



PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines to ensure that the educational program at services managed by BPA Children's Services (BPA) are:

- based on an approved learning framework (EYLF, VEYLDF)
- centred on child's learning, development, wellbeing and safety
- designed to take into account the individual differences of each child; and
- based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child



POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

BPA Children's Services (BPA) is committed to:

- supporting each child to achieve learning outcomes consistent with the national *Early Years Learning Framework V2.0 and/or the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (refer to Sources)*
- providing an educational program where children can learn through play and are supported to make decisions, problem-solve and build relationships with others
- creating an environment that supports, reflects and promotes equitable and inclusive behaviours and practices
- involving families in the development and review of educational program and practice

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, families, children, and others attending the programs and activities of BPA, including during offsite excursions and learning experiences.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensuring that the educational program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is based on an approved learning framework (<i>refer to Definitions</i>); • is delivered in a manner that accords with the approved learning framework; 	R	R	✓		✓

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child; is designed to take into account the individual differences of each child (<i>National Law: Section 168</i>) complies with the BPA Curriculum Development Guidelines is stimulating and engaging while enhancing children learning and development 					
<p>Ensuring the educational program contributes to each child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing a strong sense of identity being connected with, and contributing to, their world having a strong sense of wellbeing being a confident and involved learner being an effective communicator (<i>Regulation 73</i>) 	R	✓	✓		✓
Designating a suitably qualified and experienced Educational Leader for each service to direct the development and implementation of educational programs at a service (<i>Regulation 118</i>)	R	✓			
Ensuring that the Educational Leader consent form is included with the relevant staff record at the service (<i>Regulation 148</i>)	R	✓			
Ensuring that the service's philosophy guides educational program and practice	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that assessments of each child's learning, development, needs, interests, experiences and participation in the educational program are documented (<i>Regulation 74(1)(a)(i)</i>)	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that assessments of the child's progress against the outcomes of the educational program are documented (<i>Regulation 74(1)(a)(ii)</i>)	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring documentation of assessments includes reflection on the period of time the child is at the service, and how documented information will be used by educators at the service (<i>Regulation 74(2)(a)(i)&(ii)</i>)	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring documentation is written in plain language and is easy to understand by both educators and families (<i>Regulation 74(2)(b)</i>)	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that there is a record of learning and development for each child, and that it is updated and maintained on an ongoing basis	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring a copy of the educational program is displayed at the service and accessible to families (<i>Regulation 75</i>)	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that families are provided with information about the content and implementation of the	R	✓	✓		✓

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educational program, their child's participation in the program and documentation relating to assessments or evaluations of their child (<i>Regulation 76</i>)					
Ensuring regular communication is established between the service and families, and they are informed about their child's learning, development and progress	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Providing guidance in developing and evaluating the educational program in collaboration with the Educational Leader, Nominated Supervisor, educators, children and families	✓				
Undertaking critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation		✓	✓		✓
Developing and evaluating the educational program in collaboration with the nominated supervisor, educators, children and families.		✓	✓	✓	✓



BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

The Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (National Law) requires services to deliver an educational program (curriculum) that is based on an approved learning framework. In Victoria, approved learning frameworks for the early childhood sector are the *Early Years Learning Framework 2022 V2 (Belonging, Being & Becoming)* (*refer to Sources*), the *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* (*refer to Sources*) and *My Time Our Place, Framework for School age care in Australia 2022 V2* (*refer to Source*). The Frameworks are underpinned by contemporary theory and research evidence and provide educators with a thorough understanding of the pedagogical approach to early childhood curriculum in Australia.

Part 4.1 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (National Regulations)* outlines the operational requirements for educational program and practice within services, including the requirements for documentation of assessments in relation to the educational program. There is no prescribed method in the *National Law or National Regulations* for documenting assessment of children's learning. Educators daily practice and curriculum decision-making should be guided by an approved learning framework. An approved learning framework provides broad direction for educators to facilitate children's learning. Each service must determine a method that suits their individual circumstances. To meet the requirements of the *National Regulations*, the assessment must include an analysis of each child's learning. **Do we need to put in here that it is required to meet BPA expectations and requirements?** Collecting this information enables educators to plan effectively for each child's learning and development. It can also be used by educators to stimulate reflection on their own values, beliefs and teaching practices, and to communicate about children's learning with children and their families.

The *National Regulations* require the appointment of an Educational Leader to lead and support the development and implementation of the educational program (or curriculum) at the service (*Regulation 118*). This person will have suitable qualifications and experience, as well as a thorough understanding of the *Early Years Learning Framework V2 and/or the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework*, enabling them to guide other educators in planning and reflection, and to mentor colleagues in implementation

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practices (*Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations, p85 – refer to Sources*).

The aim of *Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice* of the *National Quality Standard* is to ensure that the educational program and practice is stimulating and engaging and enhances children’s learning and development.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- 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
- Standard 1.1: The educational program enhances each child’s learning and development
- Standard 1.2: Educators facilitate and extend each child’s learning and development
- Standard 1.3: Educators and co-ordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au



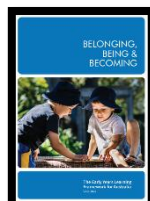
DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g. Approved provider, Nominated supervisor, Notifiable complaints, Serious incidents, Duty of care, etc. refer to the Definitions file.

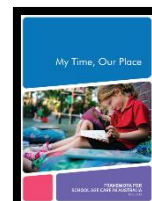
Approved learning framework: a guide which provides a vision for learning, pedagogical principles, practices and general goals or outcomes for children’s learning and how they might be attained. It provides a scaffold to assist educators to develop their own, more detailed curriculum relevant to their setting and the children and families attending. *The Early Years Learning Framework V2 (Belonging, Being & Becoming)*, *the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* and *My Time, Our Place V2; Framework for School Age Care in Australia* are approved learning frameworks for use in Victoria (*refer to Sources*).



Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework



The Early Years Learning Framework 2022 V2 (Belonging, Being & Becoming)



My Time, Our Place; Framework for School Age Care in Australia 2022 V2

Critical reflection: is a meaning-making process that assists informing future practice in ways that demonstrate an understanding of each child's learning, development and wellbeing and implications for equity and social justice. It involves examining and analysing events, experiences and practices from a range of perspectives to inform future planning and decision-making (*Early Years Learning Framework 2022 V2 – refer to Sources*).

Educational program: a program referred to in section 168 of the Law. An educational program is to contribute to the following outcomes for each child:

- the child will have a strong sense of identity;
- the child will be connected with and contribute to his or her world;
- the child will have a strong sense of wellbeing;
- the child will be a confident and involved learner;
- the child will be an effective communicator.

Curriculum: in the early childhood setting curriculum includes all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children's learning, development and wellbeing (*Early Years Learning Framework 2022 V2– refer to Sources; adapted from Te Whariki*).

Each child: A phrase used in the *National Quality Standard* when an individualised approach is warranted, and educators are required to modify their response to meet the needs of an individual child. An example is 'each child's current knowledge, ideas, culture and interests provide the foundation for the program'.

Educational Leader: The approved provider of an education and care service must designate, in writing, a suitably qualified and experienced educator, co-ordinator or other individual to lead the development and implementation of educational programs at the service (*Regulation 118*). This person should have a thorough understanding of the *Early Years Learning Framework* (or other approved learning framework), the *BPA Curriculum Guidelines* (*Attachment 1 & 2*) and be able to guide other educators in their planning and reflection, and mentor colleagues in the implementation of their practice.

Learning: is the process of gaining knowledge, skills and dispositions and from birth children naturally use exploration to expand their intellectual, physical, social, emotional and creative capacities. Life-long learning is acknowledged as a self-motivated process that extends intellectual, vocational and personal horizons which begins in early childhood and is continued throughout life. (*Early Years Learning Framework 2022 V2 – refer to Sources*).

Learning framework: Refer to approved learning framework above.

Learning outcome: A skill, knowledge or disposition that educators can actively promote in early childhood settings, in collaboration with children and families.

Play-based learning: a context and a process for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, as they engage actively with people, objects and representations.

SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES



SOURCES

- *Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia V2:* <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-law-regulations/approved-learning-frameworks>
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, ACECQA: www.acecqa.gov.au

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- *Guide to the National Quality Standard*, ACECQA: www.acecqa.gov.au
- Marrung – Aboriginal Education Plan 2016 – 2026:
https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/aboriginal/Marrung_Aboriginal_Education_Plan_2016-2026.pdf
- My Time Our Place, Framework for School age care in Australia V2:
<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/ngf/national-law-regulations/approved-learning-frameworks>
- Early Childhood Australia Professional Learning Modules
<https://learninghub.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/modules/>
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework – Resources for Professionals: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/ngf/national-law-regulations/approved-learning-frameworks>

RELATED POLICIES

- *Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing*
- *Code of Conduct*
- *Environmental Sustainability*
- *Inclusion and Equity*
- *Interactions with Children*
- *Nutrition, Oral Health and Active Play*
- *Participation of Volunteers and Students*
- *Road Safety and Safe Transport*
- *Sun Protection*
- *Supervision of Children*
- *Water Safety*



EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (*Regulation 172 (2)*).



ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: BPA Curriculum Guidelines – Creative Arts
- Attachment 2: Celebrations and Special Events Guidelines
- Attachment 3: Educational Rationale



AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of BPA on 28 June 2023.

REVIEW DATE: 28 JUNE 2026

ATTACHMENT 1.

CURRICULUM POLICY GUIDELINES – CREATIVE ARTS

Creativity is the use of imagination or original ideas to create something. Some may question what this means to Early Childhood Teachers.

BPA supports creative play and promotes the need for children to be given every opportunity for self-expression. We expect all educators to promote the development of each child’s sense of agency and to allow children to express themselves and to be leaders in their own learning.

Children in Early Childhood settings should not be required to participate in art/craft activities that are designed by Educators and that require a specific outcome. Art experiences should always be about a child’s self-expression, and the child should be intrinsically motivated to participate. It is not appropriate to have mass-produced/template activities in early childhood programs.

The role of the educator is to support children to develop their imagination and confidence to express their thoughts and ideas in a number of different ways. Educators recognise and act on opportunities to scaffold and extend children’s learning and they promote higher order thinking. All activities are planned to support the intentions of the program. We value the creative process undertaken by the child rather than focusing on the final product.

As educators we recognize that all children have different abilities. Activities provided should reflect the developmental level of all of the children attending your service.

We support the celebration of special events, when celebrated in a manner that is consistent with children’s choice and self-expression. Authentic Celebrations each year will look different, depending on the families and staff at the Centre (please refer to Event Guidelines).

As we value children’s choice and believe they should have a voice in their learning, we support the provision of engaging alternatives for children and families who do not wish be involved.

EXPERIENCES

CHARACTERISTICS	EXAMPLES
Are creative, unique and original	Wide range of materials for children to choose from. Materials are displayed invitingly and are readily accessible to children at all times. Each creation will be different.
Open-ended and unstructured	No templates, colouring-in sheets or other photocopied or mass produced products. Eg: all children making a spider/poppy/blossom tree etc.
Are child-centred and child directed	Educator supports the child to create, but does not do it for them, 'fix' what has been done by the child, or control the process in any way. Children have a choice whether to participate.
Come from within the child	Focused on individual children’s interests, and are appropriate to the child’s development. Educators believe children are capable and respect their ideas and efforts.
Involve self-expression	Are not copied or imitated. The children may be inspired by beautiful objects, natural and real materials, Master’s paintings, etc. and may imitate these in their own work. Children may also sometimes copy work from another child.

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Foster autonomy	Encourage children to develop problem solving skills, persistence and resilience.
Are process orientated (the doing is more important than the end product) finished product. Value judgements are inappropriate.	Focus on the process of creating, not the finished product. Value judgements are inappropriate.
May not appeal to adults because the finished product may not be recognisable.	It is expected that every child's art is unique. Educators should confine comments to process rather than the end result.
Are success oriented – no fear of failure	Mistakes are fine because creativity demands risk taking. There's no measure of success eg: copying something made by an educator or completing something to the educators' expectations. 'You need to add more to that painting.
Empower children to decide on content	The EYLF makes it clear that children should have agency in regard to the activities they participate in and their level of involvement.
Pleasure the child	Child is intrinsically motivated and this is enough. It is not done to please parents and educators.
Need open blocks of time	Children should not be rushed. Children should be given opportunities to explore, to experiment, and to return to their creation possibly over a number of days. Children's work needs to be protected in this case.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- Can we justify and explain its inclusion in the program in educational terms?
- What does the word 'creativity' mean to you? What does it make you think of?
- What forms of creativity does your program promote?
- How do children express or demonstrate creativity at different age /stages of development?

REFERENCES:

Stonehouse, A: [Creative Play In Art and Craft](#), Gowrie Victoria Resource Sheet

NQS PLP: [Nurturing Creativity](#), Early Childhood Australia, 2012

Schirmacher, R: [Inviting Creativity: The Teacher's Role in Art](#), www.communityplaythings.com

DEEWR: The Early Years Learning Framework For Australia, 2009

DE: Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, 2016

Lindsay, G: Art or Craft: Interest or Pinterest, Every Child Vol 21, No 4, 2015

Stonehouse, A: [Box of Provocations](#) Early Childhood Australia

ECA: [Code of Ethics](#)

ATTACHMENT 2.

CELEBRATIONS AND SPECIAL EVENTS GUIDELINES

BPA supports the acknowledgement and celebration of those events that are special and important to our educators, families, children and community. These special events and celebrations may be based around cultural beliefs, families' backgrounds and also events that are more personal to children (such as learning to ride a bike, losing a tooth etc.)

Whilst we understand the importance of acknowledging and celebrating these events it is our expectation that they are relevant to the context of the service. Celebrations and Special Events must be inclusive, respectful, age appropriate and meaningful. It is an expectation that children who do not wish to participate or who cannot participate due to their family's beliefs, are catered for and their choices are respected.

How do you decide what to celebrate at your service each year?

Decisions in regards to what you will celebrate will vary from year to year. These decisions will be based around your knowledge of the children, families and community that you work with.

This knowledge will be gained through a variety of different mediums such as conversations with families, enrolment forms, 'About Me' forms, observations, collaboration, critical reflection and relationships.

As educators and professionals the curriculum decisions that we make are based on professional standards, such as the Early Years Learning Frameworks, National Quality Standards and your service philosophy. Whilst your decisions will be informed by the children and families, your final decisions regarding how this is represented within your program will reflect the need for children's agency, be developmentally appropriate and demonstrate respect for all children.

How to ensure that celebrations are appropriate?

Not all celebrations will be appropriate for your group or your service. This may vary from year to year and needs to be considered carefully. Educators need to be reflective in their thinking when making decisions around what is and is not appropriate. Reflective practice may occur in groups or individually but should be discussed within your team before the final decisions are made.

In order to ensure celebrations are appropriate educators will complete an 'Educational Rationale.' Thing to be considered in Educational Rationales include;

- The context of the service
- Planned activities are appropriate to the development of the children
- Are planned activities/experiences age appropriate
- The event is inclusive
- Are the planned activities/experiences welcoming
- Parents have been consulted
- Children have choice to participate or not participate
- Children have had input
- The event is relevant
- It is meaningful
- It is safe (Risk Management Plan has been completed)
- It is culturally safe
- The celebration is respectful

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When planning specific experiences and activities involved in celebrations and events, the following strategies will help you to determine whether it is developmentally appropriate and inclusive.

- Use of the Educational Rationale
- Research
- Ensuring that children are offered choice
- There is a 'back up plan' for children who do not want to participate
- A variety of options offered for children
- Knowing the context of your service
- It aligns with BPA policies and procedures
- Sharing decision making with other educators, children and families
- It aligns with professional standards such as the NQS, EYLF, VEYLDF and the service Philosophy
- There are clear intentions for children's learning

A risk assessment must be completed for any events and celebrations that may include additional risks. This will include events/celebrations that are outside of normal hours, where families will be attending, when cooking is involved, incursions etc. Risk assessments must be completed and sent to Early Years Advisors two weeks prior to the event or celebration.

What do we do after an event or celebration?

It is important to ensure that service events and celebrations are evaluated once they have been completed. As we do with all aspects of curriculum, we must evaluate the value of these experiences. Critical reflection plays a crucial role in evaluation and ongoing improvement. Consider the following;


- Did everything go to plan?
- Did anything unexpected happen?
- Did the children/families enjoy the event/celebration?
- Would you do this again?
- If you do it again, would you make any changes/improvements?
- If we asked families to attend, how many were able to attend?
- What learning took place?
- Are their opportunities moving forward to scaffold children's learning based on this celebration/event?

Evaluations need to be documented as part of your Educational Rationale and should be available upon request.

These guidelines should be used in conjunction with BPA's Curriculum Guidelines for Creative Art Experiences wherever art activities are planned as part of your celebration or event. These documents work together to ensure developmentally appropriate curriculum decisions are made and offered to children at all times.

ATTACHMENT 3.

EDUCATIONAL RATIONALE

	BPA Children's Services EDUCATIONAL RATIONALE	
Event Information		
Name of Service, Educators and Group/Room:		
Celebration/Event/Experience:		
Date of Celebration/Event/Experience:		
What are the intentions for the experience? Where did this come from?		
What will the children learn?		
What specifically will be provided? Please list the activities/experiences in detail.		
Evaluation. Include whether anything unintentional occurred. Were there any surprises?		