

EDUCATION AND CARE GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Inclusion in Education and Care Services

Introduction

Each child is an individual with many abilities and from various backgrounds in our community. Council's education and care services strive to provide an inclusive environment that reflects cultural diversity, an anti-bias approach and gender equity for all children.

Council's education and care services are inclusive of children with additional support needs, including but not limited to children with diagnosed disabilities, challenging behaviours, developmental delays, as well as children from trauma backgrounds.

Council's education and care services work in partnership with a range of support services to reduce or eliminate barriers for children in accessing and engaging in quality education and care services for children aged 0-13 years.

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Definitions

FDC:	Family Day Care
LDC:	Long Day Care
OOSH:	Out of School Hours Care
SHC:	School Holiday Care

Guiding Principles

- Educators need to be positive role models to all children and their families by showing them how to be accepting, respectful and inclusive of all children.
- Educators will respect all families regardless of their differences and this will be shown through creating inclusive programs and practices.
- Each child is an individual with varying abilities, interests and needs and will be provided with opportunities to express themselves, be stimulated, enriched and develop within an inclusive early childhood and school age care setting.

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Inclusion in Education and Care Services*

- Educators will extend their knowledge, understanding and skills in regards to children with additional needs, by undertaking relevant training and by gathering as much information that will allow the educators to fully meet the child's needs whilst in care. This includes information from families, school teachers, therapists and other professionals involved with the child.
- Educators will be reflective practitioners in regards to their relationships with the individual child. Educators' and children's wellbeing are a priority at the service.
- The centre will support and implement activities and events within the program to provide awareness to children regarding social justice issues with, but not limited to, appropriate social cultural celebrations.
- All services will aim to develop their cultural competence through ongoing critical reflection and training to increase their understanding of other cultures.
- The service will support bilingual and multilingual children to use home languages and encourage educators to be respectful of the entire group when exploring home language within the program and environment. Please note that the service does not tolerate offensive or obscene language within the service.
- Educators will engage in meaningful conversations with families to translate key words, to encourage a smooth transition into the centre.
- The environment at the service will reflect the needs of individual children and be modified where necessary. The learning environment will be inviting, stimulating, accessible and safe to maximise the child's development and full participation.
- The environment and programs will reflect cultures, both traditionally and in everyday life with the use of books, music, recipes, crafts, clothing, play equipment and posters.
- Each centre will respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners of the land through a physical Acknowledgment to Country in the foyer area.
- Children will be involved in Acknowledgment to Country where appropriate.
- Meetings will begin with Acknowledgment to Country.
- Educators will be aware of culturally appropriate methods of communication with Aboriginal families and children, encouraging the use of Aboriginal English when used by families and children.
- Educators will use language that is free from bias when communicating with children.
- Educators will encourage parents from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds to contribute knowledge of their own culture and share cultural experiences.
- Educators will use visual images that support children to have a positive self-identity.
- Experiences provided to the children will be monitored by educators to ensure that messages and images that are negative, stereotyped or bias are avoided.
- Educators need to have realistic expectations for children with additional needs in their care. In consultation with families and other professionals, achievable outcomes for the child will be developed, in accordance with the needs of the child.
- Services will work in partnership with KU Children's Services to develop a Strategic Inclusion Plan to ensure all children are included in the environment by considering any barriers that may impact children or families from accessing the service or being included. Services will work to overcome these barriers through developing strategies and actions to eliminate or minimise these.

- Specialised equipment that will assist educators and the child at the service, such as, mobility stools, standing frames, electronic devices or the board maker program for signage/ cards, are resourced by the nominated supervisor. Families can bring in specialised equipment as well.
- Open communication will be maintained at all times between educators, families and other professionals to gain a thorough understanding of the individual child.
- Educators are to network with support services, agencies, community groups and other educators to aid understanding and extend their knowledge on cultural diversity and child rearing practices.
- Educators are to respect all cultural and religious practices; however the educators need to ensure that the health and safety of the children are the main priorities.
- Information will be provided in a range of languages that represent the cultural diversity within the community.
- Educators will advocate for the rights of all children and treat children equitably and respectfully.
- The enrolment visit held with the nominated supervisor and the family aims to discuss the child's background and care required. This meeting is used to gain a picture of the family and child's needs, expectations and to discuss options available to them. Refer to Council's Education and Care [Enrolment, Orientation & Waiting List](#) Guiding Principle.

Children with additional support needs

Initial enrolment (LDC/ FDC/ OOSH/ SHC)

This section must be read in conjunction with the [Enrolment, Orientation & Waiting List](#) Guiding Principle.

Prior to the enrolment of a child with additional support needs, an evaluation of the child's care needs will be conducted via a meeting with Council staff and the child's family. The Evaluation of needs and abilities form will be used to capture the required information. Consideration will be given to the child's inclusion needs and a determination will be made about the most suitable service for the child to attend.

At times, a child's additional support needs may not be disclosed prior to enrolment or not known due to the child's age. Any concerns identified will be raised with the family and support strategies will be included to support the child. Families may be asked to consult with their family doctor and possibly request a referral to a specialist doctor to seek advice about concerns. Services will also seek support from the KU Inclusion Support professionals once permission has been sought from the family. These strategies aim to support the child in the education and care environment.

The nominated supervisor may set conditions for enrolment based on the following information/ assessment of the child which may vary once the child is in care:

- days of attendance
- negotiated hours of attendance (e.g. school hours 9.00am to 3.00pm) are to support successful access of the child into the service
- attendance or non-attendance on excursions
- recommended service to attend and availability

- if specialised equipment is needed for the child.

To be able to safely include the child into a service, an additional staff member may be required to support the child's needs. This requires additional funding via the Inclusion Funds Management System. Ratios are deemed on a risk assessment of the environment and the needs of the child enrolling in the service.

Equipment that would be used at home or in the school environment should be made available to assist with day to day routines e.g. wheelchair.

Existing child (for SHC)

- During the last week of SHC, the nominated supervisor will discuss with the families their recommendations for the number of days that would be suitable for the child to attend in the next SHC program.
- By week 4, the families are required to email through their care requirements to the nominated supervisor who will compile a list of all children with additional support needs requiring a booking for the next school holidays and their booking requests.
- The nominated supervisor will then work through the requests and offer the children positions based on priority of access, care requirements and preferences where possible. As the children are already existing children, the nominated supervisor will know their needs as well as the needs of the centre to ensure that inclusion is successful for all children.
- If an existing family has not notified the service about their care requirements by week 4, every effort will be made to meet their requests, however the child may be offered only some of the days, alternative days, place the child on an internal waiting list or be offered a position at another service.
- Once days are allocated, the families will be informed and the Education and Care Support team will be notified to process the bookings.

Ongoing review process

- Should a concern arise affecting the safety of the child, other children or educators, the nominated supervisor will follow the [Guiding Children's Behaviour](#) Guiding Principle.
- The nominated supervisor/FDC educator and family will communicate on a daily basis and, if needed, through an individual communication book or electronic communication for the child. The purpose being to record brief observations by educators.
- Families need to inform educators of any changes to the child that may affect their day.
- Families are to listen to the advice of the educators and follow through with suggestions at home, for such things as behaviour management strategies.
- Families are to keep educators involved with meetings with specialist agencies regarding transition to school or other programs the child is involved in.
- Formal meetings will be conducted annually or as required by the service. Children wishing to enrol in a SHC program may be required to complete this process each school holidays. The [Evaluation of needs and abilities](#) form will be completed during this meeting. It is preferable that both parents attend this meeting.
- Families are required to provide current reports and assessments of the child, including up to date medication information to ensure the child's changing needs are being met by the service.

Related Legislation and Online Resources

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#): Section [Part 4.5](#)
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), [National Quality Standards](#): Quality Areas 5.1.2, 5.2.1, 6.1, 6.2.1 & 6.2.2
- Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment - [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia](#) (EYLF)
- Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment - [My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia](#) (MTOP)

Related Documents and Council Policies

- Cumberland City Council Education and Care Guiding Principles:
 - [Enrolment, Orientation & Waiting List](#)
 - [Governance, Management & Leadership](#)
 - [Medical Conditions and Medication](#)
 - [Guiding Children's Behaviour](#)

Attachment

- [Evaluation of Needs and Abilities](#)

Authorisation & Version Control

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CUMBERLAND
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CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

Evaluation of needs and abilities

This form is to be completed prior to the enrolment of a child with an additional support need. The form is then to be used annually and/or as required by the service. Children wishing to enrol in school holiday care programs may be required to complete this process prior to each school holiday program.

Child's name: **DOB:**

Centre name:

Attendance/enrolment requests:

Meeting attendees:

.....

.....

Date of meeting: **Time start:** **Time end:**

Information to be collected

Diagnosis:
Communication skills:
Social skills:
Self-help skills:

Behaviour:

Mobility/physical skills:

Any additional support/information required:

Parent goals for child:

Parent concerns:

Other services involved:

Additional notes/information:

Follow up: