



**The Rainbow Children's Centre Inc.**

## **Section 5 Educational Program**

**(developed and approved Oct 2010, amended August 2012, amended May 2014, amended July 2014, reviewed Sept 2017 and amended February 2018)**

### **Explanation**

The centre considers that children enrolled at Rainbow Children's Centre Inc. need to interact within an environment which is nurturing, challenging and stimulating and which promotes and enhances each child's development. The centre Philosophy, as determined by the members and the views of the families using the services inform the development of the educational program. Centre families consider it important to have an educational program for their children and are keen for that program to be of high quality. Staff are provided with programming, staff meeting, review and in-service time to ensure that high quality educational program can be put in place. The centre employs higher numbers of staff and more highly qualified staff than is required by Regulation. The centre does so in order to support the educational program for children. Such commitments demand additional resources and centre families have committed to paying sufficient in child care fees to ensure the centre has such resource levels.

For a young child interactions with others are an essential element within the human learning and development process and that process is enhanced by the quality and quantity of those interactions. Rainbow recognises that an essential element of each child's development is the opportunity for communication and positive social interactions with a wide range of others.

Young children require adults to assist them with everyday care while at the centre. The youngest children in the centre will be quite dependent on adults for routine care during the day. A baby requires assistance with eating, toileting, sleep, sitting and mobility etc. Over time each child will move from that fully dependent stage to become less and less dependent and more and more independent. However even by the time when they go off to formal schooling the children will still not be fully independent. Hence caring for children plays a major role in the day of a child at the centre. Since such tasks take up so much of a child's day, it is essential that the opportunities for children to learn from those care routines are recognised by staff and families. Children moving to independence need time, opportunity and encouragement to make their own decisions whenever possible. Hence within the educational program staff will be making decisions for children at times but also helping children make decisions at other times about their own care.

As well the centre acknowledges that the National Quality Framework and the Early Childhood Services National Regulation 2017 demand that the centre provides an educational program for children. Hence, the Regulations governing early childhood education & care

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services as well as the various recommendations from other relevant authorities will be used as an important source of advice in the development of an educational program at Rainbow to achieve these ideals. The centre will of course meet those external expectations. But it is important to note the centre would commit to a high quality educational program being provided for children regardless of whether those government authorities required it.

The centre notes the Early Years Learning Framework and recognises the leadership it provides to the sector and we are committed to implementing that framework.. It is important however to note that our program stems primarily from the principles set out in the Rainbow philosophy, mission and vision as per our annual plan. Within that document we have prepared our statement of the Rainbow Learning Environment Principles – and our educational program is developed within that Framework.

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It is heartening to see that our learning environment principles developed over some years are very similar to the ideals set out in the EYLF and the MTOP. As such we can and will follow our own learning environment principles secure in the knowledge that in doing so we also meet the requirements of EYLF, of MTOP and the National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care services.

## Implementation

- 1) **The centre's learning environment** Rainbow will provide a positive learning environment within the centre for the children. That environment will
  - a) Be a safe and comfortable place, recognising that children and staff may spend quite a few hours over a long period in the centre, which needs to be seen as a “second home” to the children. Until a child is happy and settled in the environment, the child will not be able to gain anything from the educational program
  - b) Will include a variety of spaces and types of learning experiences that allow children to make appropriate choices and to ensure children can be actively engaged in the learning process.
  - c) Be structured by staff to allow safe and appropriate access, egress for those using the space and access, cleaning and storage of the centre equipment
  - d) Allow children and families to store their belongings in a safe and effective manner
  - e) Ensure access and mobility for adults or children with additional needs.
  - f) Be set up to ensure that appropriate supervision by staff can be maintained at all times and that sufficient staff are present to be able to interact with children in a positive and extended manner.
  - g) Will allow children to be engaged at a level which can reflect their own needs at all times - allowing: for quiet and boisterous times; for large groups, small groups and for time alone; for time with same age peers and time with mixed groups; for time with adults and time with children.
  - h) Be structured so that the children's physical needs during the ebb and flow of the day can be met in a safe effective and efficient way.
  - i) Have access to open spaces in which to children can engage in active play and whole body movements where they are in little danger of hurting themselves or others.
  - j) Ensure that children can enjoy learning experiences in both the outdoor and the indoor with numerous opportunities for children to enjoy extended hands on learning experiences
  - k) Be inspected daily for any obstacles or dangerous items. These items shall be disposed of in a safe and careful manner prior to the children playing in the area.
  
- 2) **Overall approaches to the education of young children (Oct 2010).** These are broad methods of organising the educational program which are unique to Rainbow and are the result of years of discussion argument and consensus among many staff about ways to optimise the learning experience at our centre.
  - a) Care of children at the centre is a partnership between the family and the centre. Staff acknowledge that families entrust to the centre the care and education of their children and we take that responsibility very seriously.

- b) The centre will develop a friendly, home like environment in the centre that provides learning experiences for young children in ways that matches the way they learn.
  - c) Children are organised during the day in mixed age groups where children's learning occurs within groups containing peers of a variety of ages. Each child is both a learner and a teacher within the group.
  - d) Children are normally in groups of ten or less and are seldom organised into large groups of 20-25 as young children find it very hard to learn in large groups.
  - e) Our learning environment is formed around a child interest and need focus – not around adult needs. We believe that educational research suggests that child initiated learning ensures the learning process for each child is relevant, effective and interesting.
  - f) Further we believe that child choice is important and each child can choose to be involved and can also choose not to be involved if they wish.
  - g) We believe that learning is a play based concept for young children and best occurs when children are able to play in ways they choose and follow the ideas and things that are of interest to them.
  - h) We recognise that young children are people who are developing as individuals. We must be alert that every move we make as adults caring for them (good and bad) plays a part in that development. Staff try to see through the eyes of a child recognising the importance of each decision staff make.
  - i) Staff get to know each child as an individual and maintain individual developmental records so that staff also know each child as well as possible as an individual. By knowing each child as an individual with individual learning interests we can ensure our program addresses that child's best interests.
  - j) We embrace each child in a holistic way – seeing the child as a whole person with a character, background, family and culture - not just a child attending for a few hours at Rainbow.
  - k) Our external play spaces include many natural features and children have extended opportunities to interact with the natural world.
  - l) Our program features extended periods of free choice time encouraging and allowing children opportunities to build social relationships and interact with peers.
- 3) Daily routine (Oct 2010)**
- a) Rainbow recognises that children need and enjoy the certainty of a familiar environment. It is reassuring for children when there is consistent times throughout the day for the familiar routines. However, too much certainty of routine can lead to boredom. As well, children's needs vary according to events happening around them, and flexibility in routine may be needed at times to meet all those needs.
  - b) A daily routine will be developed by staff, structured around regular events of the day such as departure, meal times and sleep / rest times and will provide a mixture of structured and unstructured learning experiences for the children.

- c) The routine will be recorded and displayed where staff and families can see it.
- d) The displayed routine will be an indicative routine which sets the framework of the day in the centre, but able to be adapted to meet the varying and changing needs of the children, flexible enough to allow for spontaneity and varied enough to allow for the differing rhythms of each individual child and staff member.

#### **4) Program of learning experiences (Oct 2010)**

- a) The centre will implement a high quality educational program which also provides for appropriate care of each child and gives every child the opportunity to reach their potential. In order to ensure the program in the centre provides a suitable learning process for children, the centre program will:
  - i) Reflect the ideals expressed in the philosophy of the centre
  - ii) Reflect the diversity in our society.
  - iii) Include a wide range of learning materials being made available to children each day
  - iv) Allow for curiosity, exploration and questioning by children of the world around them.
  - v) Be child centred, in that decisions about the how, what, when and why of the learning experiences will be organised according to the interests of children
  - vi) Ensure a mix of opportunities that foster each child's progress in all developmental areas.
  - vii) Recognise the learning potential of all children from babies to those about to transition to school
  - viii) Allow the staff to support, encourage assist and extend the children in the experiences they choose.
- b) The program will be recorded daily and displayed for children and parents to view and comment on. The ongoing record of the program for the year will be available for families to view if desired. The records will be retained as required by Regulations.
- c) Staff will be allocated time each week to fulfil programming tasks as part of their duties.
- d) The centre will encourage children and families to be involved in the planning, and evaluation of the program. Children and families will be encouraged to incorporate their views, ideas and specific interests into the program.
- e) Staff will regularly talk to families concerning their child's development at the centre and discuss and encourage parent's expectations and requirements regarding care and education.
- f) The program will be evaluated on a regular basis in a variety of ways to ensure the program meets the aims of the centre and the families
- g) Excursions from the centre and visitors to the centre will be an important part of the program.
- h) The centre will actively inform and promote the values of early childhood education to families using the centre. Families will be informed that the program is intended to:
  - i) Promote the importance of play in the child's life
  - ii) Reflect the cultural and language diversity of the local and wider community

- iii) Reflect the individual and group interests, needs, skills, talents and abilities
- iv) Recognise the learning potential of everyday routine times e.g. eating, nappy change, pack away, cleaning, toileting etc.
- v) Provide a variety and choice of learning experiences - routines /free play, indoor / outdoor activities, quiet / active times and areas, structured/unstructured activities
- vi) Allow for opportunities for children to practice and perfect existing skills and knowledge and to explore and develop new skills and knowledge
- vii) Foster children's independence and self-help skills
- viii) Foster each child's ability to work and play within a group
- ix) Encourage cooperative and responsible behaviour among children
- x) Help children to appreciate and care for one another and their surroundings

### **5) Children's physical activity levels<sup>1</sup> (Oct 2010)**

- a) The centre recognises and acknowledges the link between physical exercise and movement by young children and continued good health. As such the program contains a mix of indoor and outdoor periods and contains a mix of more passive and more active learning experiences.
- b) Staff will ensure all programs include opportunities where possible for high physical activity levels for each child and the centre will ensure sufficient equipment is provided to ensure access to those learning experiences for all children.
- c) All children will be given the opportunity to undertake more active learning experiences in the program by providing access to those experiences in a variety of ways and ensuring a significant number of the small group and planned experiences provided in the centre include an element of more active play.
- d) It is recognised that all play is a balance between the safety of each child and allowing that child to explore and undertake challenging learning experiences. Therefore children of all ages will be provided with opportunities for more challenging physically active play, within appropriate supervision and safety guidelines.
- e) The centre acknowledges that in an emergent curriculum each child's learning stems from the interests and self initiated activity of each child. As such the centre respects the right of any child not to be included in any experience and to spend time in relaxed and passive experiences if the child wishes. The right of any child not to do any one particular experience or indeed not to do anything is respected.

### **6) Developmental records (Oct 2010)**

- a) Comprehensive developmental profiles will be maintained for each child, which records the children's interests, developing skills, goals, activities and interactions in a variety of

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<sup>1</sup> Policy developed after consideration of material from  
<http://www.aodgp.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/health-publth-strateg-active-recommend.htm>,  
<http://www.cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicDetails.aspx?p=114&np=301&id=1977>,  
<http://www.heartfoundation.com.au/downloads/physical%20activity%20and%20%20children.htm>, and  
<http://www.chdf.org.au/>.

contexts. These records will be active documents available to staff, the child and the family to add to at all times.

- b) Staff will ensure material added to the records includes information gathered in a variety of ways to ensure as full a picture as possible emerges about each child.
- c) Families will be made aware of their child's record and be encouraged to view, add to and comment on the record. Parents are encouraged to discuss the information in the record with staff. Families may remove the record from the centre (after informing staff) to provide access for extended inspection of the record or to show the document to others if desired.
- d) Records will be stored in the centre playrooms at a readily accessible location to maximise opportunity for children and families to access the records. The centre stresses that each record remains confidential to that family and relevant staff (and others with legal authority) and the centre trusts all families respect that confidentiality by not accessing information other than for their own child.
- e) Each staff member will be allocated a specific group of children (a focus group) to observe and evaluate. That staff member will have primary responsibility for the completion of the child's record in consultation with other staff and the family and child. Staff are to ensure that the records are up to date at all times.

## 7) Excursions and visits (Oct 2010, amended Jul 2012, amended Jul 2014, reviewed Feb 2018)

- a) **Explanation - all services** As a part of the educational experiences provided within the program, Rainbow recognises the value of visits and excursions. With visits Rainbow invites individuals and groups to come to the centre to offer the children experiences which are not able to be provided by the normal staff and facilities in the centre. On excursions the children leave the centre so as to experience other learning opportunities which cannot be provided at the centre.
- b) **Explanation OOSHC services** Excursions are an important part of our program. They assist to educate your child in his or her understanding of the broader community and are an important part of your child's social and emotional development.
- c) **Implementation**
  - i) The centre will develop a range of opportunities to allow the children to be involved in excursions and visits so as to supplement the learning experiences able to be provided for children at the centre. In particular it will be recognised that a child who is in the centre for a significant period may well miss out on: some everyday experiences enjoyed by children who are cared for at home; as well as special occasions visiting interesting destinations within the community.
  - ii) In planning visits and excursions the staff will take into consideration the care and safety of the children as well as how to maximise the children's learning experience. Travel arrangements will be made to ensure access for as many children and families as possible or suitable including allowing for the inclusion of children with additional needs.
  - iii) Prior to any excursion staff will investigate all aspects of the excursion to identify any risks and concerns. An assessment will be made of such risks, determining

how centre staff will eliminate or at least minimise any risks. In the event that risks cannot be significantly minimised, the excursion will not proceed. As long as any risks can be managed and significantly reduced, the nominated supervisor in consultation with other staff and management will determine whether the educational values of the excursion are sufficient to warrant the excursion proceeding

- iv) No child will be taken out of the centre without the parent's or legal guardian's written permission.
  - (1) Permission for local excursions (meaning within walking distance, not crossing major roads and not going close to water) is contained on the child's enrolment form and all families will be asked to authorise their child to undertake local excursions. Notification of such excursion shall be made by a written notice placed near the sign in sheets, informing families of the excursion and details about its purpose and conduct.
  - (2) Permission for non-routine excursions will require each family to authorise their child to attend that excursion. A notice will be placed in the centre and families asked to authorise their child to attend by signing next to their child's name. The notice will detail the
    - (a) Destination and purpose of the excursion,
    - (b) Method of travel and time of departure and return,
    - (c) Children, staff and volunteers attending,
    - (d) First aiders present, and
    - (e) Contact phone number for families to contact staff while at the excursion.
- v) All local and non-routine excursions will be conducted in a safe manner in accordance with expectations of the National Regulation and will broadly follow the established staffing and other standards that existed under NSW Children's Services Regulations for many years.

**These Include:**

- (1) At least 2 adult persons, at least one of whom is a primary contact staff member, accompany the children on any excursion. At least one staff member shall have a current first aid certificate.
- (2) A suitably equipped and well stocked first aid kit will be taken on all excursions and that the children on such an excursion are accompanied by a primary contact staff member with approved first aid qualifications.
- (3) The centre will encourage parents and /or volunteers to accompany the group on an excursion and normally such persons will be counted in calculating child staff ratios at 50% of the ratio applying to a paid staff member. Hence if a paid staff member might have charge of 4 children on the excursion, a parent would not be asked to have charge of more than two children.
- (4) The adult to child ratio of staff members participating in the excursion is broadly to be one adult for each 2 children who are under 3 years of age, and one adult for each 4 children who are 3 or more years of age. However given that children of different ages have different individual levels of dependence on adults those ratios may be varied ( both more or less staff) to reflect the actual children involved and the type of excursion. For instance very well settled children with advanced developmental skills of a little less than three years of age may be able to safely take part in an excursion with a one to three or even four staff:child ratio. In contrast, a less settled and less developed four or five year old may need more than a one staff: four child ratio for an excursion. As well a very short excursion through the nature reserve at the back of the centre to the local shops going nowhere near any roads may be safe with two staff to ten or eleven five year old children, whereas an excursion with the same group that

- requires travelling further and involving the use of transport and less familiar surrounds would require the 1:4 ratio.
- (5) Any motor vehicle that is used to transport children on excursions (other than a motor vehicle with seating for more than 9 persons) will need to be fitted with child restraints approved by the Roads and Traffic Authority.
  - (6) The centre shall develop and keep a file of all excursions undertaken and file information shall include any parent permissions, any risk assessments, evaluations of all excursions and any determination to vary the standard staff:child ratios.
- vi) The centre recognises that the Ballina area has many locations where there are water hazards nearby. Almost every park, shopping area, community facility or other destination will have a lake, creek or beach nearby. While most excursions we undertake will not be to a destination which is a water hazard, in our Shire there will probably be a water hazard close by. As a result if we were to veto any excursion that went anywhere near water, there would be few if any excursion destinations available to us. It is considered that despite this, we can go on excursions as long as we treat such water hazards with due care and ensure risks are managed.
- (1) The conduct of any excursions which involve children going to or near any beach, river lake or other body of water will acknowledge the special dangers that occur with young children and water. The centre shall ensure such excursions are conducted in a safe manner with such special precautions as are necessary to maintain safety. The risk assessment shall include consideration of the special dangers and risks that are applicable to that location. The minimum adult to child ratio for the excursion shall be based on recognition of that risk.
  - (2) When children are taken on any excursion to a beach, river, lake or other place where there is a water hazard, the minimum adult to child ratio of persons participating in the excursion is: one adult for each child who is under 3 years of age, and one adult for each 2 children who are 3 or more years of age but who do not normally attend school. Staff accompanying children on such excursions must have both the knowledge and ability to implement suitable water safety procedures.
  - (3) Children in long day care at Rainbow will not be taken to any excursion for the purpose of swimming or learning to swim or undertaking activities that occur in the water. The centre considers such activities should be undertaken by families with their own children, due to the high risks associated with larger groups of children going in the water.
- vii) Prior to any excursion staff will prepare the children who will attend about what will happen on the excursion and what to do if they are separated from the group. During an excursion staff will carry a list of children on the excursion and will undertake checks at regular intervals to confirm all children remain with the group.
- viii) A list of all children and staff attending the excursion will be given to the Director prior to children and staff leaving the centre.
- ix) Alternative arrangements will be made at the centre for all children not attending the excursion. The centre reserves the right to choose which children will attend excursions and to exclude a child from an excursion if the staff consider the safety and well being of the child may be put at risk by attendance at the excursion.
  - x) While on the excursion, all children will have an identification badge indicating the centre's name address and contact numbers. The child's name will not be displayed on their identification badges for child protection purposes.
  - xi) Related centre policies will be observed while on the excursion eg. re emergency, accident, illness, medication, sun protection policies as required.

**d) Additional Implementation OOSHC (May 2014)**

- i) Permission for local excursions is on the yearly enrolment B form, and an excursion form is signed when enrolling in Vacation Care and a specific excursion form will be issued to all parents. OOSHC uses seat belted buses when travelling on highways.
- ii) Inclusion of Children with Developmental Disabilities
  - (1) Children with developmental disabilities are encouraged to participate in excursions.
  - (2) All excursions are assessed on the needs of children who attend our service.
  - (3) Safety of all children and staff is paramount and a priority when making decisions with respect to excursions and every effort will be made to find a safe means for every child to undertake each excursion. However, if the excursion cannot be undertaken safely by any child then that child's involvement in the excursion may not be possible.
  - (4) Strategies to support children to participate will be developed by the educators in consultation with the child and parents/carers. Strategies may include:
    - (a) Partial participation in or modification of certain activities; where modifications to the environment or access is beyond our control, discussion may need to be made which "excludes" some children from excursions.
    - (b) Parent or carer accompanying their child on an excursion to provide support and comfort;
    - (c) Provision of funding for additional staff for inclusion needs on excursions.
  - (5) The service will take all reasonable steps to become eligible for and to apply for any supplementary funding or support service which is available to assist the centre to include children with additional needs on excursions.

**8) Multimedia use within the program (Oct 2010)**

- a) Multimedia is a term used to describe the use of electronic devices, such as CD / Radio / Tape machines, videos, television and computers. The centre recognises these are a part of the life of a child in Australia and all homes will feature at least some of these devices. The centre acknowledges that educational and health authorities have however raised concern about young children spending too long interacting with such devices as normally they involve no interaction with others and little active hands on experience for the child.
- b) The centre acknowledges that families will make choices about the use of these devices by children in their own home , but that choices made at the centre need to match the aims of the educational program at the centre.
- c) The centre will have a range of recorded music and music players available at the centre. In particular this will be seen as an opportunity to introduce children to a wide range of musical styles and cultural sounds. As well the centre recognises that musical experiences are an essential element of the opportunities which should be available to children for self expression. A variety of music and sounds will form part of the program at Rainbow. Staff may also use music to create or sustain certain environments and moods at various times during the day.
- d) The centre will provide at least one television with a suitable device (eg. CD/video) to allow various experiences to be made available to children within the program. However the use of those devices will be carefully monitored so that children do not spend long period viewing material on screen. However the use of a TV can add to the educational

program by providing access to images and information that cannot be provided or created within the centre.

- e) Computers are a recognised teaching tool for the early childhood years. Again the use of computers will be carefully monitored so that children do not spend long period viewing material on screen. In particular the use of computers to provide learning experiences which are easily provided by centre staff and equipment, will be discouraged as the live experience is more beneficial for children's learning.
- f) Cameras, videos and computers provide a range of opportunities for children to be able to record and view images of themselves and their peers engaged in the learning experiences in the centre. Early childhood education authorities have strongly endorsed children having opportunities to review and revisit their own learning as a means of reinforcing that learning and as a role model for other children.

## **9) Everyday care routines (oct 2010)**

### **a) Child Independence**

- i) The centre will recognise the different levels of dependence of children within the centre and ensure a program of care and education is available for each child that matches their level of dependence on adults.
- ii) Within the educational program on a day to day basis, staff will help children make decisions about their own care whenever possible and practical, and at other times will make decisions for children.
- iii) Staff will ensure that any desire to get through the daily routines as quickly and efficiently as possible does not override the importance of allowing children time to make decisions and maximising the learning potential of the practice and experience undertaken by children in accomplishing their own care routines.

### **b) Child Routines**

- i) Staff will monitor the daily routines of each child and record eating drinking, medication and toileting routines for each child, so that families can be well informed about their child's day at Rainbow.
- ii) Staff will recognise that monitoring of such matters for abnormalities or unusual patterns can often give clues to the well being of the child.
- iii) When staff are concerned about any child's routines during the day they will raise their concern with the family, either immediately or at the time the child is collected from the centre

### **c) Sleep, Rest and Relaxation (amended Sept 2017)<sup>2</sup>**

- i) The program will provide both a balance of active periods and relaxation, rest or sleep opportunities. Rest and/or sleep routines for each child will be determined through collaboration between staff and families and ongoing communication will ensure sensitivity to children's individual needs. In respecting the individual needs of children a child may rest at any time during the day.

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<sup>2</sup> This policy has been developed by staff and parents after consideration of various source materials including: Guide to the National Quality Framework <http://www.acecqa.gov.au> Red Nose <https://rednose.com.au> ACCC Keeping baby safe <https://www.productsafety.gov.au/publication/keeping-baby-safe-a-guide-to-infant-and-nursery-products>

- ii) A specific rest/sleep time will be incorporated in the daily program for those children who require it. Staff will acknowledge daily rest periods as a time for children's relaxation and provide lighting, music and atmosphere to facilitate this. Staff will respond to children's individual needs for comforting and settling during these times.
- iii) On enrolment staff will seek information about children's sleeping routines and patterns at home and will discuss with families the requirements for their child's rest and sleep while at the centre. Any decisions made between parents and staff about children's sleep needs and routines will be in accordance with the recommended safe sleeping practices from advisory and peak bodies.
- iv) When any child is having trouble settling to sleep or rest in the centre, staff will liaise with parents of the child to find appropriate ways to proceed.
- v) Children will not be required to sleep or rest against their wishes. Sleep or rest time will not be used as a behaviour management strategy. Staff will recognise that for children to benefit from a rest or sleep time they must be calm and relaxed. Staff will recognise when children are distressed or discomforted about sleep and rest time and liaise with parents and other staff to acknowledge this and develop strategies that support children.
- vi) Cots and beds will be made available to each child as well as sheets and a blanket if required. If desired, families may bring a small toy, cuddly or blanket etc which is familiar to their child to assist the child to sleep or rest.
- vii) Processes will be put in place to supervise and monitor sleeping children. Staff will perform checks of sleeping children in cot rooms at regular intervals, these checks will be documented. Interval checks will take into consideration the age, any medical or health concerns and the individual needs of children.
- viii) In recognising the individual needs of children, staff will provide suitable alternative activities for children who do not sleep. Staff will encourage a period of relaxation for these children with suitable restful experiences and activities.
- ix) For very young children who require sleep in cots, a cot room will be provided. Centre Management will ensure that all sleep equipment meets the appropriate safety standards.
- x) Centre staff will provide a safe physical sleep environment and be aware of safe sleeping arrangements. The centre will ensure staff have access to the latest information about safe sleeping practices. Staff will ensure that when preparing, settling and monitoring a child for/during sleep or rest, all procedures will be in accordance with appropriate advisory and peak body recommendations to ensure children are safe.

#### **d) Eating and Drinking**

- i) Children will be provided with a range of meals, snacks and drinks during the day. These items will be carefully selected and prepared to ensure suitable variety, type and amounts of food and nutrition is provided to each child.

- ii) All staff will be trained in food handling so that meal times and routines can be as safe as possible for children.
- iii) Staff will recognise the social and emotional value of eating and drinking within a group in a relaxed and comfortable manner and that role modelling by adults and peers can assist and encourage children to eat and drink while at the centre. Meals and snacks will be an unhurried experience for children and will be provided over an extended period so that children are able to make choices, although recognising that for food handling and logistic reasons snacks may not be able to be available at all times.

## **10) Toileting**

- i) Children will be assisted with their toileting as required while at the centre in a sensitive and supportive manner that acknowledges that lack of toileting skills, achievements and accidents can cause embarrassment and concern to a child.
- ii) Staff will follow hygienic and sensitive nappy changing procedures when required. Families are asked to provide disposable nappies for use by their child while at the centre. Nappy procedures, including change surfaces, cleaning and storage of soiled nappies will be designed to minimise health concerns and the procedure will be displayed in the nappy change area and families changing their child at the centre are asked to follow that procedure. Staff will recognise the potential for the one on one nappy changing procedure to be a positive and fun experience for a young child.
- iii) The children's toilet at the centre is an open and public area that is designed in the knowledge that most young children do not require toilet privacy and will learn about toileting, hand washing and rubbish disposal from observing and interacting with peers. However, the centre will provide at least one toilet cubicle that has a privacy panel in recognition that some children may wish to have higher levels of privacy in their toileting.

### **b) Clothing<sup>3</sup>**

- i) Families are asked to ensure children attend the centre in clothing suitable for the nature of the activities and experiences available to children, and that adequate changes of clothing are available for the day. Families are asked to ensure children have a jacket or jumper during cooler weather and suitable shoes to enable active play.
- ii) Children will be assisted each day to ensure their clothing is appropriate to the circumstances and is maintained in a suitable state during their time at the centre. As children become more independent staff will assist children to take care of their own belongings, including clothing, and make changes are required.
- iii) The centre will allow children to undertake messy and wet learning experiences which may result in clothing becoming wet, soiled or muddied. The centre considers such activities are an important part of the educational program and encourage all children to be involved. Parents are urged to ensure children's clothing is of a robust and easily cleanable nature so that such soiling will not cause distress to the child or the parent.
- iv) During many activities children (and staff) will be allowed to remove shoes. It is considered that children's learning is enhanced by appropriate sensory activities (e.g. sand, paint, dirt, soft fall, water etc) and such activities are often best enjoyed

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<sup>3</sup> This policy was developed after considering information from The NSW Children's Services Regulations, Dept of Community Services 2005; and Health and safety In Children's Services" UNSW 2003.

without shoes. The centre will ensure the relevant area is safe for use without shoes and that shoes are replaced at an appropriate time.

- v) Staff will monitor children's layers of clothing at all times, and allowing for the warm climate, may remove (or add) layers to ensure children will not overheat or become chilled. The centre maintains a "spare" clothing pool, to allow centre owned items of clothing to be used by children if for any reason a child does not have suitable items available to use.
- vi) Also see Policy Section 2, Clause 5 (sun protection) re clothing requirements to ensure sun protection.

### **11) Encouraging cooperative Behaviour (Oct 2010)**

- a) Within a child care setting, it is acknowledged that from time to time children may make choices or take actions which may put others in danger or which may be against the expectations of staff and peers. Such actions and choices may often be as a result of the children not having an understanding of the consequences of their actions or not having the skills to know how to act in other ways. The program at Rainbow is designed to assist children in making choices, which allow them to play and live cooperatively with peers staff and families. We aim to provide an environment where all parents, staff and children feel safe, cared for and relaxed and which encourages cooperation and positive interactions between all persons.
- b) Staff will establish with children and families a consistent set of expectations for behaviour by children and staff based on safety, respect for others, self esteem, cleanliness and which helps create a caring environment. Positive behaviour will be encouraged and self-discipline skills developed through positive examples role modelling explanation, guidance and direction.
- c) These expectations will take into account the age and stage of development of the child involved and staff will recognise that actions taken by a very young child may be understandable while similar actions by an older child are unacceptable. Where younger children are undertaking such behaviours staff will supervise the play and design the environment to minimise any danger to other children from that child's actions.
- d) All expectations will be clearly expressed in a positive way and reinforced consistently to encourage children to think about their actions and how those actions impact on the rights and needs of others. Children will be made aware of the consequences of certain actions or choices and staff will ensure a consistent response is made to assist children to recognise the reality of those consequences.
- e) In setting up for children the consequences of any action or choice, the staff will recognise that "catching a child being good" and responding positively to that is a more powerful tool for behaviour management than punishing other actions. As well providing positive attention to a child who has been the victim of any anti-social action is a very powerful management tool within a peer group setting. Families will be encouraged to understand that staff implementing behaviour management within a group setting may make different choices than those which may be made by a parent with a child at home or in a one on one setting.
- f) All consequences shall be relevant to the individual situation. Staff will take into account the child's individual needs at the time, the circumstances, the lead up situation and the

acceptable choices realistically available to the child .No child will be subjected to, or threatened with corporal punishment, intimidation or ridicule as a consequence of any action. No child will have food or other basic needs withdrawn as part of a consequence of any action.

- g)** Positive behaviour will be encouraged by role modelling, diverting children to more appropriate activities, showing appreciation for appropriate behaviour and building on each child's strengths and achievements. Children are to be given opportunities that enable them to be responsible for their own behaviour through the development of problem solving skills in interactions with peers. Children who have reached some level of independence will be encouraged to seek the support of staff when necessary, although in many cases the role of staff will be to assist the children to work out the problems themselves.
- h)** Staff will discuss with all families the choices and actions of their children within the program in the normal course of communication within the centre. Those discussions will include mention of the child's growing awareness and understanding of acceptable and positive social behaviours. Where a child has any difficulties in learning positive social behaviour, staff and families will discuss the matter and reach a mutually agreeable approach. It will be important that both staff and families recognise that typically children may show different behaviours at home or with the family to those they show at the centre. There will be examples of "little devils" at home being "little angels" at Rainbow and vice versa.
- i)** When a child demonstrates consistent unacceptable behaviour, staff and parents will discuss the matter and implement normal practices within the centre to assist the child. If the behaviour continues, the Director may convene a more formal meeting with the family and or among staff to develop a behaviour management plan for use at the centre and/or at home. This plan will draw on information from the early childhood education field about optimal methods of assisting children in the choices and actions they take. If necessary the centre may seek advice from outside consultants or specialists to assist in developing and implementing a suitable plan.
- j)** Should unacceptable behaviour continue, and the child's actions and choices constitute an unacceptable danger to other children and staff, the Director may raise the matter with the Management Committee. The child's family will be given the opportunity to further discuss their child's behaviour, in consultation with the Director and at least one member of the Management Committee. Any resolution to exclude a child must include clear conditions for accepting the child and family back into the centre at an appropriate time and under those conditions identified.
- k)** The child will be considered for a placement back into the program, only if those conditions have been complied with. Such conditions may include

  - i) the child has been assessed by a relevant professional and a diagnosis made and support (therapists, doctors etc) given to the family and that can be accessed by the centre,
  - ii) the child's behaviour is seen by the Director and the staff as improved; this will be measured against previous incidents at the centre
  - iii) the family continues with the therapy or treatment plan devised by the treating professional,
  - iv) there is a place available as per normal enrolment procedures

**12) Inclusion and Equity<sup>4</sup> (Oct 2010)**

- a) Rainbow's philosophy and our annual planning stress that the centre wishes to provide equality of opportunity to all children enrolled in the centre. Rainbow acknowledges that for various reasons some sectors of Australian society do suffer prejudice and inequality based on who they or their family are. Rainbow will aim to provide activities; experiences interactions and equipment which help children develop to their full potential regardless of their background and any additional needs.
- b) Staff will accept and value every parent and child regardless of their cultural, racial, language, disability or other background factor. And will foster that respect among the children and other families.
- c) Staff will make themselves aware of the specific cultures represented in the families enrolled at Rainbow, as well as in the general community. Staff will recognise the diversity of culture in Australia and help foster an awareness and acceptance of other cultures within each child, through the thoughtful integration of a variety of cultural activities in the program. Families will be encouraged and invited to contribute knowledge of their own culture to enhance the overall quality of the program.
- d) Staff will encourage feedback and input from parents in relation to the program, policies or other issues in the centre, which are affected by or at odds with the families' cultural and family beliefs and practices.
- e) The centre will ensure staff have the opportunity to be trained to adequately understand and implement a diversity program at the centre. The centre will actively encourage access by staff to outside organisations (e.g. SCAN, ISA, Lady Gowrie Centre) to assist with programming ideas.
- f) The centre will ensure staff are aware of the way in which they respond to and interact with children and families from diverse backgrounds, and will ensure staff have the opportunity to implement a program that allows each child to reach their full potential. Staff will act as positive role models encouraging children to be involved in activities commonly stereotyped with the opposite sex.
- g) The centre program will present positive experiences, role models and equipment for the children, which are based on respecting and encouraging inclusive and non-biased role models. All children will have the opportunity to use all equipment except where health or safety concerns restrict choices and options.
- h) The centre will inform families that all children enrolled at Rainbow will be encouraged to participate in all the variety of experiences available within the program. Staff will respect any differences in childcare and child rearing practices required by the family except where such practices would conflict with inclusion, equity and child protection policy.
- i) When families wish to restrict the choices available to their child for any reason, the centre will negotiate with the family on a suitable means of supporting their child. If a

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<sup>4</sup> Consultation re this entire policy, including the policy re inclusion and equity, was conducted by the policy sub-committee between November and December 2005. The policy was displayed in the foyer for 6 weeks with verbal or written feedback invited from families and the staff had access to written draft copies for comment over the same period. The policy was also discussed at an open parent committee meeting in January 2006 prior to its adoption.

family insists the centre restrict their child's choices of activity while at the centre, based on implementing a biased or non-inclusive program for the child, the centre reserves the right to refuse to implement that program.

- j) All activities and behaviour in the centre will be considerate of the cultural and linguistic diversity of Australia culture and society. Children will be encouraged to explore and share a range of cultural activities and experiences in an environment free from prejudice and harassment.
- k) Where possible parent information will be translated into other languages especially where such translations are likely to assist members of the local community to access the centre.

### **13) Interactions with children (Oct 2010, reviewed Sept 2017)**

- a) The staff will interact with children in a positive and open manner which ensures each child:
  - i) is encouraged to express themselves and their opinions,
  - ii) is given the opportunity to become self-reliant and to develop self-esteem,
  - iii) is given guidance as to positive and responsible behaviour, and
  - iv) is not required to perform duties that are inappropriate, having regard to each child's family and cultural values, age and physical and intellectual development.
- b) The staff will maintain the dignity and rights of each child by ensuring each child is:
  - i) not isolated for any reason other than illness, accident or a pre-arranged appointment with parental consent,
  - ii) given positive guidance directed towards acceptable behaviour with encouragement freely given,
  - iii) given both emotional support and encouragement and support in undertaking learning experiences,
  - iv) is not required to sleep or rest against the child's wishes or needs.
- c) The staff will ensure that any child with an additional need:
  - i) is treated without bias regardless of ability, gender, religion, culture, family structure or economic status.
  - ii) is encouraged to fully participate (with any necessary help and support) in programs and learning experiences at the service, and
  - iii) where possible is provided with access to all areas, facilities, activities, specialised equipment and resources of the centre.

### **14) Promoting learning among children (Oct 2010)**

- a) The centre has an emergent curriculum program and as such recognises that learning in young children comes predominantly from the children's own interests, needs and aspirations.
- b) Rainbow Childrens Centre considers that parents are the primary carers of their children and Rainbow provides each family with support in that process. As such the program at Rainbow will reflect the interests which emerge from the children as hands on learners. In turn, it is acknowledged that those interests will reflect the home experiences which each child enjoys.

- c) Rainbow also acknowledges its social responsibility to empower children to understand issues about their own personal protection, health and safety. Such matters (e.g. child protection, respect for potentially dangerous animals, road safety) will be raised with children in the normal course of the program.
- d) The centre will also ensure that children are exposed to a range of information about themselves and their world that enables them to learn about matters that may affect them and their environment. These include the matters set out in the centre philosophy - including care for others, personal safety, consideration and kindness to others, care for the environment and respect and acknowledgement of the rights of others.
- e) However, the centre does not seek to include any specific or particular information, belief system or attitude in the program. The centre considers that as the family is the primary carer of their own child, it is the right of the family to teach that child about those matters in their own way. The centre will neither support nor hinder that process – in respect of each family's rights.

#### **15) Behaviour Management in Out Of School Hours Care (amended July 2014)**

- a) The program at OOSHC is designed to assist children in making choice which allows them to play and live cooperatively with peers staff and families. We recognise children's rights to play and have fun and we acknowledge that from time children may make choices or take actions which may put others in danger or which may be outside the expectations of staff and peers
- b) We will respond positively for a child demonstrating good behaviours as well as providing positive attention to a child who has been victim the victim of any anti social actions. Families will be encouraged to understand that staff implementing behaviour a management within a group setting may make a different choice than those which may be made by a parent at home or in a one on one setting.
- c) The ultimate goal of behaviour management is to teach the child self discipline and an understanding the consequences of their actions, when children are self disciplined and self directed their needs and interests become clearer to them and to others from this a child centred curriculum readily follows.
- d) Families will be encouraged to understand that staff implementing management within a group setting may make different choices than those which may be made by a parent at home or in a one on one setting.
- e) We recognise that children attending our service often can bring anti social issues from school and they can boil over at OOSHC but not always brought in. We will not tolerate any such anti social behaviours such as:
  - i) Physical bullying
  - ii) Verbal Bullying\
  - iii) Unsafe Play
  - iv) Refusal to comply with Staff directions
  - v) Inappropriate Language
  - vi) Damage to OOSHC equipment etc
- f) All consequences shall be relevant to the individual situation. Staff will take into account the child's individual needs at the time, the circumstances, the lead up to the situation and the acceptable choices realistically available to the child. No child will be subject to or threatened with corporal punishment or intimidation as a consequence of any action.

No child will have food or other basic needs withdrawn as part of a consequence of any action.

- g)** Should unacceptable behaviours continue and the child's action and choices constitute an unacceptable danger to other children, to staff or to themselves, the coordinator will implement the Behaviour Management Report were the child is given three written warnings and upon the third warning the coordinator will consult with families to discuss suspension or possible termination of their child's enrolment .
- h)** Rainbow shall develop and anti-bullying procedure for OOSHC services and ensure all staff are aware of those procedures. Copies of the procedure should be readily available to families and children at all OOSHC services and when or if any bullying behaviour occurs a copy should be given to the family of the child/ren involved to assist in understanding the ramifications of the concerns and the possible actions that might follow.