

Access and Inclusion Policy

1. Policy statement

Values

Yarra Warra Pre-School is committed to:

-) children should attend one 4-year-old sessional kinder group of no more than 15 hours' duration per week at their local kindergarten. Upon agreement with staff and family children may attend less than 15 hours if it is in the best interest of the child.
-) the inclusion of all children eligible to attend kindergarten to access, fully participate and learn in our kindergarten program.
-) when necessary an aide may be required. This will be discussed at the discretion of the staff in consultation with the parents.
-) children with additional needs have the right to equal access to services and resources.
-) inclusive communities are strengthened by the diversity of their populations and the contribution they make; inclusive environments foster natural and support networks.
-) children with additional needs have the right to live their lives free from discrimination; children learn to accept, include and appreciate differences where access and participation are the norm.

Purpose

This policy will outline, for current and future users, staff and the committee Yarra Warra Pre-School's commitment to the principles of equity and inclusion.

2. Authorisation

This policy was adopted by Yarra Warra Pre-School committee, at the committee meeting in October 2016

3. Review date

This policy will be reviewed annually, or varied earlier if necessary, and the committee will within 28 days of making any change, notify the parents/guardians of the children attending, of that change (Regulation 42).

4. Scope

This policy applies to the committee, staff, and parents/guardians who wish to have their children enrolled at the centre, or have children already enrolled at the centre.

5. Legislation

-) *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
-) *Education and Care Services National Laws Act 2010*
-) *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
-) *Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic)*
-) *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cth)*
-) *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*

6. Definitions

Children with additional needs: Children whose development or physical condition needs specialist support

DEECD: Department of Education and Childhood Development

Eligible child: Refer to DET *Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria 2010-12*

DET: Department of Education and Training

Kindergarten: Kindergarten (formerly known as pre-school) is a universal early childhood program, funded by the state government, for children in the year prior to commencing primary school. (DET *Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria 2010-12*)

7. Principles & Procedures

Yarra Warra Pre-School endorses the spirit and intent of Victorian and Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation (listed above), which affords protection against:

-) treating people with a disability less favourably than people without that disability would be treated under the same circumstances;
-) the imposition of a condition or requirement which may be the same for everyone, but which unfairly excludes or disadvantages people with a disability.

Our program:

-) Provides a supportive and positive environment in which staff work with families and other professionals to meet the needs of all children.
-) Ensures all children have equal access to educational goals and learning.
-) Assesses and documents children's learning and development using observations, photographs, individual learning plans and learning folders.
-) Recognises and celebrates achievements.
-) Focuses on strengths and interests.
-) Provides all children with the opportunity to develop greater independence.
-) Encourages the development of positive social interactions.
-) Supports life skills as children learn to get along with others, show respect and caring for others and be comfortable with differences between people and see beyond differences to similarities.
-) Fosters the development of resilience where children are encouraged to proactively respond to set-backs.

Children with additional needs are supported by:

-) Assessment and intervention by speech pathology and/or psychology services.
-) Specialist services work collaboratively with the staff and family to support the child's teaching, learning and participation in the kindergarten program.

The committee are responsible for:

-) Approving any changes to this policy.
-) Responding to any questions/concerns that arise in relation to any aspect of the policy.

The staff are responsible for:

-) Providing opportunities for interested families with children with additional needs to attend the centre during operational hours to view the program at an agreed time between staff and family.
-) Providing opportunities for eligible children with additional needs to attend kindergarten, and in consultation with their families, develop appropriate support strategies and/or measures.

8. Related documents

-) DET *Children's Services Guide*,
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/careankinder/csg/default>
-) DET *Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria update 2010-12*

Centre policies

-) Complaints
-) Privacy

9. Evaluation

To assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes the committee will:

-) Monitor compliance with the procedures set out in the policy.
-) Consider feedback on the policy from staff, parents/guardians and committee members.
-) Assess whether a satisfactory resolution has been achieved in relation to issues arising from this policy.

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Yarra Warra Pre-School at the October meeting 2016.

REVIEW DATE: JANUARY 2018

REVISION RECORD

Date	Version	Revision description
October 2016	1	Additional information as part of review