

# Anti-Bias & Inclusion Policy



## PURPOSE

The Farmhouse Montessori School believes all children, families and the community should be supported to participate successfully and harmoniously in the school's curriculum and activities. 'Belonging, Being and Becoming (The Early Years Framework for Australia) clearly states that all children, regardless of their abilities, the family constellation to which they belong, or the community they belong, or the community that the family resides, have a right to simply belong, be and become.' (1). We therefore ensure that we not only 'assist each family to develop a sense of belonging and inclusion', we 'respect uniqueness of each family and strive to learn about their culture, structure, lifestyle, customs, language, beliefs and kinship systems' as stated in the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics.

An anti-bias environment helps all children to feel safe, respected, important and valued. Such an environment will be developed through ensuring that:

## IMPLEMENTATION

### *Enrolments:*

All children regardless of race, religion, or disability have opportunities and access to the School without discrimination. When accepting a child with a disability or learning difficulty, consideration is given to the ability of the School to cater for his/her needs or whether another facility may need to be recommended for the best development of the child.

### *Employment:*

Farmhouse Montessori School is an equal opportunity employer.

### *Program & procedures:*

Some of the ways in which the children's environment offers experiences of appreciation of differences:

### *Sex and Age*

- multi-age classroom providing children with examples of differences within their own community group
- gender- bias- free experiences indoors and out with boys and girls encourage to participate if they wish, in activities
- conventionally performed by the opposite sex in an atmosphere of inclusiveness

### *In Relation to Cultural or National Origin and Racial Identity;*

- Children and Educators will have access to information and training about other cultures/ racial identity, especially those relevant in the Service.
- Educators will work with one another, families and children to continue to extend both their individual and communities cultural competence.
- Educators will expose children to a wide variety of concrete materials from daily life of families/cultures.
- Where possible, the Service will employ Educators that reflect various cultural, national origin and racial identities.
- Educators will affirm and foster children's knowledge and pride in cultural identity.
- Educators will foster children's curiosity, enjoyment and empathetic awareness of cultural differences and similarities.

- Educators will teach children to overcome any inappropriate responses triggered by cultural differences.
- Educators will encourage children to ask about their own and other's physical characteristics.
- Educators will enable children to feel pride, but not superiority, about their racial identity. Educators will help children to become aware of our shared physical characteristics - what makes us all human.
- Educators will encourage parent input into the program, sharing culture, racial identity i.e. First language and to participate on a level that they feel comfortable
- Educators will collect information from each family on enrollment and incorporate it in the program to meet individual family needs re: ethnicity and home language
- Educators where possible will use both the Educators and children's first language verbally and visually within the Service environment.
- Educators will respect all cultures by presenting photographs, pictures, play equipment, books, posters, music, dramatic play and dolls that will encourage open discussion and exploration.
- Where possible creative materials will include 2D and 3D materials of different skin tones.
- Educators will present books that reflect different languages and children's first language.
- Culturally-based food preparation and utensils in Practical Life, e.g. chopsticks, cooking, etc.
- furnishings from different cultures, e.g. floor cushions for seating
- language enrichment from pictures of people living on each of the Earth's continents
- songs and taped music in languages other than English
- books and posters of culturally varied experiences, books in other-than-English
- books and posters on children with disabilities involved in activities
- celebrations of holidays arising from the children's cultural and personal backgrounds, e.g. Chinese New Year, Diwali, Christmas, Hannukah
- staff and parents contributing cultural experiences of their own, e.g. Thai dress, Sri Lankan stories, etc.
- use of maps, flags, and cultural folders and language cards
- visiting performers from Australia & other countries telling culturally-based

*In Relation to Gender Equity;*

- Educators will ensure that all children are given equal opportunities to engage in all experiences and interactions regardless of their gender.
- Educators will monitor and reflect on their own interactions for bias and reflect regularly on the language used with children.
- Educators will aim to use gender inclusive language.
- Educators will offer opportunities for both male and female family members to be equally involved within the program.
- Educators will assist children to identify stereotypes and unfair treatment so that they can discuss ways in which to include the perspectives of others.
- Educators will be positive role models, such as male Educators modeling nurturing dolls/ babies, female Educators involved in woodwork maintenance.
- Educators will provide resource materials that are not stereotypical.
- Educators will provide diversity of gender play e.g. Mechanic workshop, males and females in work and play clothes.
- Educators will provide a balance of men and women involved in a variety of jobs in and out of the home e.g. Show men and women repair-people, doctors, beautician, police officer, salesperson, teacher etc.

*In Relation to Diversity in Family Composition;*

- Educators will create an environment that is welcoming to all families.

- Educators will respect each family, and work in partnership to support the child's emergent identity as an individual, member of their family, our Centre and the community.
- Educators will provide resources, books, puzzles that reflect diversity in family structure including same sex, single parent, extended, nuclear, step and adopted families.
- Educators will engage in simple discussion about families that focus on fact rather than values e.g. "some children live with their Mum or Dad, some children live with their mum and dad, some with grandparents, and some with two mums or two dads.
- Educators will be encouraged to seek awareness and reflect on his/her own feelings, beliefs and background and evaluating the effect these may have on their attitudes and interactions with families.
- Educators will incorporate various family lifestyle choices during discussions ensuring that they reflect diversity in income. They will treat all families regardless of socioeconomic background with respect.
- The Educators and children will discuss how members of the community can support one another through the provision of resources, donations of goods or time etc.
- Parents are encouraged to look at their own bias and behaviour particularly within the School's environment and to bring to the School stories and items that reflect their own history, culture or celebrations

*In Relation to Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander People;*

- Educators will deepen their own knowledge and understanding of Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander culture through attending professional development, reading current information and regularly reflecting together as a team to embed Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and culture into the program in a positive way, consistent with how local Indigenous community wish to be presented.
- The service will develop an acknowledgement of country, which will be displayed and will be conveyed during special events and incorporated into the program on a regular basis.
- Educators will develop awareness/understanding about the Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander people as part of the cultural heritage of all Australians.
- Educators will show respect for the Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander culture, aiming to instill sensitivity/appreciation of the culture and a knowing and valuing of individuals.
- Educators will encourage access of the Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander community into the mainstream of children services.
- Educators will show sensitivity and respect the numerous Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander languages by incorporating where possible verbal and visual language into the Service environment.
- Educators will access and encourage involvement of the Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander families, Educators and community members who have a vast knowledge of their culture.

*In relation to ability;*

- Educators will provide an inclusive educational environment in which all children can succeed.
- Educators will promote acceptance, respect and appreciation for individuals varying abilities.
- Educators will consult with all families and other professionals to enable full participation in the program for children with varying abilities. Educators will evaluate and alter the environment to enable all children to develop autonomy, independence, competency, confidence and pride.
- Educators will provide children and parents with developmentally appropriate information about varying abilities to foster understandings that we are all similar and different.
- Educators will empower all children in their own learning to ensure that they gain a feeling of self-respect.
- Educators will treat all children equally and develop an understanding that everyone has something important to contribute.

- Educators will observe all children and with family consultation, provide an individualized program to extend the child's interests and abilities.
- Educators will display images of people of a range of ages, including elderly people and young children doing different activities.
- Educators will display differently abled people of various backgrounds doing work or their families in recreational activities.
- Educators will use images that depict differently able persons as independent.

### Source

- Education and Care Services National Regulation 2015
  - The Anti-Bias approach in Early Childhood, Second Edition, Elizabeth Dau 2001
  - Early Childhood Australia
  - Lady Gowrie NSW

Policy Review Date
<b>November 2016 2018</b>