

Program, Planning & Documentation

National Quality Standard

1.1.1	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	Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.
1.1.3	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.
1.2.1	Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.
1.2.2	Educators respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback.
1.2.3	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.
1.3.1	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 on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.
1.3.3	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.
3.2.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
3.2.2	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.
3.2.3	The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.
4.1.1	The organisation of educators across the service supports children's learning and development.
5.2.1	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.

National Regulations

73	Educational Program
74	Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program
75	Information about educational program to be kept available
76	Information about educational program to be given to parents
118	Educational Leader

Purpose

The law requires that a program is delivered to all children being educated and cared for by Medowie Gumnut Preschool that:

- * Is based on an approved learning framework
- * Is delivered in a manner that accords with the approved learning framework
- * Is based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child
- * Is designed to take into account the individual differences of each child.

Aim

To ensure that children at Medowie Gumnut Preschool are provided with a varied and stimulating planned activity program aimed at further developing their physical, intellectual, emotional and social growth in an enjoyable, educational and challenging manner.

Who is affected by this Policy?

- * Management
- * Educators
- * Children
- * Families

Definitions

- **Curriculum** – All the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children’s learning and development.
- **Emergent Curriculum** - Emergent curriculum focuses on the spontaneous and incidental curriculum that evolves as children’s interests are explored. It is also based on negotiation and collaboration with educators and families.
- **Intentional Teaching** – Involves educators being deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions. Intentional teaching is the opposite of teaching by rote or continuing with traditions simply because things have ‘always’ been done that way
- **Pedagogy** – The holistic nature of an early childhood educator’s professional practice, especially those aspects that involve building and nurturing relationships, curriculum decision making, teaching and learning.

Implementation

The Director, the Educational Leader, the Early Childhood Teacher and the Educators at Medowie Gumnut Preschool share the responsibility to ensure that:

- * Programs are challenging and engaging for all children
- * Families and educators consult when planning the program
- * Consideration is made of children's and families cultural and religious beliefs
- * Equality is promoted in the program for all children
- * A range of methods are used to discover more about children including; observations, anecdotal records, checklists, samples of work, documentation of projects, running records, discussions with parents, photos, video and cassette tapes
- * Current programs are displayed in the children's rooms for families and educators to refer to
- * Resource agencies are accessed to support the inclusion of children into the program
- * Children's strengths and current skills are considered and built on in the program
- * Transition times are planned for to ensure that they are developmentally appropriate for the group and individual children
- * Program plans ensure that both planned and incidental learning opportunities are catered for.

Planning the educational programSources

Planning involves overall plans for the group of children in each room, and planning for each individual child. Educators develop plans from observations made of the children in their room. Developmentally appropriate activities and experiences are provided each day through the planning process. The importance of learning through play is acknowledged, as play is the natural way children learn about themselves and the world around them.

- * Educational programs will be balanced and varied, and will be flexible enough to allow for spontaneity and the unexpected, including: indoor/outdoor learning experiences; quiet/active times; individual/small group/large group times; time for individual educator/child interaction; and children's individual and group interests, including activities that are physical, creative, exploratory, dramatic, musical, cognitive and involve construction
- * Educators at Medowie Gumnut Preschool will provide individual holistic programs that are responsive to children's lives, interests and learning styles and promote each child's social, cultural, physical, emotional, intellectual, language and creative potential, and meet individual children's play and relaxation needs.
- * Experiences will be provided through a range of mediums including: music, visual, arts, movement, language, literature, drama, maths, technology, science, health, safety, natural environment, equity and cultures.
- * Educators will use observations of children's participation, set up a learning environment that stimulates children's natural curiosity, encourage children to be actively involved in their own learning and decision making, and use the partnerships they have developed with families to enhance and individualise programs for children.
- * Programs, evaluations, and observations of children are recorded in digital form on Story Park. The children's program for each group is displayed in the parent area and educators evaluate the program and revise objectives for the children on a regular basis.

Involving the children

Effective programming also takes into account feedback and observations from all Medowie Gumnut Preschool's stakeholders, most importantly, from the children themselves. Educators at Medowie Gumnut Preschool employ a range of methods to involve children and gain information regarding their skills, knowledge, attitudes, interests, and developmental level in order to plan effectively, which include:

- * Seeking information about children's interests, valuing children's contributions and ideas, and letting the child know they are appreciated
- * Providing a variety of resources and experiences, and setting up the environment so that shelving/storage for equipment and toys is easily accessible, allowing children to make choices about their experiences, and observing children's preferred choices
- * One to one discussions with children during which educators ask them what they would like to do and what they think about their experiences
- * Observing group interests and group interactions
- * Holding meetings and allowing children to raise issues and become decision maker
- * Encouraging children to manage some aspects of the program independently.

Collaborating with families

Family input, suggestions and feedback regarding the program is always welcome, and Medowie Gumnut Preschool will always respect the extent to which families wish to be involved. Parents are also encouraged to discuss their child's development with the educators; however, to ensure a confidential environment, and to avoid disrupting child/educators ratios, parents are encouraged to pre-arrange a time to do this.

- * During enrolment at Medowie Gumnut Preschool, families are asked to complete information sheets about their child's abilities and behaviours, to assist educators to assess the child's current developmental level, and establish suitable routines for the child.
- * Educators will initiate and facilitate regular on-going communication with families concerning their child's participation. Families are informed promptly and sensitively of any issues or concerns in regard to their child. Recorded information will be available for discussion.
- * Program is displayed in our parent area in a position where families are able to see it and can discuss any aspect of the program with the educators. Our program is also available on Story park for all families to view at their leisure and provide suggestions/feedback.
- * Families are encouraged to have input into program development especially in relation to their own child's participation, and in sharing aspects of their culture, skills and any interesting experiences.
- * Programs will reflect the cultural differences of all families using Medowie Gumnut Preschool, and we will celebrate special events with the children that reflect the cultural heritage and ethnic origins of children attending Medowie Gumnut Preschool. Educators will work with families to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of learning experiences for children.

Assessment for wellbeing, learning and development

Assessment is designed to discover what children know and understand, based on what they make, write, draw, say and do. The educational experience of children is evaluated in relation to achievements, incidental experiences and outcomes, with a focus on wellbeing, learning and development.

- * All of the educators at Medowie Gumnut Preschool are responsible for working cooperatively to monitor the individual development of each child within their care.
- * All of the educators at Medowie Gumnut Preschool are responsible for evaluating learning programs in relation to:
 - Approved learning framework – the early Years Learning Framework for Australia
 - Medowie Gumnut Preschool's statement of philosophy and Code of Conduct
 - Individual children's learning and development.
- * A range of methods are used to discover more about children including observations, anecdotal records, checklists, samples of work, documentation of projects, running records, discussions with families, photos, and video recording
- * The developmental records will incorporate observations of stages of development, children's interests, and learning and play experiences, relationships with children and staff, strengths and abilities, child's progress against the outcomes of the educational program, and recommendations for program planning.
- * Records of child assessments for the delivery of the educational program will be kept for 3 years in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2018, and may be accessed by the child's family at any time.

Daily Routines

- * Routines at Medowie Gumnut Preschool are built around regular events of the day – arrival, meals and snack times, toileting, washing, dressing, sleeping and departure.
- * Routines will take into account the developmental needs of individual children, children's attendance patterns, climate and physical environment, the numbers and ages of children within a given group, children with additional and/or high support needs, new children entering the group and family expectations.
- * Flexibility is built into routines so that children's involvement in activities and any additional care needs are accommodated.

Medowie Gumnut Preschool's educational program in action

The educational program at Medowie Gumnut Preschool is child-centred and allows children to experience a variety of materials and pursue their own interests. The educational program is flexible and may change due to weather, time of day, time of year, and also to encompass spontaneous events that may occur.

- * Medowie Gumnut Preschool provides a range of equipment and toys for all children to play with regardless of gender. Both boys and girls are encouraged to explore a full range of experiences and emotions.
- * Educators offer appropriate choices to children, talk to them about the choices available to them, and help them to decide what to do if needed. There will always be alternatives when a child does not wish to participate in a particular activity, or chooses to initiate their own experiences and play.
- * Children will be challenged and encouraged to take 'safe' risks in order to:
 - Develop their problem solving skills
 - Build resilience, confidence and social competence
 - Extend their strength, fitness levels and coordination through physically challenging activities
 - Learn about taking safe risks by raising their consciousness of risks and the consequences of particular actions or choice
- * Educators will ensure the supervision of children in line with Medowie Gumnut Preschool's Supervision of Children Policy, and ensure that the supervision is appropriate to the child's stage of development and protects their safety and wellbeing at all times.
- * Educators at Medowie Gumnut Preschool join in the children's play, appreciate their attempts to acquire new skills, and encourage them to try new experiences.
- * Children are regularly reminded of safety procedures for play equipment.
- * Educators use children's real life experiences to engage children in learning opportunities. Families are encouraged to share their cultural traditions, customs and beliefs with educators so that children's rights to have their cultural identities acknowledged and values can be upheld.
- * Educators monitor noise levels in the environment and adjust activities with children to ensure noise levels are appropriate and do not interfere with purposeful play or activity.

Health and Safety Education

Educators at Medowie Gumnut Preschool take an active approach in educating the children on health and safety issues. This includes activities such as:

- * Hygiene practices such as hand washing, nose blowing, coughing and sneezing, teeth brushing
- * Fire safety including matches and lighters, and what to do in the event of a fire
- * Community safety and neighbourhood programs including traffic, strangers and waste. Medowie Gumnut Preschool liaises with other community groups such as the police and Fire Brigade to obtain materials and information on health and safety issues.

Environmental Education

Educators at Medowie Gumnut Preschool involve the children in the planning and decision making of environmentally focused improvements.

- * Children are educated about environmental protection and conservation to encourage them to adopt sustainable practices that they carry on through life.
- * Educators are encouraged and supported in environmental practices so that they become appropriate role models for children and families.
- * Curriculum decision making practices of educators consider how children develop an awareness of the impact of human activity on environments and the interdependence of living things.
- * Medowie Gumnut Preschool provides an outdoor space which allows children to explore and experience the natural environment, which includes adequate shaded areas to protect children from overexposure to the sun.

Reflective Practice

Educators at Medowie Gumnut Preschool become more effective through critical reflection and a strong culture of professional enquiry, by:

- * Gathering information that supports, informs, assesses and enriches decision making about their pedagogy
- * Using evidence to inform planning for early childhood experiences and pedagogy
- * Promoting practices that have been shown to be successful in supporting children's learning and development – and challenging and changing some practices based on their continually developing professional knowledge and skills which enable them to provide the best possible learning and development opportunities for all children at Medowie Gumnut Preschool.

Responsibilities

Educators will work in partnership with children, families and other professionals to:

- * Plan effectively for children's learning and wellbeing
- * Communicate with families about children's development and wellbeing
- * Evaluate children's progress towards achieving intended outcomes
- * Identify children who may need additional support
- * Evaluate the effectiveness of the education and care environment at Medowie Gumnut Preschool and the experiences offered, and the approaches taken by educators to achieve the best learning and developmental outcomes for each child
- * Reflect on their own professional practice and relationships with children and families and use this knowledge to improve the effectiveness of the program and teaching strategies.

Educational Leader will:

- Lead the development and implementation of educational programs at Medowie Gumnut Preschool.

General Information

Belonging Being & Becoming the Early Years Framework for Australia (EYLF); What does it mean for Medowie Gumnut Preschool?

This framework provides a foundation for educators at Medowie Gumnut Preschool in their work supporting children's learning and development.

- * The EYLF is a national framework for working with children birth – 5 years. Implementation of the EYLF began in July 2009. Medowie Gumnut Preschool is developing its own strategy to implement the Framework, taking its own unique context into consideration. The EYLF was written specifically for educators. The EYLF provides detailed pedagogical information and strategies about how educators can promote learning in the five Learning Outcomes.

Sources

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Review

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