

POLICY – EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

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1. National Quality Standards

Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice		
Area	Concept	Descriptor
1.1	Program	The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.
1.1.1	Approved learning framework	Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.
1.1.2	Child-centred	Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.
1.1.3	Program learning opportunities	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.
1.2	Practice	Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development.
1.2.1	Intentional teaching	Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.
1.2.2	Responsive teaching and scaffolding	Educators respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback.
1.2.3	Child directed learning	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.
1.3	Assessment and planning	Educators and coordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.
1.3.1	Assessment and planning cycle	Each child's learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection.

1.3.2	Critical reflection	Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.
1.3.3	Information for families	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.

Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements		
Area	Concept	Descriptor
4.1.1	Organisation of educators	The organisation of educators across the service supports children's learning and development.
4.2.2	Professional standards	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.
7.2	Leadership	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 Baringa Early Learning Centre (Baringa) recognises the importance of dedicated education programming. The investment in this practice enables high quality early childhood education.
- 2.2 This policy aims to support staff with guidelines and dedicated programming time which is above and beyond the minimum requirements of the Education and Care Services National Regulations. Minimum requirements for non-contact time is defined at s21.5 of the Children's Services Award.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to Baringa staff with responsibility for educational programming, as designated by Management from time to time.

4. Implementation

- 4.1 Baringa aims to enhance children's learning and development through the pedagogical practices of educators in a positive learning environment through which the five learning outcomes from the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) are supported and promoted. Educators will gather and interpret information about children as individuals to inform the preparation of the environment, and implement experiences that are engaging and meaningful, supporting children's holistic development.

Programming Guidelines

- 4.2 Programs should be developed taking into account both short-term and long-term goals for the group and individual children, based on observations from the developmental records, observations and portfolios.

Recognising that children learn through active involvement, activities should be arranged to allow for a balance of indoor and outdoor activities and interactions in both large and small groups and individual (one on one), situations. The education program shall provide:

- (a) A range of developmentally appropriate activities.
- (b) Activities that include opportunities for child-initiated / adult-initiated experiences.
- (c) Activities during the day from a range planned by the educators, or initiated by the child.
- (d) Programs including an evaluation component – assessing the achievement of objectives in terms of desired outcomes, resource suitability, activity suitability, effectiveness of the planning and preparations and future objectives.
- (e) Provide a stimulating environment by offering a range of experiences to help each child in the Centre develop and grow at a rate appropriate to his/her own age and ability.

- (f) Nurture a child's sense of wonder and sense of fun. Play is essential to young children's learning. We endeavour to meet needs of children's natural curiosity by providing opportunities for them to experiment, to discover and solve problems, to find out about themselves, other people and the world around them.
- (g) Give children time to grow, to reflect and to experience success so that they are able to face future challenges, build on their strengths and accept their individual limitations without fear of failure and loss of self-esteem.
- (h) Discourage competition between children.
- (i) Provide children with a warm, caring environment.

4.3 Outdoor experiences will be planned to:

- (a) Develop gross motor skills and risky play.
- (b) Allow the children to learn about the environment, e.g., sand and water play, science and nature activities.
- (c) Give opportunities for both passive and active activities e.g., books or craft outside as well as bikes, balls, climbing equipment etc.
- (d) Allow younger (toddler) and older (preschool) children some time for exclusive use of outdoor area.
- (e) Allow time for adult/child activities on one to one or small group basis. This should be integrated into the program and not used simply as undirected play supervised by adults.

4.4 The following areas will be considered:

- (a) Physical Development: Experiences to promote health, growth and well-being in each child.
- (b) Social and Emotional Development: To develop positive self-esteem and self-confidence; to participate in activities, both routine and new; and to develop skills to encourage fairness, cooperation, conflict resolution and social skills
- (c) Negotiation and teamwork: Effective and constructive use of leisure time; Awareness and responsibility of environment.
- (d) Motor Skills: To help each child to develop gross and fine motor skills appropriate to his/her age.
- (e) Intellectual Development: To assist each child to develop his/her language skills, problem solving ability and perception; Encourage and recognise the potential of the environment inside and outside the centre as a learning experience.
- (f) Creativity: To offer opportunities and guidance to allow the children to develop his/her creative abilities.
- (g) Self Help Skills: To assist each child to develop skills which allow him/her to attain independence appropriate to his/her age and ability in caring for himself/herself, e.g., eating, toileting, dressing, social skills (as listed above), resting, use of leisure and activity time.

4.5 In programming for these objectives, the requirements of Dignity and Rights of the Child and Diversity and Inclusion will be considered. Other considerations are:

- (a) Guidelines set down by the Government and funding bodies.
- (b) Parental involvement in decision making concerning their children's care and education.

Learning Outcome Summaries

4.6 Baringa will keep secure developmental records on each child and will know each child, based on observation and interaction and provide experiences that match each child's unique interest and development.

- (c) The supervisor of each group is to maintain developmental records for each child in his/her group.
- (d) The form of these records should be decided by educators and should be updated at regular intervals, e.g. observation, checklists etc.

- (e) They will form the basis of programming for the group and individual children, including those with additional needs to incorporate all levels of development.
- (f) Families should be made aware of the existence of these records and an opportunity to discuss them should be made available if requested by families or educators.
- (g) Team Leaders will be responsible for these summaries, but may be completed by any educators or students.

Programming Time

- 4.7 A staff responsible for the preparation, implementation and/or evaluation of a developmental program for an individual child or group of children will be provided up to five (5) hours of non-contact time per week. This is referred to as programming time, during which time the staff will not be required to supervise children or perform other duties.
- 4.8 If exceptional circumstances due to operational requirements prevent the staff from undertaking scheduled programming time, Management will provide an alternative programming time within the same week.
- (a) If alternative programming time is not possible within the same week, reasonable adjustments will be made, in collaboration with the staff. Such as combined programming with another team, or extension of a current program.
 - (b) Exceptions circumstances due to operational requirements includes instances when there are a high number of staff on unplanned leave, as such requiring staff ratios to be prioritised by all available staff.
- 4.9 If exceptional circumstances due to operational requirements require staff to have additional scheduled programming time above s4.7, this may be provided at Management's discretion based on operational requirements and financial capacity. For example, if staff are required to temporarily program for more children and/or to develop multiple programs ahead of time for planning purposes.

5. Feedback

- 5.1 Families and staff may provide feedback about this document by emailing admin@baringa.org.au.

6. Approval and Review Details

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Board
Administrator	Management
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History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	1 August 2016
Amendment Authority and Date	31 July 2018 – This policy replaced the Study Leave Policy and Programming Policy of the Policies and Procedural Manual. 31 January 2023 – Updated s1 to include Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements; s4.3(a) risk play and s4.7-4.8 programming time.