



City of Canterbury

City of Cultural Diversity

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Policies and Procedures Manual

Canterbury City Council - A great place to live and work

CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL CHILDREN'S SERVICES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

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1.1 CHILDREN'S SERVICE'S VISION

Canterbury City Council celebrates the social, cultural and linguistic diversity of our community. A true culture of community is defined by the strength and substance of the network of relationships that are intrinsic to it. Within our Children's Services we value secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships as central to our philosophy and practice. These relationships involve a collaborative team of children, families, educators and the broader community.

Our core value is Family, and we are committed to improving cultural competence and honouring and celebrating the background of each family in our services. We promote a sense of belonging for all children and families, and team members, through open and honest communication that builds reciprocal trust and respect. We appreciate the life of each family and work in partnership with them, sharing knowledge, ideas and skills, and learning about each family's backgrounds, beliefs and opinions. We show respect for diversity, acknowledge families as experts in their own lives and of their own children, and demonstrate compassion in our interactions with each family member. This enables us to create an environment where children have a strong sense of identity.

Children learn through participation in meaningful reciprocal relationships. They become connected with and contribute to their world through collaborative experiences and decision making within these respectful relationships. We respond to each child's unique strengths, abilities, knowledge and interests, and extend children's learning by provoking, challenging and guiding them. We create stimulating and supportive environments where children can expand their thinking and learning through play, and we celebrate their achievements. This supports each child's sense of being. Along with a positive attitude, harmonious environment and sense of humour and laughter with children, this also reflects our value of happiness.

We promote our value of health by encouraging all children, families and educators to be mindful of their own physical and emotional well being. We support children to build resilience while learning to understand and manage emotions. We believe in showing kindness and fairness while developing independence, confidence and assertiveness. We encourage healthy eating and participation in physical activity through a range of experiences and activities, supporting children's strong sense of wellbeing. We believe that each child has a unique capacity to succeed, and promote inclusion and participation of all children in our programs. High expectations and equity are key to the realisation of true inclusion for every child.

We encourage family involvement in all aspects of our services, particularly in programming and planning for their children, inviting their knowledge and expertise. Our own observations and knowledge of each child also assists us to utilise intentional teaching as well as continuous assessment for learning in order to be informed and plan effectively for each child's learning. We believe in responsiveness to children, learning with children, constructing knowledge together, engaging in experiences that support exploration and investigation, listening to and intentionally scaffolding children's thoughts, ideas and understanding. Our learning environments are then truly reflective of our partnerships with children and families, and children are supported to become confident and involved learners.

We have a strong focus on literacy and creative arts, sustainable practices as well as Science and technology, while encouraging children's verbal expression and use of various other media to express themselves. We share these experiences with children in a way that models joy and appreciation for engaging in a range of modes of expression and support children to be effective communicators.

While celebrating children's sense of being, we acknowledge the amazing changes that take place for children during these years and through these experiences, which promote their sense of becoming. This is further enhanced through the number of changes that occur in the child's life, in particular the move to new learning environments. We believe in supporting children and families in this process and we develop close connections with local schools and other professionals to enable continuity of learning and transitions that help children to feel safe, secure and confident.

We believe in constant reflection on our values and philosophies as well as our practice, and strive for the betterment of services for children, families, and our profession. Our services adopt holistic approaches to both teaching and learning, exploring and combining ideas and beliefs from a range of theories, attending to the whole child both as an individual and in the context of family, community and society, with a focus on collaboration, relationships and the environment. Ongoing learning and reflective practice are vital components of providing quality early childhood education and care. Council is committed to the ongoing professional development of our early childhood educators, and by doing so supports them in the ethical conduct of their services.

In creating caring communities, advocating for children's rights is central to our work. Early childhood educators have a professional responsibility in maintaining integrity in the promotion of genuine relationships among children, families, educators and the broader community. We have a significant role to play in raising the profile of our profession and the importance of the early years in building and sustaining social capital.

This vision reflects our core values of Family, Happiness, Health, Relationships, Fairness, Commitment, Compassion, Respect, Life, Integrity, Honesty, and Kindness.

It also reflects the Vision, Principles, Practice and Learning Outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.

Revised May 2014

1.2 CHILDREN'S SERVICE'S PHILOSOPHY

Canterbury City Council's Children's Services collectively advocate for Family Centred Practice, where educators and families have a shared vision for their children. Individual Early Childhood Settings recognise the family as the focus of the service and work to ensure an appreciation of the social, cultural and linguistic diversity that is unique to each service, and is the fibre of the community of Canterbury.

CHILDREN

Canterbury Children's Services are committed to Family Centred Practice to ensure:

- The early childhood setting values children's capacity to socialise, to exchange information, ideas and feelings. Children are encouraged to develop strategies for negotiation and actively participate in planning and decision making.
- A continuous dialogue among children, educators and families facilitates a curriculum that emerges through interest and activity, observation and decision making, individual and shared choices.
- Learning environments celebrate the processes of children's learning in which individual learning styles and collaborative relationships are supported and valued. Learning is made visible and children's exhibited works contribute to an environment that reflects beauty and aesthetic appeal.
- Experiences that promote an appreciation and acceptance of human diversity assist young children to recognise and challenge injustice and discrimination. Services support individual children and families with the maintenance of home language to nurture an appreciation for cultural and linguistic diversity. Also services support access and full inclusion for children with disabilities.

FAMILY / COMMUNITY

Canterbury Children's Services are committed to Family Centred Practice to ensure:

- Services foster an understanding that family interest and involvement is integral to the community of each service.
- The uniqueness of each family and the significance of its culture, customs, language, beliefs, structure, abilities and perspectives are valued and reflected in the design and development of an innovative early childhood curriculum.
- A sense of community exists in the services as a consequence of collaboration. Positive relationships with families develop as information and decision making is shared. This supports mutual growth and understanding.
- Families are invited to share in their child's experiences through active participation, documentation and opportunities to exchange ideas. This collaboration assists each family in the understanding of their child and the processes of their learning.

STAFF

Canterbury Children's Services are committed to Family Centred Practice to ensure:

- Early Childhood Educators advocate for the rights and well being of young children and their families.
- Caring connections between educators, children and educators, and families and educators consolidate a quality early childhood curriculum that nurtures a sense of belonging and community.
- Educators are committed to professional growth, and recognise the value in continuity between theory and practice that is interactive and serves to question, support, motivate and improve practice.
- The acquisition of knowledge and skills is dependent upon an educator's ability to collaborate, research, theorise, facilitate, provoke, and participate in children's learning. Educators reflect upon program effectiveness and professional competencies. The program and practices of each service are guided by an Educational Leader.
- A cohesive team respects and values the history, experiences and diversity of each team member. The combination of skills, background, life styles, culture and language of staff members enriches the community of each service.

COMMUNITY

Canterbury Children's Services are committed to Family Centred Practice to ensure:

- Early Childhood Services, practitioners and families advocate for quality care and education for young children. All work to raise the profile of early childhood education.
- Early Childhood Settings provide services that are responsive to the unique culture of each service.
- Family membership in the community of each service consolidates access to resources and opportunities that are advantageous to both individual children and families, and the early childhood service.
- Children's services provide family support and early childhood education. Each service is recognised as a community stakeholder that is pro-actively engaged in building social capital.

The Hundred Languages of Children Edwards, Gandini & Forman (Eds), (third edition) (2012)

Revised May 2014

1.3 OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE VISION & PHILOSOPHY

Vision Statement

We work towards a future where there is a sense of belonging and respect for all in our community.

Philosophy

Our Outside of School Hours Care Services work towards creating environments which provide opportunities for children to explore their capabilities and talents, and express their ideas and knowledge. We establish environments that provoke a desire for fun and exploration, whilst maintaining a commitment to the safety and well being of all children.

We acknowledge that strength lies in a service where relationships are equal and children's ideas and contributions are acknowledged and truly considered within our program and the decisions we make which will inevitably affect them.

We have a commitment to develop and foster respectful relationships amongst children, staff, families and our local citizens, and we strive towards creating a family like environment.

We believe families bring strength to our work through their expert knowledge about their child. This respect for families provides pathways to fostering collaborative partnerships as well as providing alternate perspectives which guide our practices and work with children.

We acknowledge that people are different in many ways. We believe that when we value and celebrate difference we can bring peace and harmony to our community. We recognise that all individuals have the right to be treated fairly and equally. We aim to demonstrate and instil these values in the children who access our services.

We recognise that we all contribute to the wellbeing of the environments we live in and we want the children to join us as we continue to explore the idea of sustainability at our OSHC Services. We aim to implement programs that are designed to raise the full appreciation of caring and respecting for environmental issues and help children to learn how to respect and care for living things.

Our work is underpinned by knowledge and wisdom which is derived from theory and practice. We maintain a commitment to confidentiality as well as abiding by our professional code of ethics.

Our team is made up of a diverse group of professionals with expertise and knowledge about their work with children and families. This collective knowledge and wisdom enriches the quality of service we provide to our community. We believe that a strong team is based on principles of trust, and respect for ourselves and others.

OSHC Coordinators & Assistant Coordinators

1.4 CHILDREN'S SERVICES CODE OF CONDUCT

Canterbury City Council's Children's Services has a professional commitment to providing high quality education and care for young children and their families. To this end children's services staff have a responsibility to educate the community, parents and staff and to liaise with other relevant professionals and community groups for the benefit of children and families.

1. Children's Services workers will always act honestly, fairly and professionally in the interests of Council and the families and young children they serve.
2. Children's Services workers will deal with the public in a professional and courteous manner.
3. Children's Services workers will endeavour to effectively communicate with, and promote participation by all sections of the community.
4. Children's Services workers will not promote their private interests at the expense of Council or the community whilst performing their duties.
5. Children's Services workers who in the course of their work have access to confidential information will maintain that confidentiality.
6. Children's Services workers will demonstrate impartiality in decision making and maintain public confidence in Council.
7. Children's Services workers will not make improper use of information obtained by them in the exercise of their professional duty.
8. Children's Services workers will ensure that members of the public are provided with all necessary information and appropriate assistance.
9. Children's Services workers will consider all available and appropriate information prior to making recommendations and ensure that Council is given necessary, accurate and timely advice.

Council Staff Policies