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<b>Custodian:</b>	Executive Director - Services

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the educational program delivered at Meli Kindergartens are:

- Fully compliant with the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Child Safe Standards, and all other relevant national and state standards.
- Aligned with approved learning frameworks, including the Early Years Learning Framework V2.0 (Belonging, Being & Becoming) and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.
- Designed to support each child's learning, development, wellbeing, and safety through intentional, play-based, and inquiry-led experiences.
- Reflective of the principles, practices, and outcomes outlined in approved frameworks, and responsive to each child's strengths, interests, culture, abilities, and developmental stage.
- Guided by critical reflection, collaborative planning, and a commitment to continuous improvement in educational practice.
- Delivered in partnership with families, educators, and the community to promote equitable, inclusive, and culturally safe learning environments, including meaningful recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.
- Supported by robust documentation and assessment practices that ensure ongoing monitoring of each child's learning and progress, in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Meli Kindergarten Services (MKS) sessional kindergarten programs and any other approved service models operating under the National Quality Framework.

The policy covers:

- Approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, and persons in day-to-day charge
- Early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, and contractors
- Families and children participating in the program, regardless of background, ability, or circumstance

- All individuals attending or supporting MKS programs and activities, including offsite excursions, community-based learning experiences, and partnerships with external organisations

The policy is binding on all stakeholders and is designed to ensure compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, National Regulations 2011, and all relevant standards and frameworks. It also supports ongoing review, feedback, and continuous improvement processes involving educators, families, and the broader community.

### 3. Background

The Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 requires early childhood services to deliver an educational program that is based on an approved learning framework. In Victoria, these include the Early Years Learning Framework V2.0 (Belonging, Being & Becoming), and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework. These frameworks provide a shared language and approach for supporting children's learning, development and wellbeing.

The National Quality Standard – Quality Area 1 outlines expectations for educational programs to be stimulating, engaging and tailored to each child's individual needs. Educators are required to take a planned and reflective approach to curriculum decision-making, ensuring that programs are inclusive, culturally responsive and promote equitable learning outcomes. Assessment and documentation of children's learning must be ongoing and meaningful, supporting both planning and communication with families.

To support implementation, services must designate an Educational Leader who guides educators in planning, reflection and practice improvement. This role is critical in fostering a culture of continuous learning and collaboration. Meli Kindergartens are committed to delivering educational programs that reflect these legislative and framework requirements, ensuring that each child is supported to thrive in a safe, inclusive and engaging learning environment.

### 4. Definitions

**Approved Learning Framework** – refers to a national guide that outlines principles, practices and outcomes to support and enhance children's learning from birth to five years and through school-age care. In Victoria, approved frameworks include the Early Years Learning Framework V2.0, and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.

**Assessment for Learning** – refers to the ongoing process of gathering and interpreting information about children's learning to inform planning, support progress and communicate with families. It includes observations, documentation and reflective discussions.

**Critical Reflection** – refers to a process of examining and analysing practice, experiences and learning from multiple perspectives to inform future planning and decision-making. It supports continuous improvement and responsiveness to children's needs.

**Culturally Safe Environment** - refers to a setting where children and families feel respected, valued and free from discrimination. It involves recognising and affirming diverse cultural identities and ensuring that practices do not diminish, demean or disempower.

**Curriculum** – in early childhood settings, curriculum refers to the totality of experiences, activities and environments designed to foster children's learning and development. It includes play-based learning, intentional teaching, and child-led inquiry.

**Early Years Planning Cycle** – refers to the structured process used by educators to observe, document and support children's learning. It consists of five key stages:

- **Observe:** Collect information about the child's current knowledge, strengths, interests, and skills
- **Assess:** Analyse and interpret the child's learning to understand what and how they are learning
- **Plan:** Design learning experiences based on observations and assessments.
- **Deliver:** Provide learning activities that support the child's learning and well-being.

- **Evaluate:** Reflect on the effectiveness of observations, planning and teaching strategies to inform practice changes and extend learning.

**Educational Leader** – refers to a suitably qualified and experienced educator designated to lead the development and implementation of the educational program. This role involves mentoring, guiding planning and reflection, and supporting continuous improvement in practice.

**Educational Program** – refers to a planned curriculum that contributes to the learning outcomes for each child, including identity, wellbeing, connection to community, confidence in learning, and communication. It encompasses all interactions, experiences, routines and events, both planned and spontaneous.

**Inquiry-Led Learning** - refers to a pedagogical approach where children’s questions, curiosities and investigations guide the learning process. Educators support children to explore, hypothesise, research and reflect as active participants in their learning.

**Intentional Teaching** - refers to deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful interactions by educators to extend children’s learning. It involves planning experiences and responding to children’s interests in ways that promote deeper understanding and skill development.

**Learning Outcomes** – refer to the five broad goals outlined in the Early Years Learning Framework V2.0 that describe the knowledge, skills and dispositions children are expected to develop through the educational program.

**Play-Based Learning** – refers to a context for learning where children explore, experiment and make sense of the world through play. It supports cognitive, social, emotional and physical development and is central to early childhood pedagogy.

## 5. Policy

Meli Kindergarten Services (MKS) is committed to delivering educational programs that are fully compliant with the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard – Quality Area 1, and all relevant national and state frameworks.

Educational programs will:

- Be guided by approved learning frameworks, including the Early Years Learning Framework V2.0, the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, and the Child Safe Standards.
- Support each child to achieve learning outcomes through play-based, inquiry-led, and intentional teaching practices.
- Be responsive to each child’s strengths, interests, abilities, culture, identity and developmental stage.
- Promote equitable, inclusive, and culturally safe learning environments, with meaningful recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.
- Be informed by critical reflection, collaborative planning, and ongoing assessment and documentation of each child’s learning and development, in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements.
- Involve families, educators, and community partners as active participants in the development, implementation, and review of the educational program.
- Be led by a designated Educational Leader who supports educators in curriculum decision-making, planning, and reflective practice.

MKS will regularly review and update educational program policies and practices to reflect changes in legislation, frameworks, sector guidance, and best practice in early childhood education. All stakeholders will be notified of significant changes in a timely manner.

## 6. Delegations and Responsibilities

The **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** is responsible for:

- Ensuring Meli maintains organisational compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, and all relevant standards relating to educational program and practice.
- Approving this policy and ensuring it aligns with Meli's strategic objectives and commitment to quality early childhood education.
- Promoting a culture of reflective practice, continuous improvement, and child-centred learning across all Meli Kindergarten Services.

The **Executive Director – Services** is responsible for:

- Providing operational leadership to ensure educational programs are implemented consistently across all Meli Kindergarten Services.
- Overseeing the development, implementation and review of curriculum planning, assessment practices and educator capability-building.
- Monitoring compliance with educational program requirements through internal audits, service reviews and professional development initiatives.

**Program Directors and Managers** are responsible for:

- Supporting educators to implement high-quality educational programs aligned with approved learning frameworks.
- Support Education Leaders to lead the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle within the service.
- Ensuring the educational program is displayed, and that the program is delivered using an integrated teach and learning approach.
- Regularly completing individual learning goals, documentation and learning assessments for all children.
- Using the early years planning cycle.
- Ensuring staff have access to training, resources and mentoring to support curriculum planning and critical reflection.
- Facilitating collaboration with families to ensure educational programs reflect children's strengths, interests, and cultural identities.
- Maintaining documentation and records related to educational program planning, assessment and evaluation.

**Educational Leaders and Pedagogical Leaders** are responsible for:

- Ensuring educational programs are delivered in accordance with this policy and the Practice guide.
- Maintaining current knowledge of contemporary pedagogy and practice.
- Providing expert advice and leadership in relation to contemporary pedagogy and practice.
- Mentoring and coaching educators to support a process of continuous inquiry and improvement.
- Mentoring and coaching educators to support children to be active participants in their own learning through an integrated teaching and learning approach.
- Promoting resources and information that ensure practices are high-quality and informed by evidence.

**Early Childhood Teachers, Educators and All Other Staff** are responsible for:

- Delivering educational programs that are play-based, inclusive and responsive to each child's learning and development.
- Engaging in ongoing planning, documentation and critical reflection to support continuous improvement.
- Collaborating with families and colleagues to ensure educational practices are culturally safe and child-centred.
- Participating in professional learning to strengthen curriculum knowledge and pedagogical practice.

**Parents/Guardians** are responsible for:

- Sharing information about their child's interests, strengths, culture, identity, and learning needs to support program planning.
- Engaging with educators to understand and contribute to their child's learning journey.
- Providing feedback on the educational program and participating in service-level reviews where appropriate.

**Contractors, Volunteers and Students** are responsible for:

- Complying with this policy and following staff guidance when participating in educational activities.
- Respecting the learning environment and contributing to safe, inclusive and engaging experiences for children.
- Reporting any concerns or incidents related to the educational program to a staff member immediately.
- Ensuring that the service's philosophy guides educational program and practice.

## 7. Policy Application

To ensure the values and objectives of this policy are achieved, Meli Kindergarten Services will:

- Seek regular feedback from educators, staff, families and other stakeholders on the effectiveness and relevance of the educational program.
- Educators will document children's learning through a variety of methods including learning stories, observations, portfolios, kinderloop, and visual displays.
- Monitor implementation and compliance with this policy, including documentation practices, curriculum planning, and assessment of children's learning.
- Investigate any concerns or incidents related to educational program delivery, including gaps in planning, documentation or reflective practice, and take appropriate corrective action.
- Review and update the policy to reflect changes in legislation, approved learning frameworks, sector guidance, and best practice in early childhood education.
- Undertake scheduled policy reviews every three years as part of the service's continuous improvement cycle, or earlier if required due to emerging risks, feedback or regulatory changes.
- Notify all affected stakeholders of any significant changes to this policy or its procedures at least 14 days in advance, unless a shorter timeframe is necessary to manage risk.

## 8. Legislation, Acts, Standards

This policy is informed by the following legislation, regulations and standards:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard – Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice
- Early Years Learning Framework V2.0 (Belonging, Being & Becoming)
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
- Guide to the National Quality Standard, ACECQA
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, ACECQA
- Victorian Child Safe Standards

These references ensure that educational programs at Meli Kindergartens are child-centred, evidence-based, and compliant with national and state requirements.

## 9. Related Documents

### Sources

- [Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia V2.0: ACECQA – Approved Learning Frameworks](#)

- [Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework: Education Victoria – VEYLDF](#)
- <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-01/NQF-Resource-02-Guide-to-ECS-Law-Regs.pdf>
- [Guide to the National Quality Standard](#)
- [Early Childhood Australia – Professional Learning Modules: ECA Learning Hub](#)
- [Marrung – Aboriginal Education Plan 2016–2026: Education Victoria – Marrung](#)

#### Related Policies

- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy
- Inclusion and Equity Policy
- Interactions with Children Policy
- Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Environmental Sustainability Policy

#### 10. Document History

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections Modified	Updated By
1.00	CEO	10/12/2025	10/12/2025	New Policy	Cassandra Gallop