

Multi-Cultural Policy



Australia is an increasingly multi-cultural society and as we recognise more cultural and ethnic diversity, it is imperative we lead children in recognising and respecting similarities and differences in cultures. The cultural beliefs Linguistic and religious diversity represented and signified within the Farmhouse Montessori School and wider community helps to form the foundation of the program being implemented to ensure we are promoting an inclusive environment for all children.

*“The needs of mankind are universal. Our means of meeting them create the richness and **diversity** of the planet. The **Montessori** child should come to relish the texture of that **diversity**.”*

Maria Montessori

Education and Care Service National Regulations

| Children (Education and Care Farmhouse Montessori Schools) National Law NSW | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 155 | Interactions with children |
| 156 | Relationships in groups |

PURPOSE

To develop affirmative attitudes, concepts and beliefs towards the acceptance of diversity and capricious cultures. Respect for diversity is a key element of quality care. Recognising, understanding and respecting cultural practices and beliefs are essential for the development of identity and self-esteem. Our cultural diversity in Australia is one of our greatest strengths and part of our national identity. Identity enhances children’s sense of belonging and respect for diversity. (EYLF,2010)

SCOPE

Our School values and celebrates multicultural diversity by building respectful partnerships with families and local communities. We promote and embrace cultural and linguistic differences and provide an inclusive and equitable environment for children to develop their sense of belonging and enhance their learning and well-being

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Farmhouse Montessori School.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our School values and celebrates multicultural diversity by building respectful partnerships with families and local communities. We promote and embrace cultural and linguistic differences and provide an inclusive and equitable environment for children to develop their sense of belonging and enhance their learning and well-being.

Management/Nominated Supervisor/Certified Supervisor will ensure:

- Equitable access to the school is provided to children and families from all cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- That child-rearing practices reflect cultural context
- All children and families are treated equally and fairly and with respect at all times.
- The Farmhouse Montessori School creates and maintains links with local cultural diverse communities
- A sense of inclusion for all families will be embraced within the Farmhouse Montessori School.
- There is specific programming and cultural awareness activities and experiences, identifying similarities and differences and learning about cultural celebrations
- The Farmhouse Montessori School builds and maintains cultural resources
- Encourage children, families and staff to respect and value others, including those who are different from themselves.
- Children, staff and families cultural backgrounds are reflected in developing routines and program consistent with best practice and positive outcomes for all stakeholders
- Communication for families can be translated into their home language wherever possible.
- Encourage educators to attend professional learning opportunities in order to develop a better understanding of cultural diversity.
- Acknowledge the unique cultural and social perspectives of each family
- Ensure that all children and families have equal access to the Farmhouse Montessori School, and are welcomed and respected regardless of race, culture, colour of skin, socioeconomic status, ability, family composition, belief systems or lifestyles
- Encourage positive attitudes towards differences in appearance, culture and lifestyle
- Adhere to the Code of Ethics/Conduct

Educators will: When working with children-

- Create and maintain an inclusive environment that enhances children's development, self-worth and dignity
- Act in the best interests of all children at all times
- Engage parents and families in planning cultural days, events or celebrations
- Seek to protect the integrity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural expressions and language-Please see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy
- Encouraging children to respect and value others, including those who are different from themselves
- Ensure children do not exclude others on the basis of differences such as race, sex or ability
- Work to ensure that the self-identity of each child is valued and respected
- Encourage children to explore and accept diversity
- Challenge bias and stereotypes
- Provide an inclusive environment
- Use picture books to explore intercultural understanding
- Address bias or comments about difference
- Model inclusive practices
- Ensure privacy and confidentiality is maintained
- Use unbiased language – avoid racist, sexist, discrimination, stereotyped remarks

- Ensure own interactions are responsive to all children in the Farmhouse Montessori School
- Demonstrate respect for all children and families
- Ensure all displays, posters, children’s books and other materials are monitored to ensure they are inclusive of all people
- Be sensitive to specific cultural behaviour or dress, which may be different to their own beliefs

Source

- Education and Care Farmhouse Montessori Schools National Regulation 2015
- The Anti-Bias approach in Early Childhood, Second Edition, Elizabeth Dau 2001
- Early Childhood Australia
- Lady Gowrie NSW
- Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2009) *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*.
- Reconciliation Australia, Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education, (2019).
<https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/about>
- Kearns, K. (2017). *The Business of Childcare* (4th Ed.).

| Policy Review Date | Modification | Reviewed |
|--------------------|---|------------|
| July 2016 | Feb 2018-New Logo | |
| Feb 2018 | New logo and formatting | |
| March 2018 | Additional statements added to ‘Implementation’ section of the policy | March 2019 |
| March 2019 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional information added to points. • Duplicated information deleted. • Irrelevant information deleted. • Sources checked for currency. • Sources/references corrected, updated, and alphabetised | March 2020 |
| March 2020 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional information added to points and implementation • Sources/references added updated | March 2021 |

Multi-Cultural Procedure

There are many ways of living, being and of knowing. Children are born belonging to a culture, which is not only influenced by traditional practices, heritage and ancestral knowledge, but also by the experiences, values and beliefs of individual families and communities. Respecting diversity means within the curriculum valuing and reflecting the practices, values and beliefs of families. Educators honour the histories, cultures, languages, traditions, child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of families. They value children's different capacities and abilities and respect differences in families' home lives. (Early Years Learning Framework)

When early childhood educators and teachers respect the diversity of families and communities, and the aspirations they hold for children, they are able to foster children's motivation to learn and reinforce their sense of themselves as competent learners. They will do this by:

1. Gathering background information during children's enrolment and orientation, giving insight into the child and family's beliefs, values and traditions.
2. Using information resources (internet, books etc) to research cultures and traditions.
3. Making connections with local cultural groups/organisations
4. Building centre resources, (including books, activities and experiences, wall displays etc) as a means to intentionally teach the children about various cultures.
5. Pronouncing and spelling children's names correctly
6. Finding out which festivals are important to children and families
7. Using resources from the children and families
8. Inviting families to volunteer their time to extend multicultural learning of children and Educators
9. Advocating and supporting the maintenance of the family's home language in conjunction with their wishes

Additional Resources for Educators and families

- Lady Gowrie Resource Centre, Migrant and Ethnic Link Farmhouse Montessori Schools (1800 648 598) which provide translation Farmhouse Montessori Schools and resources (Interpreter Farmhouse Montessori School 131450).
- For assistance with multicultural matters the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs can be contacted on 131 881 or www.immi.gov.au
- Exploring Multiculturalism, Anti-Bias and Social Justice in Children's Farmhouse Montessori Schools by Miriam Giugni
- Raising Children Website - <http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/multicultural.html>