

SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY

PURPOSE:

To ensure that the program is continually reviewed and adapted to meet the needs and interests of the children who attend the centre bearing in mind cultural background and doing so without bias to culture, sex or ability.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Gender Equity The centre recognises that sexism is a system in which gender is deemed to be the decisive factor in matters concerning rights, choices and opportunities. It is the centre's policy to consider gender issues irrelevant and to ensure equal opportunity exists in employment and shared responsibilities occur in work and care practices. Therefore, it is the policy of the centre that programming is based on assessed individual needs of each child and implemented in a non-sexist, unbiased environment.

Reviewed and Updated: 8 July 2005
Source: NSW Anti-Discrimination Board
Ethnics Community Council

Multicultural Perspective

Elder Street embraces the fact that our nation is comprised of families with diverse ethnic origins, cultural practices and linguistic backgrounds.

We also value contributions made in our society by families of Aboriginal / Torres Strait and South Sea Islanders Communities. Our multicultural perspective is emphasised by planning multicultural programs. An opportunity is given whereby young children can experience in many concrete and meaningful ways the rich variety of human experience. This helps to enhance their own self-esteem and cultural identity and their awareness, concern and respect for others.

It is the centre's policy to provide and encourage this awareness and acceptance of other cultures by: Programming music, art, games and stories characteristics of other countries. By presenting children with a variety of multicultural experiences such as celebration of festival days and the preparation of international cuisine whilst at the same time respecting families wishes for the religious or cultural aspects of eating, drinking and food handling.

By reflecting other cultures through posters, artwork and displays at the centre. By arranging visits by people of other cultures to the centre.

Reviewed: 10 June 2005
Source: Ethnics Community Council

Inclusion for Children with Special Needs

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre has a strong commitment to the inclusion of children with special needs at this centre. Such special needs may include children with physical impairments, intellectual delays and exceptional awareness. Inclusion is a term, which refers to an approach or an environment in which all children / people belong equally, and each individual is valued for the unique attributes and qualities that he/she possesses. Through inclusion this centre aims to ensure that: All children within each community are offered the choice to participate and enjoy experiences with their peers. Growth in dignity, self-confidence and self-esteem is encouraged.

The staff at Elder Street Early Childhood Centre enjoy a good professional relationship with other agencies and undertakes to liaise with such agencies. To utilize each agencies expertise in its given field ensuring that the best possible individual program is formulated for the child with special needs. To adapt the environment at the centre to ensure a smooth transition of children with Special Needs.

We at Elder Street Early Childhood Centre believe that all children contribute and benefit from integration into mainstream of early childhood education. However we also acknowledge that in some cases this centre may not be the most suitable environment in which the special needs child may grow and develop. In these rare cases the executive staff and family of the child may enter into an agreement which stipulates a set trial period. During this period staff may research the diagnosis and liaise with health professionals and other agencies in order to ensure that they can provide the necessary care and education.

If at the completion of the trial period the staff in consultation with parents agree that the centre cannot meet the child's needs, staff and other professional agencies will assist parents to make more appropriate choices.

In order to ensure that all social justice policies are implemented staff will:

- Respect children as individuals
- Provide equal opportunity for each child to access all learning experiences
- Regularly assess the interaction materials and equipment provided to children for any evidence of gender or other biases.
- Ensure that the language they use reflects their commitment to equity, equal opportunity and justice.
- Monitor their responses and behaviours to biases.
- Assist children to appreciate the importance of equality and equal opportunity. Consult with families about gender equity and equal opportunity issues.

Reviewed: 10 June 2005

Source: Ethnic Community Services Special Education Centre
Outreach Program – The University of Newcastle
Integration & Inclusion in Action – P. Forema