

ANTI BIAS, SOCIAL JUSTICE, INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY PROCEDURE

Policy Hierarchy link	Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 Anti Discrimination Act 1977 Disability Discrimination regulation 1996 Equal employment opportunity Act 1987 Sex discrimination Act 1984 Racial discrimination regulation 1987 UNSW Policies: Equity; Anti-Racism; Students with Disabilities.		
Responsible Officer	Vice-President, University Services		
Contact Officer	General Manager – j.carlisle@unsw.edu.au 9385 1708		
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Associated Documents			
Version	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date
2.0	Early Years Management	6 May 2015	6 June 2015

1. Purpose and Scope

Purpose

Celebrating and respecting the similarities and differences (diversity) of each other's culture, knowledge, and experience enriches our own life experience. Addressing biases and actively seeking opportunities to challenge and criticise normative discourse and explore diversity with children is important if we are to have a positive impact on social justice issues that exist within the centres and wider community.

The exploration of diversity not only encourages individuality and increases our sense of self worth, self esteem and belonging, it also prepares us to stand up to injustice.

Children learn from observing and imitating the behaviours, attitudes and values that are role modelled to them as well as those portrayed in the environment. As educators we will provide positive role models for appropriate and acceptable social interactions, which celebrate diversity and contribute to harmony within our centre and wider community.

The purpose of the procedure is to:

- Identify biases that exist in society and help empower children to make decisions based that do not rely on stereotypes.
- Raise awareness within the centres of basic human rights
- Value children as active citizens in their own right.
- Promote positive attitudes towards diversity and to value all people including and not limited to those:
 - of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage
 - from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - who may be socially isolated or socially constructed as vulnerable

- of all abilities, including children with additional rights
- from diverse family structures, including gay or lesbian families
- from a range of socio-economic backgrounds.

Scope

This policy will apply to all families, all centre staff, volunteers, students,) and Management of UNSW Early Years.

This policy complements and operates in conjunction with existing UNSW policies including Anti Racism Policy, Equity and Diversity Policy Statement.

2. Definitions

Culture - *Culture is a person's or group of people's way of life. It includes surface level aspects, such as the clothes, activities such as child rearing practices and traditions, as well as values and attitudes, which are the deepest level of culture (Arthur, Beecher, Dockett, Farmer and Death, 2007).* Culture can include race, religion, ethnicity, language, beliefs and traditions.

Anti-bias approach - An anti-bias approach consists of policies and practices which deal with all aspects of diversity and addresses issues of bias, such as culture, language, physical appearance, gender, lifestyle, beliefs, sexual preference, family structure, ability and age to prevent the development of prejudices and stereotypes resulting in discrimination.

Family - Those adults and children who have significant relationships with children incorporating diverse family composition, extended family and kinship ties.

Inclusive Curriculum - Inclusive curriculum means minimising the barriers to access and successful participation in education programs so that no group of learners are excluded from achieving the outcomes.

Additional needs - This also refers to children who may be gifted, have identified delays or require additional support for developmental, cultural or social reasons.

3. Implementation

3.1 Children

Staff will develop and implement a program for children that address bias, recognise diversity and injustices within society, and encourages each child to develop to their full potential.

This will be achieved by:

- Viewing all children with many strengths and abilities and as active social constructors of their own learning, particularly children with additional needs.
- Providing children with opportunities to explore diversity and celebrate culture. This can be done at an obvious level such as through use of languages, music, and equipment, , community events and through less obvious means such as modelling co-operation, social responsibility, awareness of others, empathy and acceptance.
- Actively encouraging all children to show empathy and assertiveness whilst respecting the rights of others.

- Providing equal opportunities for and reflecting on the use of space by boys and girls to enter experiences based on their interests, needs and strengths rather than gender stereotyping.
- Providing experiences for children with additional needs within the daily program ensuring an inclusive curriculum.
- Providing opportunities to learn about and appreciate Australian Indigenous cultures, heritage and languages.
- Ensuring that interactions with children are supportive and unbiased.
- Planning for opportunities for children to critically analyse popular culture, media and stories, to use role-play to solve problems relating to unfairness.
- Providing children with opportunities to make connections with the local community.

3.2 Families

A relationship of reciprocal rights and responsibilities will be developed with all families in the following ways:

- Ensuring all families are made aware of, and have the opportunity to read this procedure. Showing sensitivity and respect for the range of family structures including same sex parents.
- Understanding that child rearing practices and family values will contribute to children's early development and as such communication about home routines, religious practices, communication style (verbal and non-verbal), health and safety, and cultural values will be encouraged.
- Accessing wherever deemed necessary by centre or family, additional support and assessments from specialists to ensure that the best educational environment for that child can be developed.
- Facilitating staff awareness of possible conflicts between the values and practices of children's families and those values within the centre and creating sensitive communication strategies and openness to different possibilities.
- Ensuring that all times cultural practices does not contravene practices within the legal requirements placed on the centre.
- Encouraging and supporting families to participate in their child's program through both verbal and written communication.
- Translations of materials will be provided where possible and required. .
- Encouraging families to share their culture, values and interests eg. languages, meal preparation, skills and practices within the home environment.
- Acknowledging that equal participation does not mean everyone participates in the same way.
- Valuing multiple perspectives (other than those values which lead to the discrimination of others) and empowering families as decision-makers about their children's wellbeing.
- Providing for family social events that support families all families to develop a sense of belonging at the centre.

3.3 The program and environment

The program and environment will incorporate resources and experiences, which challenge stereotypes and value diversity. Children will be encouraged to critically analyse dominant discourses through their play and conversations.

This will be achieved through:

- Using language which is inclusive and non-discriminatory and that which avoids objectification in regards to people with additional needs.
- Providing an environment that respects diversity through its use of resources.
- Employing a diverse staff team who will use their home language within the centre in all its forms.
- Encouraging children to explore their own hidden values, and misconceptions in society through simple discussion about issues.
- Encouraging children to verbalise their feelings towards each other and to work through their own emotions and conflicts.
- Providing opportunities for children to participate in experiences which help them recognise bias and stereotypes. These experiences may be planned or take opportunities that arise spontaneously within the daily program and in children's play.
- Providing children with strategies to take action against bias and which encourage critical thinking and problem solving.
- Incorporating the use of external specialists in order to ensure all children, including children with different abilities, have access to all areas of the centre's program.
- Planning for successful transition between areas of the centre to support the child's wellbeing and continuity in the learning environment.
- Providing equipment and resources that reflect positive images of difference, variety of abilities and inclusion.
- Ensuring resources and equipment respectfully and realistically reflect Australia's indigenous heritage and multi-cultural society.
- Supporting the second language (English) to be learnt in addition to, rather than as a replacement of, the home language.
- Working with families to learn and use key words and statements as well as written forms of the child's home language to use in all aspects of the program.
- Supporting staff who share a child's home language or any other language to use it throughout the day and to assist children to make connections with English.
- Including sign language, local Aboriginal dialects and other languages in the program in a variety of contexts.
- Respecting all family types and challenging discriminatory and homophobic attitudes.
- Identifying and combating stereotypes and any discriminatory behaviours including racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia and classism.
- Valuing the system of extended family kinship and welcoming them in the Centre.
- Seeking ways to involve local Indigenous Elders in the children's programs.

- Supporting community activities aimed at reconciliation.
- Ensuring resources and experiences do not reflect gender stereotypes or sexist images or behaviours. Deconstructing gender stereotypes within the community and media and discussing the power relations within. These narratives can then be reconstructed to reflect multiple possibilities.
- Ensuring all family structures, including gay and lesbian families, have a positive and visible presence within the Centre.
- Using non-sexist language and acknowledging children's attempts and achievements rather than their appearance.
- Using the principles contained in this policy to facilitate all areas of curriculum such as areas of literacy (including critical literacy) and numeracy, media and technologies.
- Ensuring that the environment is safe for all both physically and emotionally.

3.4 Staff

Staff will develop knowledge, understanding, appreciation and sensitivity of diversity issues through:

- Being encouraged to seek awareness of her/his own feelings, beliefs and background, evaluating the effect these may have on attitudes and interactions with families.
- Generating discussions at staff and other meetings to combat discrimination that may exist amongst staff. Seeking to employ staff from a range of social and cultural backgrounds including bilingual and bicultural staff as well as staff of different genders and age groups.
- Providing professional development for staff to extend their knowledge of social justice, inclusive and anti-bias practices through training opportunities, resources and publications.
- Establishing and maintaining links with organisations, which promote social justice and inclusion and/or provide specialised support or resources.
- Actively seeking information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait cultures and Indigenous issues within the local and wider community.

3.5 Wider Community

Networking with community organisations and accessing resources which support the development of an anti-bias approach will be implemented by:

- Recognising and utilising the local Indigenous community as a significant resource.
- Utilising the resources available within UNSW.
- Seeking specialised assistance/additional support to successfully include children with additional needs.
- Maintaining updated information about children with additional needs.
- Planning an Individualised Educational Plan for children in collaboration with families and other professionals/agencies.
- Seeking support/funding to provide any building or environment modifications that may be required.

- Borrowing equipment that may be required to support inclusion and seeking training to appropriately use it.
- Working collaboratively with other services to support the child in the transition to other learning environment.

4. Review & History

5. Acknowledgements

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Community Child Care Cooperative (NSW) - www.cccnsw.org.au Accessed May 2015

ECA Code of ethics - www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au Accessed May 2015

UNSW Policies: Equity, Anti-Racism, Students with Disabilities.

Related legislation

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Anti Discrimination Act 1977

Disability Discrimination regulation 1996

Equal Employment Opportunity Act 1987

Sex Discrimination Act 1984

Racial Discrimination regulation 1987

Appendix A: History

The authorisation and amendment history for this document must be listed in the following table. Refer to information about [Version Control](#) on the Policy website.

Version	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections modified
1.0	Vice President, University Services	11 November 2013	11 November 2013	
2.0	Early Years Management	6 May 2015	6 June 2015	