



Jesus said, "I am the vine,  
You are the branches."  
John 15.5

GOLDEN GROVE OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE

# Diversity and Equity Policies

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POLICY STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY AND EQUITY  
POLICY STATEMENT ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

## GGOSH



## **POLICY STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY AND EQUITY**

At GGOSH we believe it is important to ensure equal access and respect for all regardless of gender, race, culture, ability and socio-economic circumstance.

The program will be inclusive and will actively include opportunities for children to experience and value culture, gender roles and differences of ability.

As a Christian environment, GGOSH does not tolerate behaviours, language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others.

GGOSH abides by the conduct and practices outlined in the following documents, as governing practices for all stakeholders:

*United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child*

*Early Childhood Australia (ECA) Code of Ethics (2005)*

## **HOW POLICY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED**

### **Children and Families**

- GGOSH implements a range of guidelines and strategies that meet the individual needs of children and families. These are to be equitable and inclusive practices functioning as a continuous process and occurring every day.
- GGOSH supports children and families with additional needs through practicing effective communication techniques, as appropriate to each situation.
- GGOSH supports the language needs of children and families, and is able to access literacy, interpreter and translation services.
- GGOSH supports the inclusion of children with specific medical conditions, such as asthma, diabetes or anaphylaxis. All staff will be encouraged to participate in training and development opportunities to further understand the needs and requirements of individual medical conditions. For children requiring medication, please refer to the Medication Policy.
- GGOSH supports families in their parenting practices, family structure and beliefs, and will endeavour, as appropriate to the Philosophy of the service, to provide a balanced and respectful service to all families.
- GGOSH supports the emotional needs of children in care, resulting from trauma, abuse or grief. If staff become aware that further support is needed by the child, this will be communicated with the family and counseling with appropriate services will be offered.

### **Enrolling and orienting families and children into the service**

GGOSH ensures that the enrolment and orientation process is equitable and fair by providing information to all new families regarding the service, childcare benefit payments, and care provided.

All new families and children to the service will be asked to complete an Enrolment Information form to assist staff to provide a service which will meet the needs of the child and family.

Where language or literacy services are needed, to assist with communication of enrolment and orientation information, these services will be accessed.

Where external support agencies may be needed to assist children with additional needs to integrate to the service, these services will be accessed.

## **Staff and students**

### Selection and recruitment

GGOSH encourages the recruitment of staff with diverse backgrounds and upholds the equal opportunity legislation by protecting the rights of individuals through the recruitment and selection of employees.

Please refer to the service's Policy Statement on Equal Employment Opportunity

## **Students**

All new students and visitors to GGOSH are educated in the Philosophy Statement and Diversity and Equity Policy of the service through their induction procedure.

## **Staff professional development opportunities**

GGOSH will support staff in developing diverse and equitable partnerships with stakeholders.

This may be achieved through participating in professional development and training opportunities and on the job experiential learning.

## **Management:**

GGOSH Management will not tolerate all types of prejudicial or biased behaviours. This includes all forms of abuse, bullying, harassment or other behaviours deemed inappropriate by the Consultative Committee. These behaviours will not be tolerated from all stakeholder parties: staff, children, families, students, visitors and committee members.

Where children are involved with the behaviours, the Behaviour Guidance Policy will be enacted.

Where adults are involved, the Grievance Policy will be enacted.

## **Communication with different stakeholders**

### **Children**

- GGOSH aims to strengthen and reinforce diverse and equitable behaviours and practices with children, and challenge prejudice and bias.
- Children will be encouraged to understand the right of individuals to have their thoughts, feelings and ideas heard and respected.
- As part of the planned programme, all children who attend the service will be provided with the opportunity to develop competence, confidence, and to participate in a wide range of activities.
- Activities and experiences, both planned and spontaneous, are programmed, implemented and evaluated according to the individual needs and interests of children.
- Children are encouraged to have positive attitudes and relationships towards staff and their peers.
- Children are encouraged to actively participate in the resolution process when prejudice is confronted within the service

### **Families**

- GGOSH will incorporate the diversity of families utilising the service, into daily practice.
- GGOSH staff will compromise with families if home practices or family beliefs are in conflict with the services recommended practices or values.

## **Staff**

- Staff will avoid sexist language when communicating with children individually or in groups.
- Staff will support and encourage children to be fair and respectful of others, encourage empathy and fairness, and challenge stereotypes that promote prejudicial and biased behaviours and practices.
- Staff will avoid allocating tasks on the basis of sex.
- Staff will source specialised training on issues relating to children with additional needs.
- Staff will regularly assess the programme, materials and equipment provided for children for evidence of discrimination, sexism and other bias.
- Staff interactions with children will help show understanding, acceptance and respect for the many different cultures, beliefs and abilities in our service.
- Staff will be given the opportunity to participate in professional development, and have access to relevant materials, books and resources. Ref. At bottom
- Staff will interact with children, families and peers equitably and respectfully.
- Staff will identify scenarios or situations that may create acts of prejudice or bias and encourage cross gender play choices.
- Staff will use their diverse life experiences to contribute to and enhance the program and environment.

## **Staff, students and visitors as role models:**

- Children learn through example and modelling is an important way to teach children about the values that support diversity and equity.
- Staff are important role models in guiding and educating all children and families in relation to diverse and equitable behaviours and practices.
- children also learn from modelling and staff, students and visitors need to be aware that their actions, language, gestures and behaviours may communicate biased or prejudiced opinions or feelings.

## **External support agencies**

Staff will work closely with agencies such as Inclusive Directions, to provide effective support, training and advice to facilitate the inclusion of children into GGOSH.

## **Experiences**

Diverse and equitable experiences will be provided to encourage children to more fully understand their own belief systems and the values that they place on people of different backgrounds, cultures and lifestyles.

Placing token values on differences and assuming that one interpretation of a culture, race or lifestyle represents everyone from that background, is not a sign of diversity and equity. It makes an assumption about the lives of individual's or groups of people, which may not be a true reflection of who they are. This type of assumption emphasizes difference and diverts attention away from the similarities between people.

Similarly, organising a one-off 'cultural celebration days' where children are exposed to cultural signs and symbols that they are not exposed to on any other day, limits children's experiences. Services should aim to create environments where people of different backgrounds are considered equal to others, and therefore their culture is celebrated every day.

## Programmed experiences will:

- Provide an opportunity to detail how diversity and equity are reflected and can be embraced in children's individual and group experiences;

- Include discussion of the common values, concerns and triumphs that are shared among people and be open to discussion with children regarding stereotypes in the workplace, media and books, as well as stereotypical situations
- Reflect the diversity of children's families and lifestyles, and encourage children to explore experiment and further understand the culture, community and society they live in;

### **Routines**

Staff and families will engage in open, honest conversations during the enrolment and orientation process to determine if there may be potential differences in expectations and develop strategies to communicate needs that can be resolved positively and effectively.

### **Excursions**

A variety of excursions are chosen and planned for to include those children and families from different backgrounds, experiences, and age or ability ranges

### **Community**

GGOSH will demonstrate how it embraces diversity in the local community through:

Marketing of the service in the community

Translation of resources or documents in other languages as appropriate

Involvement in the local community through children's play and learning experiences

### **Procedures**

Diversity and Equity need to be considered at all times, including:

- Employee, student and visitor induction procedures.
- Enrolling new children and families into care.
- Planning and evaluating play and learning experiences for individuals or groups of children.
- Procedure for non-compliance of the Diversity and Equity Policy and procedures by staff, children, families, students or visitors

### **References**

Quality Practices Guide for Outside School Hours Care 2003

Quality Area 1 Respect for Children

Principle 1.3 Children are treated equitably.

Principle 1.2 Staff respect the diversity of children's backgrounds and abilities and accommodate the individual needs of each child.

## **POLICY STATEMENT ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

GGOSH is committed to the principles of Equal Opportunity in relation to community access to the service and the appointment of staff. Individuals will be treated with respect regardless of their gender, race, religion, age, impairment or disability, marital status, pregnancy, sexuality, political conviction, family responsibility or family status. GGOSH will actively promote the positive aspects of diversity and encourage acceptance and appreciation of individual differences. Out of School Hours Care will be made available to the community in accordance with the Commonwealth 'Priority of Access Guidelines'.

GGOSH will actively promote the access and participation of marginalised groups (e.g. those in poverty, those with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, or those from minority ethnic groups), both as employees and as users of the service.

### **HOW POLICY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED (specific policies and procedures)**

- \* GGOSH will keep up-to-date information regarding Equal Opportunity legislation, multicultural policies and gender equity policies, which will be made available to staff, parents and committee members.
- \* Parents and staff will be given clear instructions about the Commonwealth 'Priority of Access Guidelines' (see 'Access to the Service' policy).
- \* Equal Opportunity principles are an integral part of the GGOSH's daily programs and routines. Children will be given positive experiences which encourage equal opportunity. Programs will be culturally inclusive and will actively include opportunities for the children to experience and value diversity of culture, gender roles, ability/disability and/or impairment.
- \* The planning and delivery of GGOSH will reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of the local and wider community.
- \* Staff will respect individual children and their families and treat them accordingly. They will take into account individual differences in language, attitudes, abilities, assumptions and expectations in the activities they provide and promote active participation of all children.
- \* Children who have a disability will not be discriminated against and will have access to the Service where:
  - a place exists
  - they meet the required priority of access guidelines
  - the child can be cared for within existing or available resources.
- \* All staff will be selected and employed according to equal opportunity guidelines. Applicants with a disability who apply for advertised positions will be assessed according to the selection criteria and will not be discriminated against because of their disability.
- \* Where the community the service serves comprises a substantial number of children of a particular ethnic group, management will actively seek support and include a suitable worker from that group at the service.

Grievance procedures for the service are made available to staff (see Grievance Policy). At the beginning of their employment, during orientation, the Director will provide relevant information to staff about the procedures to be followed in the event of harassment or discrimination in the workplace.

- \* Grievance procedures for the service will be made available to parents (see Grievance Policy). During enrolment the Director will provide relevant information to parents concerning procedures to be followed in the event of harassment or discrimination.
- \* No child, parent, staff member or potential staff member will be excluded from the Service due to living with HIV/AIDS.
- \* Information about a child, parent or staff member living with HIV/AIDS will be kept confidential at all times.
- Staff will follow appropriate hygiene procedures to eliminate any risk of HIV/AIDS transmission in the Service (see 'Health' policy for further information).

### **References**

Quality Practices Guide for Outside School Hours Care 2003

Quality Area 1 Respect for Children

Principle 1.3 Children are treated equitably.

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