursions</p> <p>3.1 Sustainability</p> <p>5.1 Inclusive Practices</p>
Forms, record keeping or other organisational documents	<p>Koorana Preschools Programming & Reflection Guidelines</p> <p>Koorana Preschools Programming/Reflection/Meeting Schedule</p>

Definitions

"Koorana" means Koorana Child and Family Services Incorporated.

"Parents" includes a legal guardian.

"Visitors" includes students, volunteers, visiting professionals, performers and contractors.

"Staff" is a Koorana staff member working in the Preschool, e.g. Educator, Administrator or Key Worker. This may also include other Koorana staff such as Case Managers, Early Linker, Therapists, Head Office Administrators, Home and Community Based Key Workers and Koorana Management when visiting or working in the Preschool.

"Program" is the activities and learning experiences the children are engaging in on a daily basis provided by the staff.

POLICY STATEMENT

Koorana is committed to providing excellence in curriculum development, programming and practice within our Preschools. The teams aim to provide a stimulating and engaging program that is designed to enhance children's learning and development within the context of the preschool setting and the cultural diversity of the families and the community.

Each Preschool has an Educational Leader who is suitably qualified, experienced in early childhood education and has accepted the responsibility of leading the educational program in writing.

The program, through the Daily Journal, will be on display in the Preschool for families to view as well as program and progress documentation. Portfolios will be available for families to view and take home at any time. Families will need to inform a Preschool Educator if they wish to take their child's portfolio home and will have to sign the portfolio out before taking it home and in when they return the portfolio to Preschool.

PRACTICES

The program

- Will acknowledge and reflect the individual and group needs of the children attending the Preschool.
- Will reflect children's strengths, capabilities, culture, interests and experiences.
- Will reflect the Principles, Practices and Learning Outcomes of the 'Early Years Learning Framework'.
- Will represent the environment.
- Will be in line with directions and expectations from government/agencies regarding learning and education.
- Will reflect the diversity of families and cultures within the local community.

The program in Koorana Preschools will be delivered through a Day Book that outlines and reflects on the children's daily experiences with linking as to why these experiences have been planned as well as

linking to the Early Years Learning Framework Learning Outcomes. Furthermore, the Day Book will outline the forward planning on future experiences, outline the learning that occurred during group times and give families the opportunities to provide feedback and have an input into programming.

Generally, the Day Book will be e-mailed to families, who wish to receive the Day Book this way, on a daily basis in a PDF format. Families can choose to decline receiving the Day Book via the enrolment form. When families receive the Day Book via e-mail, they are required to use the information received appropriately, ethically, confidentially and respect the privacy of children and their families, e.g. it is not appropriate to use pictures out of the Day Book and upload them to social media platforms such as Facebook or Instagram. The Day Book is for the child's family only.

To complement the Day Book, the Preschools will use daily "Program and Progress" documentation to ensure each child's learning is captured on a daily basis where their learning has not been captured through the Daily Journal or their portfolios.

In addition, parents have the opportunity to share their information through conversations with staff, e-mails, quarterly "Parent Information" sheets, annual "Getting to know your family" profile and annual Parent – Educator interview.

Furthermore, each child enrolled in Koorana Preschools has an individual portfolio where Educators document and evaluate each child's learning on a regular basis.

In addition to that children's learning will be evaluated through a midyear/end of year summary or "Transition to School Statement" for children going to school the following year.

The program in the Preschools will:

- Be of high quality.
- Be child centred.
- Be play based.
- Be based on children's interests and child led.
- Include intentional teaching.
- Achieve educational outcomes.
- Support each child's needs including formal and informal observations by staff.
- Reflect the philosophy and goals of the Preschool.
- Reflect Koorana's Vision, Mission and Principles.
- Reflect Koorana's Strategic Plan.
- Promote the dignity and rights of the child.
- Promote cultural diversity and social justice.
- Have flexibility.
- Prepare children for school.
- Be balanced in providing passive and active experiences.
- Involve critical reflection.

- Comply with regulatory standards and quality assurance principles.
- Be based on contemporary research and early childhood trends.

As part of the program and through daily experiences the children will be offered opportunities to:

- Play and explore both indoors and outdoors.
- Practise their growing autonomy and independence.
- Pursue interests.
- Learn appropriate social interactions.
- Practise positive, responsible behaviours.
- To learn about interdependence and mutual respect.
- Have freedom, choice and flexibility of experiences.

Furthermore, the teams' holistic approach to the program includes all aspects of the preschool:

- Daily routines.
- Physical environment, materials and equipment.
- Experiences and activities.
- Interactions and partnerships.

In order to provide a high quality educational program staff will:

- Be provided with professional development training opportunities and support.
- Be skilled and suitably qualified.
- Be provided with suitable and appropriate equipment and provisions to implement the program.
- Document and evaluate.
- Regularly review the program with adaptations to be made where required.
- Keep up to date on current research and practices.
- Be supported by their Preschool Leader and Koorana Management team.

Children in supported places

Children in supported places will have an individual program that has input from their family in addition to that of the Preschool staff and their Key Worker. The aim is for all children to develop holistically. This is done by developing and implementing an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)

- The Key Worker meets with the family in Term 1 to discuss their goals for the child.
- These goals are listed in the IFSP. A copy is placed in the child's file and another is given to the parent within two weeks of the meeting. The IFSP has an action plan for follow-up for both parents and Koorana staff.
- The IFSP is reviewed at the end of each term with the parents to ensure progress is being made and the goals are still relevant for the family.

Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

- The Koorana Team working specifically with the child develops the ILP. The ILP comprises strengths-based goals that ensure the child's skills in all areas continue to develop throughout the year.
- The child's ILP is reviewed every term and outcomes are listed in the child's end of year report.

School Readiness

A major component of a successful and high quality preschool program is preparing children for school.

Preparation for school or school readiness is not about learning to read or write; however, it is about supporting and preparing the children for learning and encouraging a love of learning. This is fostered throughout our daily programs.

Some of the key elements of the school readiness program are:

1. Incorporation of school based activities in our daily program including providing the children with opportunities to develop important self-help skills such as using lunch boxes, drink bottles etc.
2. Developing and building specific skills and competencies including:
 - Development of literacy and numeracy skills.
 - Group participation and respect.
 - Social skills, resilience, confidence and self-esteem.
 - Task processes and problem solving.
 - Creative/expressive skills and appreciation.
 - Music awareness- tone/pitch/rhythm/beat/tempo.
 - Physical development- fine/gross.
 - Development of positive attitudes towards self and others.
 - Listening, speaking and following directions.
3. Where possible staff will arrange to visit local schools with small groups of children. This will allow the children the opportunity to gain an insight into the school environment. Parents are to note that despite these visits, parents and children are still required to attend the formal Orientation Visits that are organised by your child's school as these provide you with information for your individual school.

When preparing children for school parents have a vital role to play. Parental support is important for children to gain confidence and develop the necessary skills to make school and learning successful.

Parents can help their child by exposing the child to many aspects of school life to build confidence such as:

- Going past the school regularly and talking with your child about the school.
- Encouraging your child to become self-sufficient at putting on and taking off his/her jumper, tying shoelaces.
- Helping your child to take responsibility for their belongings.

- Talking openly with your child about any concern he/she may have. Many children and parents are anxious about starting school. Show your child you are confident in them starting school.
- Read to your child every day! Let your child “read” their favourite book to you from memory. Talk with your child about the stories, the pictures, what they liked best in the story. Read familiar books often, as well as introducing new books to your child.
- Show to your child that you also enjoy reading.
- Use a range of writing materials, paints, textas, and pencils, draw pictures and write names, words, or symbols.
- Developing maths skills is easy at home. Ask your child to help cook: measure the ingredients, talk about size, shape colour, difference, patterns and sequence events.
- Taking your child to the school’s orientation visit. This allows your child to see the classrooms, toilets, playground and meet other children.