

Educational Program and Practice Policy



Document Title	NQS1.10 Educational Program and Practice Policy	Version	3
Date Approved	June 2025	Date for Review	June 2028
Warning - Ensure you are using the latest version of this policy.			
DCC Network/All Organisation Information/Policies/Quality Area 1 – Educational Program and Practice			

1. Policy Statement

River Region Early Education (RREE) has a commitment to ensuring that all children being educated and cared for can participate in educational programs that contribute to their sense of identity and wellbeing, connection and contribution to their world, effective communication and confidence and involvement in learning. RREE ensures educational programs are informed by an approved learning framework (Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)), are planned, child-centred and play-based, and educational practice includes intentionality, responsive teaching and scaffolding, child-directed learning, and critical reflection. Educational programs and practice include programmed learning opportunities and an assessment and planning cycle that identifies and assesses each child's learning goals, learning, development and progress.

2. Rationale

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations require services to have an educational program based on an approved framework that contributes to outcomes for each child and to document assessments of each child's developmental needs, interests, experiences and participation in the educational program, and assessments of the child's progress against outcomes. The National Quality Framework (NQF) and Standards require services to ensure the educational program enhances each child's learning and development, that educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development and take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the educational program for each child. This policy provides clear guidance for educators and those supporting educators about expectations for educational programming, observations, assessments and evaluations, documentation, and educational practice.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, including students and trainees, and volunteers, including Board members.

4. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Board as Approved Provider to ensure that:

- Each service has an educational program delivered to all children being educated and cared for that is based on and delivered in accord with an approved learning framework, based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and designed to take into account the individual differences of each child,
- Each service has an educational program that contributes to the following outcomes for each child:

Educational Program and Practice Policy

- The child will have a strong sense of identity,
 - The child will be connected with and contribute to his, her or their world,
 - The child will have a strong sense of wellbeing,
 - The child will be a confident and involved learner, and
 - The child will be an effective communicator,
- For the purposes of the educational program, assessments of the child's developmental needs, interests, experiences and participation in the educational program, and assessments of the child's progress against the outcomes of the educational program are documented with consideration for the period of time the child is enrolled, how the documentation will be used by educators, and the documentation is prepared in a way that is readily understandable by educators and the parents of the child,
- Information about the contents and operation of the educational program for the service is displayed at the education and care service premises at a place accessible to parents of children being educated and cared for by the service,
- A copy of the educational program is available at the education and care service premises for inspection on request,
- A parent of a child being educated and cared for by the service is provided with the following information on request:
 - Information about the content and operation of the educational program so far as it relates to that child,
 - Information about the child's participation in the program, and
 - A copy of child assessment or evaluation documents in respect of the child, and
- Prescribed enrolment and other documents, including the documentation of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of the educational program, are stored in a safe and secure place and for the relevant period set out in regulation as described in *NQS7.56 Governance and Organisation Management Policy*.

It is the responsibility of the General Manager to:

- Carry out or delegate the responsibilities of the Board as listed above, and
- Support the capacity and professional development of Nominated Supervisors, Educational Leaders, teachers and educators in educational programming and practice that is in accord with the approved learning framework.

It is the responsibility of Nominated Supervisors to:

- Support the capacity of Educational Leaders, teachers and educators in the design and delivery of the educational program and ongoing planning cycle,
- Support the capacity of educators to understand and demonstrate the principles and practices of the EYLF, including working collaboratively, being responsive to children, facilitating play-based learning and intentionality, creating inclusive learning environments and being culturally responsive in their educational practice, and
- Ensure information about the contents and operation of the educational program is displayed in their service and accessible to families.

It is the responsibility of Educational Leaders to:

- Design and implement educational programs and curriculum that reflect the EYLF Principles and Practices and are based on the funds of knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities, and interests of children enrolled at the service,

Educational Program and Practice Policy

- Draw on a range of theories, perspectives, child-centred approaches and place-based pedagogies in the development of curriculum relevant to children in their local context,
- Display information about the contents and operation of the educational program at the education and care service premises at a place accessible to parents,
- Support educators to understand and demonstrate the principles and practices of the EYLF, including working collaboratively, being responsive to children, facilitating play-based learning and intentionality, creating inclusive learning environments and being culturally responsive in their educational practice, and
- Support educators to actively participate in an ongoing planning cycle in accordance with *NQS1.10A Educational Program and Practice Procedures*.

It is the responsibility of educators to:

- Support every child to participate in the educational program,
- Understand and demonstrate the principles and practices outlined in the EYLF,
- Actively participate in an ongoing planning cycle that involves observing, documenting, assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating for children's learning, development and wellbeing in accordance with *NQS1.10A Educational Program and Practice Procedures*,
- Take into account children's physical, personal, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing and cognitive aspects of learning and their connections with family, community and the natural world when planning and assessing children's learning,
- Work in partnership with children, families, other professionals and communities to build on the strengths of each other's knowledge and skills to achieve learning outcomes for children,
- Be attuned to and respond in ways that best suit each child's strengths, capabilities and curiosity, including trauma informed practice and strategies used by children with additional needs to negotiate their everyday lives,
- Be responsive to children's funds of knowledge, ideas, sociality and playfulness and assess, anticipate and extend children's learning, development and wellbeing through open-ended questioning, challenging their thinking and making use of planned and spontaneous 'teachable moments' to scaffold children's learning,
- Act with intentionality in all aspects of the curriculum by acting deliberately, thoughtfully and purposefully to support children's learning through play,
- Ensure learning environments are welcoming, safe and inclusive and reflect, affirm the identities of and enrich the lives of children and families,
- Be culturally responsive and integrate the culture and context of children's families and communities into curriculum and practice,
- Observe and listen to children and use documentation to record children's voices, experiences and responses to the learning environment in a way that is meaningful and has a minimal impact on engagement with children's learning,
- Engage in ongoing critical reflection of their practice with individual children and in groups to inform decisions about the type and degree of support offered, and
- Provide information about the educational program, their child's participation and assessment and evaluation documentation to parents on request.

5. Definitions

All of the following definitions are drawn from Early Years Learning Framework 2.0.

Assessment strategies – Includes observations, documentation, reflections and gathering of information about, and with, children and their families. Through assessment, educators describe and interpret children's actions, interactions and communications to consider their achievements, capabilities and wellbeing in relation to the EYLF Learning Outcomes.

Cultural responsiveness – A contemporary way to think about culture that enables individuals and organisations to be respectful of everyone's backgrounds, beliefs, values, customs, knowledges, lifestyles and social behaviours. Being culturally responsive includes a genuine commitment to take action against discrimination in any form, embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all aspects of the curriculum and working collaboratively with culturally and linguistically diverse children and families.

Curriculum - In the early childhood setting includes all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children's learning, development and wellbeing.

Critical reflection - A meaning-making process that assists informing future practice in ways that demonstrate an understanding of each child's learning, development and wellbeing and implications for equity and social justice. It involves examining and analysing events, experiences and practices from a range of perspectives to inform future planning and decision-making.

Development - The sequence of physical, language, cognitive, emotional and social changes that occur in a child from birth through to adulthood. Development and learning are dynamic processes that reflect the complex interplay between a child's heredity, biological characteristics and the environment, which includes family, friends, communities and early childhood settings.

Documentation – The range of methods used by educators to gather information about children, identify and analyse learning, plan and evaluate the program.

Evaluation - Educators' critical reflection on and analysis of information, and consideration of the effectiveness of their planning and implementation of curriculum for children's learning, development and wellbeing.

Funds of knowledge - The historically accumulated experiences and understandings that an individual has and includes abilities, skills, bodies of knowledge, life experiences and cultural ways of interacting. A child's funds of knowledge are often described as a "virtual backpack" of all the life experiences and knowledge they bring into the early childhood setting.

Intentionality - Being thoughtful and purposeful in actions and making decisions that is something that both children and educators can do. Educators are intentional in the roles they take in children's play and the way they intentionally plan the environment and curriculum experiences.

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

Scaffold - The educators' decisions and actions that build on children's existing knowledge and skills to enhance their learning, development and wellbeing.

Trauma informed practice - Responsive practice made possible by awareness of the impact of trauma on children's learning, development and wellbeing. This includes recognising the signs and symptoms of trauma in children, responding by making places and relationships feel safe and supportive to children, and helping children to develop their capacity for emotional regulation.

6. Guidelines

Educational programs at RREE services are based on the Early Years Learning Framework which supports early childhood providers, teachers and educators to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to 5 years and through the transition to school.

a) Educational programs

Educational Leaders in each service take responsibility for the development and delivery of an educational program that is informed by pedagogical expertise and based on the knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities, and interests of children enrolled at the service.

The educational program is on display in each service and information about the program, their child's participation in the program and assessment and evaluation documentation are available to families on request.

b) Educational practice

Educational practice at RREE services is guided by the Early Years Learning Framework Principles and Practices.

The EYLF Principles underpin practice and reflect contemporary theories, perspectives and research evidence concerning children's learning and early childhood pedagogy. Educators consider ethical, socially just and inclusive principles for children's learning in the early years when they:

- Build secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships,
- Develop partnerships,
- Are respectful of diversity,
- Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives,
- Commit to equity, inclusion and high expectations,
- Consider sustainability in all its forms,
- Engage in critical reflection and professional learning, and
- Exercise collaborative leadership and work as a team.

Educators draw on a rich repertoire of pedagogical practices to inform curriculum for children's learning, development and wellbeing by:

- Adopting holistic approaches,
- Being responsive to children,
- Planning and implementing play-based learning with intentionality,
- Creating physical, temporal, intellectual, social and emotional environments,
- Valuing the cultural and social contexts of children and their families,
- Providing continuity in experiences and enabling effective transitions, and
- Analysing, assessing, monitoring and evaluating children's learning, distance travelled, development and wellbeing in ways to understand, acknowledge and document children's progress and their achievement of learning outcomes.

c) Planning cycle

The Early Years Learning Framework identifies the planning cycle as the process educators follow in planning, documenting, responding to and supporting children's learning.

Educational Program and Practice Policy

The RREE planning cycle is the ongoing process used by educators, with support from the Educational Leader and in partnership with children, families and other professionals, to design programs that enhance and extend each child's learning and development.

The planning cycle is detailed in *NQS1.10A Educational Program and Practice Procedures* and involves the use of a variety of tools, including tools to:

- Gather information about different aspects of children's abilities, ideas, learning, development, wellbeing and family and community context,
- Assess children's strengths, capacities, learning and engagement,
- Plan and design learning and teaching strategies to enrich and extend children's learning,
- Implement learning plans with intentionality through planned and spontaneous experiences and during routines, and
- Evaluate the meaningfulness and effectiveness of the implementation of plans and the 'distance travelled' for children through critical reflection.

d) Learning environments

Welcoming, safe and inclusive indoor and outdoor learning environments reflect, respect, affirm the identities of, and enrich the lives of children and families. Educators plan and provide both active and calming spaces as well as times in the daily schedule for active and quiet play and sustained time in both indoor and outdoor spaces. Learning environments and resources promote the wellbeing and cultural diversity of children and their physical, social, emotional, cognitive and language development.

7. Relevant Legislation, Regulations and Standards

Education and Care Services National Law	
168	Offence relating to required programs
Education and Care Services National Regulation	
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
177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
183	Storage of records and other documents
National Quality Standards	
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.

Educational Program and Practice Policy

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.
7.2.2	The educational leader is supported and leads the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle.
Child Safe Standards	
2	Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
3	Families and communities are informed and involved
4	Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account
Early Years Learning Framework Learning Outcomes	
1	Children have a strong sense of identity
2	Children are connected with and contribute to their world
3	Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
4	Children are confident and involved learners
5	Children are effective communicators
Early Years Learning Framework Principles	
	Secure, respectful, and reciprocal relationships
	Partnerships
	Respect for diversity
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives
	Equity, inclusion, and high expectations
	Sustainability
	Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning
	Collaborative leadership and teamwork
Early Years Learning Framework Practices	
	Holistic, integrated, and interconnected approaches
	Responsiveness to children
	Play-based learning and intentionality
	Learning environments
	Cultural responsiveness

Educational Program and Practice Policy

	Continuity of learning and transitions
	Assessment and evaluation for learning, development, and wellbeing

8. Related Documents

Doc #	Attachments
NQS1.10A	Educational Program and Practice Procedures
NQS1.10B	Family Profile
NQS1.10C	Child Profile
NQS1.10D	Observations Template
NQS1.10E	Child Goals Template
NQS1.10F	Learning Story Template
NQS1.10G	Goal Evaluation Template
NQS1.10H	Program Planning Tool
NQS1.10J	Intentional Experience Planning Tool
NQS1.10K	Family Feedback
NQS1.10L	Summative Assessment Template
NQS1.10M	Planning Cycle Tracking Tool
NQS1.10N	Audit Planning Cycle Tracking Tool
NQS1.10O	Developmental Milestones

Doc #	Intersections with other key documents
NQS7.56	Governance and Organisation Management Policy
	Early Years Learning Framework 2.0

9. Document Control

Doc #	Doc Title	Version	Approved	Next Review
NQS1.10	Programming and Documentation Policy	1	February 2017	February 2019
NQS1.10	Educational Program and Practice Policy	2	November 2021	November 2024
NQS1.10	Educational Program and Practice Policy	2a	Jan 2024	November 2024
NQS1.10	Educational Program and Practice Policy	3	June 2025	June 2028