

## INCLUSION /Additional Needs Policy:

### POLICY STATEMENT:

Grays Point Activity Centre (GPAC) aims to provide an environment that is free from bias and prejudice in which children learn the principles of fairness and respect for the uniqueness of each person. Children are encouraged to develop their own sense of identity and Educators will facilitate this in a way that embraces the needs and abilities of each child (My Time, Our Place Outcome 1). Educators will ensure that children become aware of fairness and equity and have opportunities to practice challenging bias in their play (My Time, Our Place Outcome 2). The Service involves the community to assist Educators and children to understand and accept the range of cultures and abilities of members of the local community. Differences in backgrounds, culture and abilities are valued, and families are actively encouraged to share their experiences with Educators and other families and cultural competence in children will be fostered. The Service will ensure that appropriate Inclusion Support Services are accessed, and families are referred to them in order to support children's well-being and full access to the program.

### PROCEDURES:

#### **a) Inclusive Practices**

- Educators will actively seek information from children, families and the community about their cultural traditions, customs and beliefs and use this information to provide children with a variety of experiences that will enrich the environment within the Service.
- Educators will work in partnership with families to provide care that meets the child's needs and is consistent with the family's culture, beliefs and child rearing practices. Specific requests will be acknowledged where practical, to demonstrate respect and ensure continuity of care of the child.
- Educators will obtain and use resources that reflect the diversity of children, families and the community and increase awareness and appreciation of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and multicultural heritage.
- Educators will be sensitive and attentive to all children and respect their backgrounds, gender, unique qualities and abilities. The Service will ensure that the Service environment reflects the lives of the children and families using the Service and the cultural diversity of the broader community and ensure children's individual needs are accommodated at the Service.
- Children with additional needs will be provided with the necessary support and resources to allow them to fully participate in the Service. This may require the assistance of specialty services, adaptation of the environment, changes to routines and Educator arrangements in order to facilitate inclusion. The Service will achieve this in collaboration with the child's family.

- Educators will treat all children equitably and encourage them to treat each other with respect and fairness.
- Educators will act as positive role models by encouraging all children to be involved in a variety of activities, regardless of gender.
- Educators will role model appropriate ways to challenge discrimination and prejudice and actively promote inclusive behaviours in children.
- Children will never be singled out or made to feel inferior to or better than others. Educators and children will discuss incidents of bias or prejudice in children's play or relationships with each other to help children understand and find strategies to counteract these behaviours.
- The program will include experiences for the children that are not based on sex role stereotypes.
- Resource materials and equipment used in the Service will, as far as possible, be non-stereotyped.
- Families will be consulted in the development of holistic programs that are responsive to children's lives, interests, learning styles, genders and reflect children's family, culture and community.
- Educators will create opportunities for children to learn about, develop respect for, and celebrate the diversity that exists in the Service and in the broader community by:
  - ✓ Encouraging all families, children and other Educators to share their experiences, skills, cultures and beliefs;
  - ✓ Inviting community members to the Service to share their stories, songs, experiences, skills, cultures and beliefs;
  - ✓ Accessing and using a range of resources (including multi-cultural and multi-lingual resources) that reflect the diversity of children and families in the Service and in the broader community.

**b) Educator recruitment and professional development**

- Wherever possible, our Service will aim to recruit Educators from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds that reflect the cultural diversity of our community and to employ staff from both genders.
- The Nominated Supervisor and Educators will attend professional development that builds awareness of their own cultural beliefs and values, increases their cultural competence and helps them to challenge discrimination and prejudice.
- All Educators will be provided with a copy of the Outside School Hours Care Code of Professional Standards.

c) **Inclusion Support Agencies**

- The Service will access bicultural support workers when necessary and/or telephone translation services and provide information on aspects of the Service in languages that are spoken in the local community to assist in communicating with families from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- The Service will access additional support, assistance and resources for children with additional needs including children from diverse cultural backgrounds, children with high ongoing support needs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- Educators will talk to children's families about any concerns they have and offer the family links to other support services within the community such as Inclusion Support Agencies; Community Health Services etc.
- Educators will work with families, inclusion support agencies and other specialists associated with the child to develop individual support plans.

**ADDITIONAL NEEDS**

Supporting children with additional needs requires Educators to extend upon the strategies they already use in providing quality care for children. 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 GPAC offers flexible attendance options, and Vacation Care options, it is critical that our Service works in partnership with families and other professionals to ensure specific consideration and adaptations/adjustments allow children with additional needs access and participation. Our 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 our setting.

Our Service understands and meets our obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) to support children with disability and be responsive to each child, irrespective of their additional needs and abilities. We aim 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 are treated equally and fairly and have the opportunity to grow and develop to their individual potential.

According to the [Inclusion Support Program Guidelines](#) (Australian Department of Education 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 our Education and Care Service.



Additional needs may include children 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 children who:

- are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders
- are recent arrivals in Australia
- are from refugee or humanitarian backgrounds
- come from 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 learning difficulties
- are gifted or have special talents
- have other extra support needs.

## WHAT IS A DISABILITY

Disability is defined broadly in the Disability Discrimination Act (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].

We understand that additional needs may be temporary or permanent with diverse origins, which require different responses. Supporting children 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 with additional needs can differ significantly, because every child is unique.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE:

- we meet our obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA)
- all staff understand and comply with the (DDA) including making reasonable adjustments to the program, practices and environment in collaboration with families and children
- support is provided to Educators to make reasonable adjustments to support children with disability access and participate in the Service
- completed enrolment forms are used to gather information about children's additional needs and supports that may be required
- equitable access is provided to support children with additional needs
- communication with families is consistent and supportive
- develop effective relationships with the School and the OSHC Service to support the child
- they have a thorough understanding of the NDIS plan for each child (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 (see: [Inclusion Development Fund Manager \(IDFM\)](#) for NSW)
- they develop *Plans* in collaboration with the Inclusion Agency (IA) which will identify any barriers preventing a child'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 if accessing support under the Inclusion Support Program

- families are encouraged to meet with the Educators who will be working with the child to ensure an understanding of the child's needs, appropriate methods for communication, and to ascertain those suitable resources and support is provided to both the family and the child
- the Service works in partnership with allied health professionals and families to verify the educational program and learning environment is inclusive for each child with additional needs, including children and families from culturally diverse backgrounds
- specific plans and programs provided by external resource providers and professionals for children with additional needs are shared with Educators and copies filed in the child's individual record
- children are encouraged to feel safe and secure during their education and care at the OSHC Service by developing trusting relationships with Educators, other children, and the community
- inclusive strategies and practices are embedded in the delivery of quality education and care
- the privacy and confidentiality for children and families is maintained
- the indoor and outdoor environment and equipment is designed or adapted/adjusted to ensure access and participation for all children, supporting the inclusion of children 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 Indigenous children and children from linguistically diverse backgrounds
- the program and curriculum are inclusive and meet the individual needs of children with additional needs, disability or developmental delay
- children's sensory sensitivities to pressure, texture, smell, noise, or colour are considered within the environment.

### EDUCATORS WILL:

- treat children equally and fairly and with respect
  - create an inclusive program and environment, which is adaptable and supportive of all children
  - advocate for children's rights
  - conduct specific observations on the individual child, outlining their interests, strengths, and developmental needs to support programming including open ended learning opportunities
  - meet with families of children with additional needs to familiarise themselves with the specific communication needs of each child. Communication could include verbal and non-verbal
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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's home language

- establish a means for frequent communication with parents of children with additional needs through a communication book, verbal daily information exchanges, and/or formal and informal meetings.
- collaborate with all families to meet children'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 parents of the child and keep a copy in the child's individual record
- liaise with School counsellor and other key personal at the School to ensure consistent strategies are implemented for the child at GPAC
- collaborate with other professionals who play a role in supporting the child's development
- create a flexible environment, which can be adapted to each child's needs within the Service to support the inclusion of children with additional needs
- implement programming experiences and activities, that are inclusive for all children to access, explore and participate.
- listen carefully to all children'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 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
- not judge or compare one child's development with another
- talk to children about differences and acceptance.
- provide opportunities for all children 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 with additional needs, our OSHC 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 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
- to address access and participation barriers
- support the inclusion of children with additional needs

## HIGH POTENTIAL AND GIFTED CHILDREN

Our OSHC Service will collaborate with families to support the needs of high potential and gifted children. We will:

- respect the uniqueness of each child
- acknowledge the characteristics of high potential and gifted children
- be sensitive to the social-emotional needs of gifted children and assist them to feel a sense of belonging
- develop our capacity to cater for the needs of gifted children through professional development
- support children's transition to school
- assist Educators cater for gifted children who also have a disability - 'Twice Exceptional' children

## 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.

## SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2022). [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(DDA\) resources](#).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)

Australian Government Department of Education. (2022). [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia](#). V2.0.

Australian Government Department of Education. (2023) [Inclusion Support Program \(ISP\) Guidelines](#). Version 2.5 July 2023.

Australian Government. Australian Institute of Families Studies. (2024). [Supporting disability inclusion with children and families](#).

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. (2019). [High Potential and Gifted Education Policy](#).

Raising Children *Supporting gifted and talented learning* <https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/play-learning/gifted-talented-children/supporting-learning>

## CONSIDERATIONS:

| Education and Care Services National Regulations | National Quality Standard                                                                                                             | Other Service Policies/documentation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Other                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 73, 74, 75, 76, 155, 156, 157, 168, 170.         | 1.1.1,<br>1.2,<br>3.1, 3.1.1,<br>3.2.1, 3.2.2<br>4.2,<br>5.1,<br>5.1.1,5.1.2,<br>5.2,<br>6.1, 6.1.1,<br>6.1.2, 6.2,<br>6.2.2,<br>6.3. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behaviour Guidance</li> <li>• Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Enrolment &amp; Orientation</li> <li>• Interactions with Children, Families and Staff Policy</li> <li>• Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy</li> <li>• Providing a Child Safe Environment</li> <li>• Confidentiality</li> <li>• Management of Complaints</li> <li>• Dealing with Medical Conditions and Medication Administration</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Disability Discrimination Act 1992</a></li> <li>• Guide to Strategic Inclusion Plan – Childcare Desktop</li> <li>• Additional Needs Policy – Childcare Desktop</li> <li>• My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia</li> </ul> |

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

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