

POLICY: CURRICULUM, PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING



QUALITY AREA 1: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE

AIM

In developing an education program, a level of consultation with children, parents and staff should be sought to ensure the Pre-School services individual needs of children's needs and interests.

Programs should include activities that are appropriate to the individual child's level of development that stimulates each child's social, physical, emotional, cognitive, language and creative potential. This should include the balance of indoor and outdoor experiences.

Planning and Assessment for Learning is based upon observations taken by educators and interpreted into a planned experience. After the planned experience is presented to the child, the educator will evaluate the experience learning outcomes and suggest ways in which the experience may be extended to scaffold the individual child's learning and development.

GOALS

It is the goal of the Yass Montessori Pre-School to implement a learning curriculum which is founded on the Montessori Method of teaching, underpinned by the two national approved learning frameworks, Belonging, Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. As a Hybrid Pre-School the Pre-School educators are working towards a blended curriculum of the mentioned recognised curriculums.

Programming and Planning at the Pre-School is based on close observation of children at work and play and their interactions/relationships with other children. It should integrate every dimension of children's experiences encompassing daily routines, the physical environment, relationships and interactions, materials for play and special experiences and opportunities.

Planning is diverse and continuously evolving. It can forecast possibilities with children's experiences noted and later used for reflection and evaluation.

- ⇒ **Links to the National Curriculum Framework**
- ⇒ **National Law: Section 168**
- ⇒ **Education and Care Services National Regulations 75-76**
- ⇒ **Quality Standards Elements: 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 1.1.5, 1.1.6 Elements: 1.2.1., 1.2.2., 1.2.3.**

Educational Program

The National Law and National Regulations require the Approved Service to provide a program that is:

- Based on an approved learning framework – The Early Years Learning Framework and the Montessori Method.
- Delivered in accordance with the above frameworks.
- Based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child.
- Takes into account the individuality of each child.

The educational program should contribute to the following outcomes:

- Children have a strong sense of identity.
- Children are connected with and contribute to his or her world.
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
- Children are confident and involved learners.
- Children are effective communicators.

Educators will

Develop their preferred methods for recording information for planning in consultation with the Educational Leader and Pre-School Director.

Educators consider:

- Careful observation and documentation processes.
- Interactions and relationships with children, families and other staff.
- The emergence and progress of projects.
- Children's contributions.
- Family contributions.
- Contributions.
- Anecdotal Records.
- Montessori Developmental Checklists.
- Entries into the Room Reflection Journal (reviewed at fortnightly staff meetings, appropriate planning and actions followed up).

Assessment and evaluation:

The approved national learning frameworks outline that assessment is a process used by educators to gather information about what children know, understand and can do. This information should be analysed by educators to plan effectively for each child's learning. Assessment information can also be used by educators to reflect on their own values, beliefs and teaching practices, and to communicate about children's learning with children and their families.

Assessment and documentation must be kept for each child; it should be a continuous and on-going process. There is no prescribed method in the National Law or National Regulations for documenting assessment for children's learning.

At the Pre-School documentation includes:

- Assessment of the child's development needs, interests, experiences and participation in the educational program.
- Assessments of the child's progress against the learning outcomes of the educational program.
- Documentation of the child's learning experiences and evaluation of learning is recorded by educators on an observation template that is used by educators to evaluate and scaffold the child's individual development.
- Child Portfolios, which include an analysis of the children's learning.
- Reflective Journal (kept in classroom – staff use).
- Program Reflection Journal (kept on foyer bench – for family viewing).

Evaluation

Is used to inform future planning for individual children, forms a basis for planning appropriate learning experiences focussing on the child's wellbeing, development and learning within the educational program.

Overall evaluation of the program's effectiveness in meeting the needs of children, families and the community will be conducted after the implementation of the Pre-Schools weekly program by the Educational Leader at the Pre-School.

The Program is displayed in a way that is clear, easily understood and respects the children's work and development.

The Educators at Yass Montessori Pre-School use a 'Reflective Journal' to record observations, child interactions with staff and is a valuable tool assisting educators to develop their reflective practice.

Educators discuss entries in the 'Reflective Journal' at regular fortnightly staff meetings. The Journal is used as a provocation, discussing the information from the Journal staff collaborate on the 'where to next', implementing a program that is responsive to the interests of both the individual child and small groups of children.

Documentation

Provides a record of children's learning to assist staff to reflect on and plan weekly experiences that support the children's development.

Documentation is also a tool which educators may use to make the children's learning visible to parents/carers. Documentation of the weekly program is displayed on the outdoor notice board to inform families about the learning process including experiences and problem solving.

Educators record observations onto an observation template for a particular focus group of children. These observations are placed into a folder and kept in the Pre-School classroom. Families are made aware that they may request to view the observations of their child at a pre-arranged time at the Pre-School.

Educators document children's learning in a 'Learning Portfolio' which contains jottings, anecdotal observations, learning stories, work samples and artefacts of the child's work during their attendance at the Pre-School. The Learning Portfolios are presented to the child/families at the end of the year.

The weekly program is also recorded in the 'Program Reflection Journal' which is located in the front foyer of the Pre-School. Families and carers are invited to view the Journal and a suggestion box, notebook and pen are located near the Journal inviting families and carers to comment on or make suggestions in relation to the learning program.

Planning

Child-free time for planning and documenting assessment for learning is to be incorporated into primary contact staff work schedules. The Award for Teachers allows for two hours per week non-contact time for programming. Although not provided by the award for Child Care Workers and classifications other than Early Childhood Teachers, it is expected that all child care staff are involved in programming for individual child needs; therefore when possible some child-free time should be allowed for all staff to plan for this programming.

Currently at the Pre-School two hours is set aside for programming on a Thursday morning between 9.00am and 11.00am.

Information for parents and caregivers about educational program:

Information about the educational program must be displayed at the service in a place that is easily accessible to parents and caregivers.

The following information must be given to a child's parents when requested:

- The content and operation of the educational program as it relates to that child.
- Information about that child's participation in the program.
- A copy of assessments or evaluations in relation to that child.

Sources:

- (see **Early Years Learning Framework** retrieved from DEEWR website April 2012; **NSW Curriculum Framework for Children's Services** retrieved from the Family and Community Services website April 2012)
- www.acecqua.gov.au Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

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