

Information sheet

BELONGING, BEING & BECOMING

Equity, inclusion and high expectations

Quality educational programs promote a view of all children as capable and competent learners.

Educators who are committed to equity recognise that all children have the right to participate in inclusive early childhood services, regardless of their circumstances, strengths, gender, capabilities or diverse ways of doing and being. This recognition is reflected in educators' quality practice.

This information sheet on the *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia V2.0, 2022* (EYLF V2.0) Principle, Equity, inclusion and high expectations provides you with reflective questions as you consider your practice, service philosophy and children's program in relation to this Principle.



Links to the [National Quality Standard \(NQS\)](#)

The NQS recognises the potential of the educational program and practices to enhance each child's learning and development. The EYLF V2.0 Principle, Equity, inclusion and high expectations is reflected in several quality areas of the NQS, with a particular focus in:

QA1: Educational program and practice

Element 1.2.1: Intentional teaching – Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.

Element 1.1.3: Program learning opportunities – All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.

Element 1.2.3: Child directed learning – Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.

QA2: Children's health and safety

Element 2.1.1: Wellbeing and comfort – Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.

QA3: Physical environment

Element 3.1.1: Fit for purpose – Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.

QA4: Staffing arrangements

Standard 4.2: Professionalism – Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical.

QA5: Relationships with children

Standard 5.1: Relationships between educators and children – Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.

Educators recognise that equitable means fair, not equal or the same, and that some children may need greater access to resources and support to participate in early childhood settings.

QA6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Standard 6.2: Collaborative partnerships – Collaborative partnerships enhance children’s inclusion, learning and wellbeing.

QA7: Governance and Leadership

Element 7.1.1: Service philosophy and purpose – A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service’s operations.

Standard 7.2: Leadership – Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.

What is the change?

The Principle, High expectations and equity has been renamed to Equity, inclusion and high expectations.

Rationale for the change

- The expansion of this Principle includes a focus on inclusion, recognising that all children have the right to participate in quality and inclusive early childhood settings, regardless of their circumstances, strengths, gender, capabilities or diverse ways of doing and being.
- There has been considerable growth in research and understanding relating to inclusive learning environments and practices for children.
- Inclusion makes visible and celebrates the diversity of children’s lives.
- EYLF V2.0 draws on new knowledge and evidence-based practice to strengthen inclusion in children’s education and care settings, where educators support inclusion for all.

What this looks like in practice?

- Educators intentionally plan for and create inclusive learning environments and adopt flexible and informed practices, including making [reasonable adjustments](#) to optimise access, participation and engagement in learning.
- Educators nurture children’s feelings and emotions, such as optimism, happiness and sense of fun, and support children’s friendships and interactions with each other.
- Educators engage in critical reflection, challenge practices that contribute to inequities or discrimination, and make curriculum, routines, rituals and practice decisions that promote genuine participation and inclusion for all children.
- Educators recognise and actively respond and challenge barriers that some children face. For example, attitudinal and practical barriers that may be related to disability, family diversity, cultural and linguistic diversity, neurodiversity, and children and families living through trauma and adversity.

- Educators view all children as capable and competent learners with a right to attend, be reflected in and contribute to the service and to succeed regardless of diverse circumstances, including strengths, cultural background and abilities.
- Service operations, policies and practices do not discriminate against children or others either directly or indirectly.
- Educators actively listen to children and families and provide opportunities for them to make choices about decisions that affect them. This encourages them to feel valued and provides a foundation for ongoing conversations about learning, development and wellbeing.
- Educators monitor and evaluate adjustments made with children and families to see if they are still supporting the child, or if changes are needed.
- Educators actively refer to and engage with the [United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child](#) and Early Childhood Australia’s (ECA) [Code of Ethics](#).
- Educators are engaged in active research, incorporating information from the services in the community to support equity and inclusion.

Reflective questions and provocations

- How does your service philosophy guide quality practice that reflects a commitment to equity, inclusion and high expectations for all children?
 - » ACECQA – [We hear you blog – From soaring towers to inclusive playscapes: Exploring the journey of children’s participation](#)
- Take a walk around your service. Is it welcoming, accessible and responsive to the diverse range of children and families in the community?
 - » City of Darebin – [Creating Gender Equitable Spaces \(YouTube\)](#)
- Are physical and human resources adapted and used flexibly to support every child (regardless of abilities, needs and interests) to achieve maximum participation in all routines, transitions and learning opportunities?
 - » ACECQA – [Information sheet – QA3 Inclusive environments](#)
- What strategies are in place to assess, monitor and evaluate the reasonable adjustments that may be required to support inclusion of all children?
 - » ACECQA – [Information sheet – The Disability Discrimination Act: What do children’s education and care services need to know?](#)
- What strategies are in place to ensure all team members understand the DDA and support them to make reasonable adjustments to support participation and access?
 - » Reimagine Australia – [Reimagine Early Childhood](#)

- How do you provide opportunities in your program to promote respect for diversity and value the contribution of children with disability?
 - » Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA) – [Your child, your family and early childhood intervention: Family Perspectives \(YouTube\)](#)
- How does your curriculum decision making demonstrate high expectations for all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and provide opportunities and access to learning to enable them to be successful learners, and confident and strong in their identities?
 - » Emerging Minds – [The whole Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child \(Vimeo\)](#)

ACECQA references and resources

- ACECQA – Information sheet: Quality Area 4 – [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia V2.0 \(EYLF\)](#)
- ACECQA – [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
- ACECQA – [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(DDA\) resources](#)
- ACECQA – [We hear you blog – From soaring towers to inclusive playscapes: Exploring the journey of children’s participation](#)
- ACECQA – [Information sheet – QA3 Inclusive environments](#)

Other references and resources

- City of Darebin – [Creating gender equitable spaces \(YouTube\)](#)
 - Early Childhood Australia (ECA) – [Inclusion resources](#)
 - Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA) – [Your child, your family and early childhood intervention: Family Perspectives \(YouTube\)](#)
 - Emerging Minds – [The whole Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child \(Vimeo\)](#)
- © Copyright Emerging Minds. All Right Reserved.
- Inclusive Directions – [First impressions, lasting impressions](#)
 - Inclusion Support QLD – [Inclusion Matters Poster](#)
 - Manningham City Council – [Fostering an inclusive environment: Practical tips for early childhood services](#)
 - NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency – [Inclusion matters \(Poster\)](#)
 - NSW Department of Education – [Reasonable adjustments](#)
 - PSC National Alliance – [Exploring diversity and equity in education and care services](#)
 - Reimagine Australia – [Reimagine Early Childhood](#)