



ADDITIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Supporting children with additional needs requires educators to extend upon the strategies they already use in providing quality care for children and young people. It is imperative for educators to develop a comprehensive understanding of each child’s interests and abilities and implement a program and environment that is receptive to their needs and inclusion.

As the Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) Service offers flexible attendance options, and vacation care options, it is critical that the Service works in partnership with families and other professionals to ensure specific consideration and adaptations/adjustments allow children and young people with addition needs access and participation. The Service is committed to take into account children’s social and cultural diversity, including learning styles, abilities, and disabilities to achieve positive experiences for children in the setting.

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.
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
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures are to be followed

RELATED LEGISLATION

[Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)

POLICIES

Anti-Bias and Inclusion Policy Behaviour Management Policy Code of Conduct Policy Educational Program Policy Enrolment Policy	Interaction with Children, Family and Staff Policy Medical Conditions Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Respect for Children Policy
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PURPOSE

The Service understands and meets the obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) to support children and young people with disabilities and be responsive to each child, irrespective of their additional needs and abilities. The Service aims to provide a supportive and inclusive environment that sanctions each child to fully participate in its education and care at the Service. Educators will remain encouraging, unprejudiced and supportive, ensuring that all children and young people are treated equally and fairly and have the opportunity to grow and develop to their individual potential.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children and young people, families, staff, educators, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

DEFINITIONS

According to the [Inclusion Support Program Guidelines](#) (Australian Department of Education September 2023), there is no national definition of 'additional needs.' This term is used within the policy to describe children who may need or require specific considerations or adaptations to participate fully in an Education and Care service.

Additional needs may include children and young people who:

- have a disability or developmental delay- physical, sensory, intellectual, or autism spectrum disorder
- are presenting with challenging behaviours and/or behavioural or psychological disorders
- have a serious medical or health condition
- are presenting with trauma-related behaviours

Meeting the needs and requirements of:

- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children
- children from refugee or humanitarian backgrounds
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse background
- may also require specific considerations, such as cultural support, to ensure that these children are able to participate fully in ECEC services and experience positive outcomes

[source: Inclusion Support Program Guidelines. 2023. p. 6]



WHAT IS A DISABILITY

Disability is defined broadly in the DDA and does not rely on formal diagnosis of disability. Disability can be visible or non-visible. Disability in relation to the DDA includes:

physical; intellectual; psychiatric; sensory; neurological and learning disabilities as well as physical disfigurement.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Changes to a policy, practice, procedure, program or environment that enables a person with disability to access and participate in the service on the same basis as others. [ACECQA: The Disability Discrimination Act 2022].

The service understands that additional needs may be temporary or permanent with diverse origins, which require different responses. Supporting children and young people with additional needs enables them to have equitable access to resources and participation. This can lead to stronger skills in literacy and numeracy, social and emotional development and understanding of diversity. Strategies for supporting children and young people with additional needs can differ significantly because every child and young person is unique.

IMPLEMENTATION

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE:

- obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* are met
- obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)* are met
- all staff, educators, students and visitors have knowledge and adhere to this policy and understand and comply with the (DDA) including making reasonable adjustments to the program, practices and environment in collaboration with families and children and young people
- all new employees are provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction process
- support is provided to educators to make reasonable adjustments to enable children and young people with disability access and participate in the Service on the same basis as others



- completed enrolment forms are used to gather information about children and young peoples' additional needs and supports that may be required
- equitable access is provided to support children and young people with additional needs
- communication with families is consistent and supportive
- to develop effective relationships with school wellbeing leader and the Service to support the child
- they have a thorough understanding of the NDIS plan for each child or young person (if applicable) and assist to help achieve goals and build skills and independence
- they contact their local Inclusion Agency to access information and support about the Inclusion Support Program
- that any barriers preventing a child or young person's inclusion are identified and strategies to make improvements implemented
- they develop a *Strategic Inclusion Plan* and *Individual Support Plans* in collaboration with the Inclusion Agency which will identify any barriers preventing a child or young person's inclusion and implement strategies for improvement
- they seek assistance, training, and where possible, financial funding from inclusive support agencies to promote the development of skills in children with identified additional needs
- educators are meeting the needs of each individual child, by providing educators with targeted professional development and opportunities to network with professional agencies
- they access the Inclusion Support Portal (IS Portal) through PRODA
- parents/guardians provide written consent for information about their child to be shared with relevant IA, IDFM and the Department of Education if accessing support under the Inclusion Support Program
- families are encouraged to meet with the educators who will be working with the child/young person to ensure an understanding of the child/young person's needs, appropriate methods for communication, and to ascertain those suitable resources and support is provided to both the family and the child/young person
- the Service works in partnership with allied health professionals and families to verify the educational program and learning environment is inclusive for each child and young person with additional needs, including children and young people and families from culturally diverse backgrounds



- specific plans and programs provided by external resource providers and professionals for children and young people with additional needs are shared with educators and copies filed in the child/young person's individual record
- children and young people are encouraged to feel safe and secure during their education and care at the Service by developing trusting relationships with educators, other children and young people, and the community
- inclusive strategies and practices are embedded in the delivery of quality education and care
- the privacy and confidentiality for children and young people and families is maintained
- the indoor and outdoor environment and equipment is designed or adapted/adjusted to ensure access and participation for all children and young people, supporting the inclusion of children and young people with additional needs. This may include the use of:
 - portable ramps
 - use of standing frames and support swings
 - specialised furniture such as chairs, tables and positioning equipment
 - communication charts and Auslan dictionaries
 - resources and books in languages other than English to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people and children and young people from linguistically diverse backgrounds
- the program and curriculum are inclusive and meet the individual needs of children and young people with additional needs, disability or developmental delay
- children and young people's sensory sensitivities to pressure, texture, smell, noise, or colour are considered within the environment.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- treat children and young people with equity and fairly and with respect
- create an inclusive program and environment, which is adaptable and supportive of all children and young people
- advocate for children and young people's rights
- conduct specific observations on the individual child/young person, outlining their interests, strengths, and developmental needs to support programming including open ended learning opportunities



- meet with families of children and young people with additional needs to familiarise themselves with the specific communication needs of each child/young person. Communication could include verbal and non-verbal communication skills and cues and may necessitate the use of systems such as sign language, the use of images, and/or learning key words in the child/young person's home language
- establish a means for frequent communication with care givers of children and young people with additional needs through a daily conversation, and/or formal and informal meetings.
- work with all families to meet children and young people's developmental needs in order to build strengths and capabilities
- develop an Inclusion Support Plan (ISP) in collaboration with Inclusion Agency professionals, health professionals and care givers of the child/young person and keep a copy in the child/young person's individual record
- liaise with school wellbeing leader and other key personal at the school to ensure consistent strategies are implemented for the child at the Service
- work with other professionals who play a role in supporting the child/young person's development
- create a flexible environment, which can be adapted to each child/young person's needs within the Service to support the inclusion of children and young people with additional needs
- implement programming experiences and activities, that are inclusive for all children and young people to access, explore and participate.
- listen carefully to all children and young people's concerns and discuss issues of inclusion and exclusion, and fair and unfair behaviour.
- act as role models by displaying appropriate behaviour and language, being consistently aware of and responsive to children and young people who may require additional support, attention, or assistance.
- discuss a wide range of emotions, thoughts, and views constructively with the children and young people within a supportive environment
- not judge or compare one child/ young person's development with another
- talk to children and young people about differences and acceptance.
- provide opportunities for all children and young people to play and learn together, promoting cooperative, caring, and social behaviours.

INCLUSION SUPPORT PROGRAM (ISP):



To assist in the provision of an inclusive environment for children and young people with additional needs, the 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. Applications would need to be submitted for the different types of care the child/young person accesses through our Service (care during school terms and vacation care). The objectives of the Inclusion Support Program include:

- supporting Out of School Hours Services increase their capacity and capability to provide quality inclusive practices for all children and young people
- to address access and participation barriers
- support the inclusion of children and young people with additional needs

FAMILIES WILL:

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

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION



The *Additional Needs Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in conjunction with children, families, educators, staff and management.

CHILDCARE CENTRE DESKTOP- RELATED RESOURCES

Guide to Strategic Inclusion Plan

SOURCES

- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2022). [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(DDA\) resources.](#)
- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). [Guide to the National Quality Framework.](#)
- Australian Government Department of Education.(2022). [My Time, Our Place- Framework for School Age Care in Australia.V2.0.](#)
- Australian Government Department of Education (2014) *Continuity of Learning: A resource to support effective transition to school and school aged care.*
- Australian Government Department of Education. (2022) [Inclusion Support Program \(ISP\) Guidelines. Version 2.5 July 2023.](#)
- Catholic Education Office Melbourne (2013) *Gifted and Talented Students A Resource Guide for Teachers in Victorian Catholic Schools*
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
- Early Childhood Australia (ECA), & Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA). (2012). [Position statement on the inclusion of children with disability in early childhood education and care.](#)
- Early Childhood Intervention Australia *National Guidelines for Best Practice in Early Childhood Intervention Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).*
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations.](#) (Amended 2023).
- New South Wales Department of Education *High Potential and Gifted Education Policy.* (2019).
- Raising Children *Supporting gifted and talented learning* <https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/play-learning/gifted-talented-children/supporting-learning>
- [Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Xin Wang & Sheridan Fiegert	Deputy director & Director	13/3/2025
POLICY REVIEWED	APRIL 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	APRIL 2026
VERSION NUMBER	V9.04.24		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> annual policy maintenance updated Inclusion Support Program guidelines (2023) 		

POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sources checked and updated as required 	
APRIL 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> annual policy maintenance inclusion of Disability Discrimination Act (1992) referencing/recommendations for compliance additional definitions added- disability/reasonable adjustments minor formatting edits within text hyperlinks checked and repaired as required Continuous Improvement/Reflection section added Childcare Centre Desktop Resources section added MTOP V.20 updated in sources link to Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations added in 'Sources' 	APRIL 2024
APRIL 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> policy maintenance - no major changes to policy minor formatting edits within text hyperlinks checked and repaired as required 	APRIL 2023
APRIL 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of policy - Moved Families will.... to end of policy sources checked for currency Updated information for Inclusion Support Program- PRODA Reference to resource- <i>Guide to Strategic Inclusion Plan</i> added 	APRIL 2022
APRIL 2020	<p>Additional information for Approved provider and educators added</p> <p>Adjustments for inclusion added</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family responsibilities - Inclusion Support Program - High Potential and Gifted children <p>New references added</p>	APRIL 2021
APRIL 2019	<p>Rearranged the order of points for better flow</p> <p>Points added (Highlighted).</p> <p>Sources/references checked, corrected, updated, and alphabetised.</p> <p>Deleted 'procedures' appendix and added relevant info to body of policy.</p>	APRIL 2020



APRIL 2018	Minor terminology and grammatical adjustments made to further support understanding and implementation Included the list of related policies	APRIL 2019
NOVEMBER 2017	Updated the National Quality Standard references to comply with revised standard.	APRIL 2018
APRIL 2017	Minor changes and additions made	APRIL 2018