

Educational Programs

Purpose

ECMS requires educators to develop quality educational programs in accordance with the ECMS philosophy, the Centre's philosophy and in compliance with relevant legislation and documentation in particular the;

- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (the Framework)
- Belonging, Being Becoming – the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (BBB) and the National Quality Framework
- Child Safe Standards, Victoria

The philosophy of the Centre and the practice of educators must “establish respectful and caring relationships with children and families, to enable them to work together to construct curriculum and learning experiences relevant to children in their local context.” (BBB)

Principles

ECMS programs are based on:

- children's strengths and interests
- developmentally appropriate and informed by the *National Early Years Learning Framework*.
- the belief that each child is a unique individual
- children learn and develop by exploring and interacting with their environment in a safe and secure space.
- is a structured form of play designed to target specified areas of a child's development.

Children have the freedom and choice to investigate, explore and discover their environment. Children are encouraged to develop positive relationships with their peers with the assistance of educators.

Educators work with all the children but have particular responsibility for children of a specific age. Program planning is the responsibility of all educators. Many educators use portfolios to document children's progress, but are not limited to this means of documentation. Documentation may include photographs, children's words and dialogue, written observations, learning stories, group projects and investigations and samples of children's work. The program is flexible and the interests of the children guide the program on a daily basis. Educators will refer to The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework as a guide when program planning.

There is opportunity for parents to have input into this planning through regular communication and contact with educators about their children's interests and home experiences.

Experience and activities can include:

- Language and literature
- Music and movement
- Art and craft
- Dramatic play
- Science and maths experiences
- Sensory motor activities
- Activities to promote physical co-ordination and fine motor development

Services are organised into activity/experience areas that children can access at all times: books and puzzles, construction play and blocks, art and sensory materials, dramatic play and outdoors. Children are able to choose for themselves the learning experiences they would like to be involved in. Some activity areas are always available and may change according to children's interests, while other planned activities are initiated by educators at appropriate times during the day. Educators will support children in making choices, where appropriate. Children are encouraged to develop their independence through daily routines such as feeding, dressing, toileting and packing away.

The goals of children's programs are to:

- Foster secure bonds between children and educators developing a strong sense of trust
- Provide a stimulating and caring environment that encourages children to develop to their full potential
- Cater for each child's individual needs and interests
- Allow for the children's religious and cultural beliefs
- Integrate children with additional needs
- Develop a sense of fun and enjoyment
- Develop positive self-esteem and confidence
- Develop self-motivation and creativity
- Develop and gain effective communication skills
- Develop problem solving techniques, to question and be curious
- Develop independence
- Consolidate skills and acquire new ones
- Show respect for others, peers and adults and to respect equipment
- Provide equal access to the program
- Provide freedom and choices within limits
- Provide a balance between the need for active as well as passive play, indoor and outdoor play, groups as well as individual experiences.

Programs are displayed for parents/guardians interest and comment.

Roles & Responsibilities

General Managers	Accountable for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting awareness• Ensuring implementation
Area Managers	Responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensuring implementation in the services they manage• Monitoring the currency and implementation of educational programs in the services they manage

Centre Directors & Nominated Supervisors	Responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing or ensuring that the development of a current educational program in place in accordance with legislation, regulations and frameworks • Ensuring documentation is recorded in relation to educational programs
Educators	Responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing educational programs • Documenting children's progress against these programs • seeking clarification, guidance, resources or support as required

Children's Records

Children's records are created and regularly updated by educators to document the stages of development and learning for each child during their time in the service. These records are available to parents/guardians at all times to see and contribute to.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss their child/ren's development and learning with the children's educators.

Educators are encouraged to use an ongoing planning cycle approach to ensure adequate documentation on children's progress of assessment and learning.

Excursions

Excursions are seen as part of the ECMS program. (Please see Excursion Policy)

ECMS services organises a range of visitors to the centre to extend the children's interests such as farm animals, puppet shows, drama workshops and music and movement sessions. The costs of these incursions are calculated into the term fees.

Evaluation

The program is reflected upon and evaluated regularly through the observation of children by educators and through conversations at educators meetings and planning times.

Children's progress is monitored and parents receive regular individual feedback about their child/ren's progress. Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss their child's school readiness with the preschool teacher at any time throughout the year.

Educators are encouraged to critically reflect on their own practice to continue to improve and ensure best practice. An open and honest approach is taken when reflecting in educator planning and meeting times.

Policy Created Date	July 2014, Reviewed September 2016
Policy Review Date	September 2018
Sources and Further Reading	The National Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 Reg 73-76, Education and Care Services National Law 2010 Section 168 & 323
Related to NQS Q.A	1.1 & 1.2

