

CELEBRATIONS POLICY

Rituals and traditions strengthen our partnership with children, families and community, bringing a sense of belonging to our Out of School Hours Service (OSHC). We believe that celebrations and cultural traditions need to be handled sensitively. The value in educating children, families and educators is fundamental to our inclusive program. Both the planning and preparation, and the events themselves, can be a satisfying and pleasurable experience. In school age care, relationships are crucial to a sense of belonging.

‘From before birth children are connected to family, communities, culture and place. Their earliest learning, development and learning takes place through these relationships, particularly with families, who are children and young people’s first and most influential educators. ... As children transition to school, their social worlds expand to include a wider range of relationships particularly with other children and young people of multiple age groups.’ (MTO, 2022, p. 6).

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

| QUALITY AREA 1: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE | | |
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| 1.1.1 | Approved learning framework | Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child’s learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing and confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators. |
| QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND SAFETY | | |
| 2.1 | Health | Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted. |
| 2.1.3 | Healthy Lifestyles | Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child. |
| QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS | | |
| 6.1.2 | Parent views are respected | The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child’s learning and wellbeing. |

| EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS | |
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| 77 | Health, hygiene and safe food practices |
| 78 | Food and beverages |
| 90 | Medical conditions policy |

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| 155 | Interactions with children |
| 162 | Health information to be kept in enrolment record |
| 170 | Policies and procedures to be followed |
| 171 | Policies and procedures to be kept available |

RELATED POLICIES

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| Anaphylaxis Management Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Dental Health Policy Diabetes Management Policy Enrolment Policy | Family Communication Policy Multicultural Policy Nutrition Food Safety Policy Photograph Policy Professional Development Policy Student, Volunteer and Visitors Policy |
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PURPOSE

Incorporating celebrations into children's services appropriately, can be used to strengthen the partnership with children and families, creating a feeling of belonging and developing a sense of community amongst families, educators and children.

Celebrations provide an opportunity for children to develop respect for diverse values and beliefs as they learn about practices, which are different to their own. To ensure we are providing an inclusive program and environment, it is imperative to recognise the array of celebrations, both religious and worldly, that take place throughout the year in our community and to have an understanding of, and respect for, cultural diversity in our OSHC Service.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, the approved provider, nominated supervisor, educators, students, volunteers and visitors of the OSHC Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, an approved provider must ensure policies and procedures are in place to provide a child safe environment. When providing opportunities for children to celebrate special occasions incorporating food or beverages, consideration must be made to ensure children with medical conditions that can be impacted by food are clearly identified and risk minimisation plans are in place and educators and staff implement these plans.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/MANAGEMENT WILL ENSURE:

- educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy
- families are aware of this *Celebrations Policy* during their orientation process and kept updated throughout the year via centre correspondence
- the National Model Code guidelines are understood and adopted within the Service including:
 - only service-issued/approved devices are to be used when taking images or videos of children
 - ensuring families and visitors are clearly informed that they are not to take images or videos of children whilst visiting the Service [not mandatory- adjust to your Service decision]
 - embedding the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and creating a child safe culture
- they value rituals and routines and prioritise nurturing relationships through culturally safe and responsive interactions (MTOP, 2022, p.14).
- they recognise the diversity of children and young people and value children and young people's unique and diverse capacities and capabilities and affirm different ways of knowing, being and doing (MTOP, 2022, p.15).
- cultural responsiveness is evident in everyday practice as educators respect multiple cultural ways of knowing, doing and being as they celebrate the benefits of diversity
- cultural celebrations that are significant to our families and relevant to our broader community are implemented within the OSHC Service
- religious celebrations such as Christmas and Easter are recognised within the Service and reflected in our programs
- sensitivity to issues such as family composition is respected (e.g.: Mother's & Father's Day)
- families' beliefs about celebrating birthdays are respected within the OSHC Service
- healthy options for birthday celebrations are discussed with families which may include fruit platter, fruit salad, watermelon balls or muffins in preference to a cake
- families discuss cake options with the nominated supervisor prior to celebrations
- parents provide ingredients of any cakes brought to the service (if store bought, the 'use by' date and ingredients must be clearly labelled)
- educators are aware and make alternate arrangements if families would prefer that their child does NOT participate in such celebrations
 - if this is the case, we will respect the rights and feelings of this child and will provide an alternative experience for them to participate in so that they do not feel that they are being left out

- the Service has an '*Events Calendar*' that is used to support such events throughout the year. We ask that families add their celebration to the calendar, so Educators can prepare the program.
- families are encouraged to be involved in the preparation and/or the celebration in the Service
- educators remain current with the professional knowledge and skills that support planning for and engaging in culturally inclusive practice
- they liaise and collaborate with our local Aboriginal educational consultative group to provide advice on relevant cultural celebrations and correct protocols to be followed (e.g. NADIOC Week, Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week)
- advance planning is adhered to if food or drink is provided for children at the Service. Additionally, all parents must be advised prior to the celebration. This allows for any feedback / concerns from parents which can then be considered as part of the normal planning involved in such activities.
- safety issues are taken into account prior to the implementation of celebratory experiences and risk assessments completed to identify, manage and minimise the risk of harm to children
- all requirements in our *Nutrition Food Safety Policy* are adhered to when planning for celebrations
- professional development is considered as a tool to assist to expand educator's knowledge of cultural awareness and cultural celebrations

EDUCATORS WILL:

- seek written approval from the nominated supervisor prior to any celebrations where food is provided to children
- identify any children with medical conditions that may be impacted by particular foods and if required complete risk minimisations plans/risk assessments to ensure children's safety
- ensure food handling training has been completed (as required)
- ensure the use of candles is carried out with the children's safety in mind and fully supervised. A full risk assessment will be submitted to the nominated supervisor prior to such celebrations.
- ensure each child is provided with a separate cupcake (with a candle, if they wish for the child celebrating their birthday; or a large cake that can be cut and shared
- be aware of cultural tokenism and stereotyping
- encourage and support family members to be involved in sharing their customs and celebrations with our Service
- ensure sensitivity to issues such as family composition is respected (e.g.: Mother's & Father's Day)
- ensure children and young people have the agency to make choices about the celebrations they would like to participate in, engaging and collaborating with families to give advice on traditions, ceremonies, lore and culture

- ensure that children and young people have the resources and time necessary to be able to celebrate effectively
- ensure that families who do not wish to be involved in celebrations have an option to not participate
- balance family values about receiving gifts and products from their children and educator's values about avoiding product-based activities by developing creative and meaningful gifts for families
- notify the community about the celebration e.g., requesting consent for taking photos to display on the Service notice board or displaying children's artwork and drawings about the celebration
- provide opportunities for children and young people to participate in 'open-ended' celebration activities
- celebrate traditions and customs relevant to children and community
- ensure that the same amount of time and energy is dedicated to ALL celebrations
- invite educators and families to share their own personal experiences of celebrations
- ensure resources such as storybooks, images, and music are reflective of contemporary celebrations to which children and young people can relate
- be respectful of all religions and cultural backgrounds
- participate in professional development to raise cultural awareness around cultural celebrations.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Celebrations Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators and management.

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)

Australian Government Department of Education. [My Time, Our Place- Framework for School Age Care in Australia.V2.0, 2022](#)

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023).

National Health and Medical Research Council. (2024). *Staying Healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (6th Ed.). NHMRC. Canberra.

[Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Law \(WA\) Act 2012](#)

[Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Regulations \(WA\) Act 2012](#)

REVIEW

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| POLICY REVIEWED BY | Libby Haines | Director | November 2024 |
| POLICY REVIEWED | NOVEMBER 2024 | NEXT REVIEW DATE | NOVEMBER 2025 |
| VERSION NUMBER | V11.11.24 | | |
| MODIFICATIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual policy maintenance • inclusion of National Model Code and guidelines (not mandatory) • minor edits within policy • sources checked for currency and updated as required | | |
| POLICY REVIEWED | PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS | NEXT REVIEW DATE | |
| NOVEMBER 2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy maintenance • updated reference to MTOP, V2.0, 2023 • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required • additional information added re: food safety requirements | NOVEMBER 2024 | |