Diversity and Inclusion and Anti-Bias Policy

Policy Statement
Mt Hawthorn Out of School Hours Centre aims to provide an environment which is free from bias and prejudice in which children learn the principles of fairness and respect for the uniqueness of each person. The Centre involves the community to assist staff and children 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 staff, carers and other families. The centre will ensure that appropriate inclusion support services are accessed and referred to families in order to support children’s well-being and full inclusion into the program.

Procedures:

Staff will actively seek information from children, families and the community, about their social backgrounds, cultures and beliefs, and use this information to provide children with a variety of experiences that will enrich the environment within the service.

Staff 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 care practices. Specific requests will be honoured where practical to demonstrate respect and ensure continuity of care of the child, and will obtain and use resources that reflect the diversity of children, families and the community. Parents/guardians will be consulted in the development of programs.

Staff will be sensitive and attentive to all children, respect their backgrounds and abilities, and ensure that their individual needs are accommodated at the centre. Children with special needs will be provided with support so they can be included as equals within the service. This may require the assistance of social, ethnic or special needs services which the Centre will access in collaboration with the child’s family.
Staff will treat all children as equals and encourage them to treat each other with respect and fairness, and 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. Staff and children will discuss incidents of bias or prejudice in children's play or relationships with each other, to help children to understand and find strategies to counteract these behaviours.

The Centre will aim to recruit staff from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds wherever possible.

Staff will create opportunities as an integral part of their daily programs for children to learn about, develop respect for, and celebrate the diversity that exists in the Centre and in the broader community by:

- encouraging all families, children and other staff to share their experiences, skills, cultures and beliefs;
- inviting community members to the Centre 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 Centre and in the broader community.

Children who have a disability will not be discriminated against and will be provided with a place whenever possible.

**Inclusion Support Agencies**

The Centre may access additional support, assistance and resources for children with additional needs, children with high ongoing support needs (including disabilities) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) children.

Play leaders are aware that children in child care settings may become slowly excluded because they do not develop at the same rate as their peers. Therefore when staff observe developmental delays in individual children the Director will talk to the child's parents about their concerns and offer the family links to other support services within the community such as Inclusion Support Agencies; Community Health Services etc.
Sources:

OSHQA Quality Practices Guide – Principles 1.2; 1.3; 3.1; 3.2; 3.3

Children & Community Services Act 2004 – Part 2, Division 2&3; Clause 199

Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs – website www.rucsn.org.au

Department for Community Development Factsheets – www.community.wa.gov.au

Early Childhood Australia website – www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

Input from Parent (from surveys)

NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010(Vic) – Part 1 – Preliminary – 3 (3) (a) & (c)

Education and Care Services National Regulations

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care (Nov 2010) – Element 1.2.2; Element 3.1.4; Element 4.2.1

Early Years Learning Framework for Australia – Practice: Holistic approaches; Responsiveness to children; Cultural competence; Learning environments – Outcomes: 1, 2, 3

Framework for School Age Care in Australia – Practice: Holistic approaches; Responsiveness to children; Cultural competence; Environments – Outcomes: 1, 2, 3

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