

# Inclusion

## Policy Statement

At South Turramurra OOSH (OOSH/service) we believed that all staff, children, parents/guardians and visitors have a right to an inclusive environment that supports their individual needs and fosters their development. We are committed to:

- embracing diversity and promoting equal opportunities for all
- providing a safe and welcoming environment for children of all backgrounds and abilities
- encouraging positive interactions and relationships among children, staff and families

We aim to ensure that South Turramurra OOSH is an inclusive environment where all children, families, visitors and staff feel welcome, respected and valued. We are committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of OOSH.

While there is no national definition of ‘additional needs,’ there are children who may need or require special considerations or adaptations to participate fully in the OOSH program (although not all children with additional needs will require support).

Additional needs may arise for children who:

- have a disability or developmental delay.
- are presenting with challenging behaviours.
- have a serious medical or health condition, including mental health.
- are presenting with trauma-related behaviours.
- are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders.
- are recent arrivals in Australia.
- have a culturally and linguistically diverse background.
- are experiencing difficult family circumstances or stress.
- are at risk of abuse or neglect.
- are experiencing language and communication difficulties.
- are gifted or have special talents.

Additional needs may be temporary or permanent with diverse origins because every child is unique and will require different responses. Supporting children with additional needs enables them to have equitable access to resources, participation, and opportunities.

Inclusion is greater than focusing on one type of circumstance, it is about ensuring equity for all children. “Educators who are committed to equity recognise that all children and young people have the right to participate in inclusive education and care, regardless of their circumstances, strengths, capabilities or diverse

ways of doing and being.” (Australian Government Department of Education [AGDE](2022). *My Time our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia (V2.0)*).

## Legislative Requirements

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: 165, 166, 167, 168, 175
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 73, 74, 90, 92, 93, 101, 155, 156, 162, 168, 170, 171, 177
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Disability Standards for Education 2005
- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- Children’s Guardian Regulations 2022
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Disability Inclusion Act 2014
- Anti-discrimination Act 1977
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- Records and Information Privacy Act 2002
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Anti-Discrimination (Religious Vilification) Act 2023

## Definitions

### Additional Needs

- The term used for children who require or will benefit or be able to participate more fully from specific considerations, adaptations, or differentiation of any aspects of the curriculum, including resources and the environment.

### Children or young people Living with Disability

- Disability is part of human diversity. There are many different kinds of disability, and they can result from accidents, illness, or genetic disorders. Disability may affect mobility, ability to learn, ability to communicate, or ability to engage with others and with experiences. Some children may have more than one type of disability. A disability may be visible or hidden, may be permanent or temporary and may have minimal or substantial impact on a child’s abilities.

## Culture

- The values and traditions of groups of people that are passed from one generation to another.

### Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)

- Refers to individuals and groups who are from diverse racial, religious, linguistic, and/or ethnic backgrounds.

### Cultural Responsiveness

- Is a contemporary way to think about culture and enables individuals and organisations to be respectful of everyone’s backgrounds, beliefs, values, customs, knowledges, lifestyles, and social behaviours. Being culturally responsive includes a genuine commitment to take action against discrimination in any form,

embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all aspects of the curriculum and working collaboratively with culturally and linguistically diverse children and families.

## Equity

- Equity refers to fairness and justice, it is about making sure children get access to the same opportunities, considering the unique circumstances and needs of individuals and groups. It recognises that individuals or groups may require different levels of support or accommodations to achieve a level playing field.

## Inclusion

- Involves considering all children and young people's social, cultural, and linguistic diversity (including learning styles, capabilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographic location) in program decision-making processes. The intent is to ensure that all children and young people's experiences are recognised and valued. The intent is also to ensure that all children and young people have equitable access to resources and participation, and opportunities to demonstrate their learning and to value difference.

## Inclusion support agencies

- Funded by the Commonwealth Government to work at a local level with education and care services. Inclusion Agencies (IA) provide practical advice on inclusive practices and support education and care services to build their capacity and to access training. The IA may also recommend that services access resources, bi-cultural support, and specialist equipment to better facilitate a child's inclusion in a service.

## Inclusive practice

- The provision of a flexible, innovative, and responsive program that supports the learning needs and meaningful participation of all children attending the service.

## Neurodiversity

- Is the diversity of human minds. It describes the range of differences in individual brain functioning and behaviour, regarded as part of the variance in human populations.

## Reasonable Adjustment

- A measure or action taken by approved providers and educators to assist children and young people with disability to participate and engage on the same basis as children and young people without disability. An adjustment is reasonable if it achieves this purpose while balancing the interests of all parties affected, including the child with disability, the approved provider, educators, and other children (Australian Government 2005).

## Trauma

- Children and young people may be exposed to 4 different types of trauma:
  1. Single incident trauma which can result from experiencing a time-limited and often unexpected traumatic event (e.g. a car accident, bushfire, loss of a loved one).
  2. Complex trauma which can result from exposure to severe, sustained, and harmful interpersonal events (e.g. physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, profound neglect, domestic and family violence).
  3. Historical trauma which refers to multigenerational trauma experienced by a specific cultural group (e.g. the intergenerational impacts of the European colonisation and forced removal of children from families and communities on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities).
  4. Intergenerational trauma which can result when unresolved complex trauma impacts on the next generation's capacity to parent and leads to intergenerational harm. When exposed to traumatic events at a young age, children may not have developed or will have lost their sense of safety, trust and belonging.

## Implementation Strategies – how will it be done?

### The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will:

- **be aware of their obligations under the current Education and Care Services National Regulations and the National Quality Standard** in relation to inclusion and diversity.
- ensure **professional development is provided for staff and educators** to extend their knowledge of social justice, inclusive and anti-bias practices.
- **establish and maintain links with organisations** that promote social justice, inclusion and/or provide specialist support or resources.
- ensure **compliance with relevant legislation to provide an inclusive and discrimination free environment**.
- encourage children and families with additional needs to visit South Turrumurra OOSH for short periods prior to enrolling as part of the **orientation process**.
- use the enrolment and orientation procedures as an opportunity to **find out all necessary information about the child**, for example their needs, interests, abilities, sense of humour, learning style, cultural background, communication preferences, likes and dislikes.
- do an **audit of the physical environment** to ensure the child is able to access and fully participate in all aspects of the program.
- **work with Inclusion Professionals** to discuss the development of the Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) detailing what educators need to do, know, and have to support the child's inclusion in the program.
- **invest time getting to know the child and building a positive relationship with them**.
- recognise and **build on the child's strengths, abilities, and interests**.
- ensure the child has opportunities to see **positive images of themselves in their environment**, for example through photographs, posters, picture books and so on.
- invest time in **building a trusting relationship with the family** so they feel accepted, respected, and valued.
- **consider the family as the primary consultants and acknowledge them as experts in their child**.
- **ask the family about their goals and expectations** for their child and talk with them about how to work together to make them happen.
- **ask the family how they would like to exchange two-way information** in an ongoing capacity, acknowledging that some may prefer written communication such as email, while others may prefer oral communication such as informal meetings or telephone conversations.
- **acknowledge that some families may prefer that there is one educator that they communicate with** rather than talking to everyone in the team.
- **consider any issues regarding fees that may be a barrier to families enrolling** at OOSH and removing these barriers wherever possible.
- **provide information about OOSH in various community languages** wherever possible.
- ensure **collaborative relationships with specialised services and professionals** to provide support and services for families and children with a disability, complex medical needs, and/or developmental delay.
- **implement programs and practices to support vulnerable children and families**, including working co-operatively with relevant services and/or professionals, where required (refer to *Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy*).
- ensure that **programs are inclusive of all children with medical conditions**.
- **ensure that no employee, prospective employee, parent/guardian, child, volunteer, or student is discriminated against**.
- ensure that any behaviour or circumstances that may constitute **discrimination or prejudice are dealt with in an appropriate manner** (refer to *Dealing with Complaints Policy*).

## Educators and Staff will:

- **support the participation and inclusion of all children** in the program at OOSH.
- **be aware of South Turramurra OOSH's expectations** regarding positive, respectful, and appropriate behaviour when working with children and families (refer to *Code of Conduct* and *Interactions with Children Policy*).
- **provide a range of opportunities** in the outdoor and indoor spaces and the natural environment, for all children to engage in physical, explorative, and creative experiences.
- **undertake appropriate professional development** to support the inclusion of all children.
- **understand and respect different cultural child-rearing and social practices.**
- **meet any specialised medical and nutritional needs** of children on a day-to-day basis (refer to *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy* and *Nutrition, Food and Beverage and Dietary Requirements Policy*).
- **provide information to families about the support available to assist children.**
- **discuss any concerns regarding individual children with the Nominated Supervisor and parents/guardians.**
- **respond to the needs and concerns of parents/guardians**, and provide support and guidance, where appropriate.
- **Use an inclusive approach** ensuring that all children, especially children with additional needs, have the same opportunities to participate in all experiences and all aspects of the program.
- **maintain updated information relevant to particular disabilities, delays, or giftedness relevant to the children in OOSH.**
- **plan experiences based on children's strengths, talents, likes and dislikes and family priorities** for their child.

## Procedures

### Non-Discrimination

South Turramurra OOSH does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or exclusion based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, disabilities or socio-economic status. All children, staff and families will be treated with respect and dignity. Any reported incident will be promptly addressed, and actions will be implemented with reference from our existing policies.

### Accessibility

South Turramurra OOSH is committed to making OOSH accessible to all children, staff and families, including those with a disability. This includes providing necessary accommodations, modifications, open communication and support to ensure every child has full participation in our programs. Our approach to accessibility encompasses the following:

#### Inclusive environments

South Turramurra OOSH is designed to be physically accessible to all children, including those with mobility challenges, featuring ramps, wide doorways, accessible bathrooms, and sensory-friendly spaces. We can provide adaptive equipment tailored to the needs of children with physical disabilities, ensuring they can fully engage in all activities. Additionally, we conduct regular assessments of our physical environment to identify and address any barriers to accessibility, making necessary improvements to maintain an inclusive space.

#### Program Accessibility

All activities at OOSH are designed to be inclusive and adaptable, allowing children of all abilities to participate. Our programs are flexible and can be modified to accommodate individual needs. For children requiring additional

support, we develop individualised plans in collaboration with families and external professionals, outlining specific accommodations and modifications to support each child's participation and learning in our programs.

## Communication Accessibility

We use a variety of communication methods to ensure all children can understand and engage with the program, including visual aids, sign language and simplified language. We provide language support for children and families who speak languages other than English through bilingual staff, translation services, and culturally relevant materials. Additionally, we are mindful of sensory sensitivities and offer sensory-friendly options such as quiet areas, noise-cancelling headphones, and sensory toys, designing activities to be adaptable to different sensory needs.

## Educator Recruitment and Development

### Recruitment

Where possible, South Turramurra OOSH will aim to recruit educators of any gender and those who come from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds that reflect the cultural diversity of the Turramurra Public School community.

During the orientation process for new staff, we prioritise inclusive practices as fundamental to creating a supportive environment for all children. Staff undergo thorough training on understanding the diverse needs of children with disabilities or developmental differences and implementing inclusive strategies and behaviour guidance skills to help support their interactions with children. They are also introduced to resources available at OOSH including child profiles and behaviour support plans to help instruct and guide their practices.

### Training and Development

All OOSH staff receive ongoing training in diversity, inclusion, and cultural competence. We support our staff in developing the skills and knowledge necessary to create an inclusive environment for all children. This includes training on recognising and addressing biases, implementing inclusive practices, and effectively supporting children with diverse needs. This commitment extends beyond initial training; continuous professional development opportunities are provided to keep our staff informed of best practices and emerging trends in inclusive practice.

### Inclusion team

At South Turramurra OOSH we employ an inclusion support team who meet weekly and work closely with our other focus teams (Programming and WHS) to promote the inclusion of all children in OOSH. This includes:

- discussing the needs and interests of all children requiring support.
- developing, implementing and reflecting on procedures and practices to include children, families and staff into the programs. This extends to the upkeep of our projects including our Reconciliation Action Plan and Strategic Inclusion Plan.
- working with other educators to help support and develop best practices in supporting children.
- liaising with educators and teachers to inform them of children's changing needs and support.

### Educator Practices

- Educators will treat each child with respect and acceptance, regardless of culture, ability or gender.

- Educators will work in partnership with families to actively seek out information on cultural beliefs, traditions, customs and values, and use this information to enrich the program and its experiences, along with creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and respected.
- Educators will work in close partnerships with families to ensure the care provided to children aligns with their needs, beliefs and values.
- Educators will role model inclusive behaviours to promote inclusive behaviours in children.
- Educators will encourage children to treat each other with respect and fairness.
- South Turramurra OOSH will ensure its environment reflects the cultural diversity of all families and children using OOSH and the cultures represented in the wider community.
- Educators will create a program that provides positive experiences without restrictions to gender, ability or stereotypes.
- All children are encouraged to participate in all activities, regardless of gender.
- All children, regardless of gender, will be provided with the same emotional support.
- Educators will ensure children will never be singled out or made to feel inferior to or better than others.
- Educators will discuss incidents of prejudice that present themselves in children's play or relationships with each other to help children understand and find strategies to counteract these behaviours.

## Family and Community Engagement

We actively engage families and value their input and participation. We provide opportunities for families to be involved in decision-making processes and to share their cultural and linguistic heritage. Regular communication with families ensures that they are informed and involved in their child's care and education, fostering a strong partnership between home, school and OOSH.

We aim to collaborate with community organisations and services to enhance our inclusive practices and support the diverse needs of our children and families. These partnerships provide additional resources, expertise, and opportunities for children to engage with the broader community.

## Inclusion Support Resources

South Turramurra OOSH acknowledges that each child is unique and may require different levels of support. Our staff work collaboratively with families and external professionals to create individualised plans that meet the specific needs of each child. We use a strengths-based approach to build on each child's abilities, providing tailored interventions and resources to support their growth, development, and participation in our programs.

## Enrolment of Children with Additional Needs

The following steps apply for parents/guardians wishing to enroll their children into South Turramurra OOSH.

- Parents/guardians have the responsibility to inform South Turramurra OOSH of any additional needs/medical conditions their child/ren may have at the time of enrolment or when a diagnosis is made by a medical professional. This information will be recorded by parents/guardians via the enrolment form or via email or conversation with Management.
- On receiving this information, South Turramurra OOSH will contact the family and may request a meeting to discuss what additional support their child may require or benefit from at OOSH. Behaviour Support plans and child profiles may be created in consultation with families and external providers at this stage.
- Parents/guardians may be asked to supply additional information including signing and returning KU permission forms, Inclusion Development Fund Manager Parent permission notes and providing South Turramurra OOSH with a NDIS plan, Psychologist reports, Letters of diagnosis or other relevant reports. This



information will allow us to consult with our KU Inclusion Support Agency and OOSH may be eligible for additional support funding.

- Access to care will depend on Management's assessment of whether appropriate care can be provided, taking into account potential barriers, risks, and overall safety while ensuring a high-quality program. Enrolment at OOSH may be subject to the approval of Government KU Inclusion Funding, which may take up to 6 weeks to arrange, or until appropriate training can be arranged in consultation with the Management team, families and external providers.
- South Turrumurra OOSH can arrange an orientation with families of children requiring additional support to become more familiar with the environment, routines and educators prior to their enrolment date.

## Inclusion Support Agencies

Inclusion Support Agencies are essential in childcare for their specialised expertise and resources that enable South Turrumurra OOSH to effectively support children with diverse needs. These agencies provide guidance on implementing inclusive practices, modifying environments, and creating individualised support plans tailored to each child. By partnering with Inclusion Support Agencies, South Turrumurra OOSH ensures a welcoming environment where every child, regardless of ability, can thrive and participate fully in OOSH. This collaboration promotes equity and positive developmental outcomes, enhancing the quality of care and enabling each child to reach their fullest potential.

## KU Funding

South Turrumurra OOSH strongly advocates for the inclusion of children who require additional support into OOSH. We work closely with our Inclusion Support Program (KU Gowrie) to provide inclusive practices and support within the care environment and provide funding for additional educators to address barriers and strategies identified in our Strategic Inclusion Plan.

It is the responsibility of the head of the inclusion team to manage and update our Strategic Inclusion Plan and apply for weekly funding through Xplor and/or the KU Inclusion Support Portal.

## References and Related Policies and Procedures

### References

- Inclusion Support Agency KU Gowrie <https://inclusionagencynswact.org.au/for-educators/out-of-school-hours-care>
- ACECQA My Time, Our Place <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/MTOP-V2.0.pdf>
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>
- Early Childhood Code of Ethics, Early Childhood Australia, 2016 <https://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/>

### Related Policies and Procedures

- Providing a Child Safe Environment
- Interactions with Children
- Staffing
- Enrolment and Orientation



- Dealing with Complaints
- Dealing with Medical Conditions in Children
- Nutrition, food and beverages and dietary requirements
- Emergency and Evacuation
- Excursions and Transportation
- South Turramurra OOSH Philosophy

## Approval and Revision History

Review Date	Reviewed By	Approved By	Next Review
28.06.2024	Kathleen Carmichael	Scott Everard	August 2024
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