



Gender Equity Policy

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice

Policy Statement

Children are exposed to many factors which influence their attitudes, behaviours and aspirations. One of these factors is gender. By the age of four children have already formed an understanding of what it means to be a woman or a man in today's society. "When children play, they are making sense of their social world. In play they create and recreate their understanding of what they believe to be normal behaviour for boys and girls, women and men. They construct their play using what they have distilled from the adult world about normal gendered ways of being, thinking and acting." (Rethinking Gender in Early Years Education, Glenda MacNaughton 2000) Stereotypical ideas about gender provide a very limiting and narrow definition of what individual children can and should be doing. This policy has been developed because Tathra Preschool is aware of the important role we can play in challenging the constraints and inequities that gender stereotypes place on all children.

Policy Goals

Tathra Preschool is committed to developing the full potential of all children irrespective of gender. It affirms that all children are treated equitably in regard to ability, personality and behaviour. It further affirms the right of all children to:

- Develop and play without the limitations of stereotypes based on gender.
- Develop a sense of pride in oneself and one's accomplishments, to enhance feelings of positive self-esteem and self-worth.
- Develop respect for each other's rights and responsibilities.

Strategies: How will it be done?

To support the intent of this policy, Tathra Preschool will endeavour to:

- Ensure that all children regardless of gender are equally encouraged to participate in all activities with due consideration for individual needs and interests. For example, encourage all children to use the home corner, outdoor playing equipment and toys such as cars and dolls.
- Encourage non-sexist behaviour by children and staff.
- Purchase resources and materials that promote gender equity and counter sexist and violence supportive attitudes, for staff use and supply staff development programs focused on issues of gender equity, sexism, and education.
- Encourage all children to express emotions and display affection.
- Ensure that all language used within the preschool, both verbal and written, is gender inclusive.
- Encourage use of materials which portray women and men in roles, situations and jobs which are not stereotyped.
- Select resources where all children are seen as both initiators and nurturers.
- Ensure that all children regardless of gender equally share staff time, indoor/outdoor playing space and equipment taking into account individual needs and interests.
- Encourage the employment of both female and male staff and ensure that tasks carried out by staff are not related to gender.
- Encourage educational or information opportunities that further the aims of this policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

The approved provider will:

- Ensure the development, implementation, and review of and maintenance of the policy.

- Provide families with information about the importance of a gender equity approach in achieving positive outcomes for all children.
- Consider barriers to participation in preschool programs and activities and developing strategies to overcome these.
- Ensure that staff have access to appropriate and accredited professional development activities that promote a positive understanding of gender equity and develop skills to assist them in implementing this policy.
- Provide support and guidance to educators/staff.
- Ensure that educators and all staff are aware of Tathra Preschool's expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour when working with children and families.
- Ensure that any behaviour or circumstances that may constitute discrimination or prejudice are dealt with in an appropriate manner.
- Develop and deliver an educational program that is reflective of the Tathra Preschool's values, beliefs and philosophy, and embraces the principles of fairness, equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Endeavor to include gender neutral language in songs and rhymes. For example, ***they/them*** as well as ***he/she***.

Educators will:

- Ensure the day-to-day implementation of the gender equity policy.
- Be aware of the Tathra Preschools expectations regarding positive, respectful and appropriate behaviour when working with children and families.
- Ensure that the program provides opportunities for all children to participate and interact with one another, irrespective of gender.
- Undertake appropriate professional development on issues about gender equity.

- Understand and respect how different cultural child-rearing and social practices may view gender roles.
- Use family-centred practice and working collaboratively with staff, parents/carers, specialist services and other professionals to implement a gender equity approach at the preschool.
- Provide opportunities for families to contribute to the gender equity program.
- Notify management or appropriate staff of any behaviour or circumstances that may constitute discrimination or prejudice.
- Critically reflect on practice to ensure that interactions and programs embrace a gender equitable approach in which children and families feel valued and respected, and that their contributions are welcomed.
- Incorporate a gender lens across their reflective practice and observations.

Monitor, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the preschool will review this Policy every 3 years.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the preschool will ensure that families of children enrolled at the preschool are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the preschool; a family's ability to utilise the preschool; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

Relevant Legislation

- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Education and Care Service National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Guidelines, Standards and Frameworks

- The Early Years Learning Framework V2.0(EYLF) (DEEWR, 2022)
- National Quality Framework
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- Early Childhood Australia (ECA) Code of Ethics

Sources and References

- https://www.mav.asn.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/7279/Darebin-City-Council-Creating-Gender-Equity-in-the-Early-Years-A-Resource-for-Local-Government.pdf
- MacNaughton, G. 2000. Rethinking gender in early childhood education. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

Links to other policies

- Staff, Student, Volunteer Induction Policy
- Confidentiality and Privacy policy
- Code of Conduct
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Interaction with Children Policy
- Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy
- Feedback and Complaints Policy
- Staff Appraisal Policy

Developed

April 2024

Review Date

2027 or when procedure,
practice or legislation changes.