**Planning and Programming Policy**

**Rationale:**

The educators at The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten aim to provide quality care and education for all the children enrolled at all times. The children are provided with developmentally based programs within each room to ensure there are opportunities to further refine and develop new skills within a supportive and nurturing environment. We are also mindful that children require a range of experiences that mirror a home environment, so it is important to maintain a balance between structured and less formal play.

Children learn through play and as much as possible, educators aim to provide a range of experiences that meet the needs of individual children. It is now well known that the early years of a child’s life lay very important foundations for future development and learning.

Educators are keen to work with parents to ensure that the education and care that is provided is of a high standard and is relevant to the children at the centre.

This policy will provide guidelines to ensure that the educational program and practice at The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten is:

* based on an approved learning framework
* underpinned by critical reflection and careful planning
* stimulating, engaging and enhances children’s learning and development

**Policy:**

The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten will provide a developmentally appropriate program for all children attending the centre. The program will provide for the development of each child’s social, physical, emotional and intellectual potential, including language skills and creativity. Children will be actively involved in the program planning. Parents will be asked for their input. The program will meet the needs of each individual child and to the group as a whole. The program will reflect the centre philosophy.

The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten is committed to providing an educational program that is based on reflective practice, critical analysis and planning and supporting each child to achieve learning outcomes consistent with the national Early Years Learning Framework and/or the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework. Educational program is provided where children can learn through play and are supported to make decisions, problem-solve

and build relationships with others

**Definitions:**

Approved learning framework: A document that outlines practices that educators and coordinators/2IC must use to support and promote children’s learning. The Early Years Learning Framework (Belonging, Being & Becoming) and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework are approved learning frameworks for use in Victoria.

Critical reflection: Reflective practices that focus on implications for equity and social justice (Early Years Learning Framework, p45)

Curriculum: All interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children’s learning and development (Early Years Learning Framework, p45 – adapted from Te Whariki).

Each child: A phrase used in the National Quality Standard when an individualised approach is warranted and educators are required to modify their response to meet the needs of an individual child. An example is ‘each child’s current knowledge,

ideas, culture and interests provide the foundation for the program’.

Educational Leader: The Approved Provider of an education and care service must designate, in writing, a suitably qualified and experienced educator, coordinator or other individual to lead the development and implementation of educational

programs at the service (Regulation 118). This person must have a thorough understanding of the Early Years Learning Framework (or other approved learning framework), be able to guide other educators in their planning and reflection, and

mentor colleagues in the implementation of their practice.

Learning: A natural process of exploration that children engage in from birth, as they expand their intellectual, physical, social, emotional and creative capacities. Early learning is closely linked to early development.

Learning framework: Refer to approved learning framework above.

Learning outcome: A skill, knowledge or disposition that educators can actively promote in early childhood settings, in collaboration with children and families.

Learning relationships: Relationships that further children’s learning and development. Both adult and child have intent to learn from one another.

Play-based learning: A context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social world as they engage actively with people, objects and representations.

The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) describes the principles, practice and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school.

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) provides valuable guidance for Educators in supporting children and families in their transitions through the first eight years of a child’s life. It provides a shared language, and guiding principles for achieving the best outcomes for every child and continuity of learning.

The Frameworks have a strong emphasis on play-based learning as play is the best vehicle for young children's learning providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development. The Frameworks also recognise the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**The Management is Responsible for**:

* ensuring that the educational program is stimulating and engaging, enhances children’s learning and development, and is based on an approved learning framework
* ensuring the developmental needs, interests and experiences, and the individual differences of each child are accommodated in the educational program (Section 168)
* ensuring the educational program contributes to each child:
* developing a strong sense of identity
* being connected with, and contributing to, his or her world
* having a strong sense of wellbeing
* being a confident and involved learner
* being an effective communicator (Regulation 73)
* designating a suitably qualified and experienced Educational Leader to direct the development and implementation of educational programs at the service (Regulation 118)
* ensuring the staff record includes the name of the Educational Leader at the service (Regulation 148)
* ensuring that the centre’s philosophy guides educational program and practice
* ensuring that assessments of the child’s developmental needs, interests, experiences and participation in the educational program are documented (Regulation 74(1)(a)(i))
* ensuring that assessments of the child’s progress against the outcomes of the educational program are documented (Regulation 74(1)(a)(ii))
* ensuring documentation of assessments includes reflection on the period of time the child is at the service, and how documented information will be used by educators at the service (Regulation 74(2)(a)(i)&(ii))
* ensuring documentation is written in plain language and is easy to understand by both educators and parents/guardians (Regulation 74(2)(b))
* ensuring a copy of the educational program is displayed at the service and accessible to parents/guardians (Regulation 75)
* ensuring that parents/guardians are provided with information about the content and implementation of the educational program, their child’s participation in the program and documentation relating to assessments or evaluations of their child (Regulation 76)
* ensuring that each child's learning and development is assessed as part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documentation and evaluation
* ensuring that there is a record of learning and development for each child, and that it is updated and maintained on an ongoing basis
* developing and evaluating the educational program in collaboration with educators, children and families
* ensuring regular communication is established between the centre and parents/guardians in relation to their child's learning and development

**Educators and other staff are responsible for:**

* delivering an educational program that is stimulating and engaging, enhances children’s learning and development, and is based on an approved learning framework
* considering the developmental needs, interests and experiences, and the individual differences of each child in the educational program
* assessing and documenting each child’s needs, interests, experiences, participation and progress in relation to the educational program in a way that is easy to understand for parents/guardians
* making information available to parents/guardians about their child’s participation in the educational program
* communicating regularly with parents/guardians in relation to their child’s learning and development
* developing and evaluating the educational program in collaboration with the management, coordinator/2IC, Educational Leader and children and families.

**Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

* communicating regularly with the centre in relation to their child’s learning and development
* providing input to the development of the educational program in collaboration with the management, coordinator/2IC, Educational Leader, educators and children

**Volunteers and students, while at the centre are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.**

**Strategies and Practices**

* The educators at the Avenue aim to provide a stimulating, positive experience that is developmentally appropriate. The program will foster all aspects of child development at the same time as providing a flexible program to individually meet each child’s needs and interests
* The educators aim to provide experiences, which allow the child the opportunity to progress to his/her next stage of development or follow through with a particular interest of the child
* The programs are based on the children’s interests, strengths and needs and we will endeavour to include those in our program
* The activities and experiences provided are for the benefit of the children, so no emphasis is placed on the finished product. Please don’t be discouraged if your child doesn’t bring home artwork, as he/she has been busy learning living skills – such as dressing/undressing, eating, and serving lunch, pouring or messy play type activities
* We believe in setting limits so that children are able to learn what socially accepted behaviour is, as well as ensuring their safety. The skill of using positive guidance to develop effective relationships with children expands the growth of their self-esteem
* The Outdoor Program is equally as important as the Indoor Program. Throughout the day, we offer both indoor / outdoor play as would happen in a home environment
* Observing and recording children's behaviours, achievements and milestones is happening on everyday basis and is recorded in Journeys in written, photographic format and children’s artwork
* Educators will have knowledge of the EYLF and VEYLDF learning outcomes and the overall model of the framework for early childhood.
* We will ensure that documentation is displayed and available to families at all times
* Educators will be encouraged to take up training to develop further understanding of the EYLF and VEYLDF
* Parents and families will be encouraged to share information about their child and to be a part of our planning and programming. They will be involved in the development and review of educational programs and practice.
* Educators will be provided with opportunities to further their knowledge of child development theories and practices
* All educator/ staff will be encouraged to explore and use good quality resources and training to offer fresh experiences for children and to further their own professional development and skills
* The Educational Leader will lead the development and implementation of educational programs at the centre, guide other educators in their planning and reflection, and mentor colleagues in the implementation of their practice

**Links to other policies:**

* Behavior Guidance Policy
* Interaction with Children Policy
* Inclusion and Equity Policy
* Privacy and Confidentiality of Record Keeping Policy
* Cultural Diversity Policy
* Parent Involvement Policy
* Code of Conduct Policy
* Environmental Sustainability Policy
* Food, Nutrition and Active Play Policy
* Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy
* Road Safety and Safe Transport Policy
* Sun Smart Policy
* Supervision of Children Policy

**Sources and further reading:**

* Education and Care Services National Regulation
* Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
* Belonging, Being Becoming/The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
* The Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (National Law)
* Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (National Regulations)
* National Quality Standard Professional Learning Program: www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nqsplp
* Early Childhood Management Manual
* Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia:
* http://education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework
* Educators’ Guide to the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: http://education.gov.au/earlyyears-learning-framework
* Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services
* Guide to the National Quality Standard, ACECQA: www.acecqa.gov.au

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