

Strathfield One Stop Child Care Service (S.O.C.C.S.)

Centre Philosophy

At S.O.C.C.S. we value and welcome all families. We recognise all children's capacity and right to succeed regardless of their circumstances, cultural background, strengths and abilities. We believe that children learn best when they are playing and are involved in activities and experiences that interest them. We focus on the importance of communication, language, social and emotional development. Fundamental to the Early Years Learning Framework is a view of children's lives as characterised by belonging, being and becoming. From before birth children are connected to family, community, culture and place and here at S.O.C.C.S. we focus on developing a program that fosters this learning and development.

Inclusion is acknowledged as an approach where diversity is celebrated. At S.O.C.C.S. we recognise that every child treads an individual learning path and will progress in different and equally meaningful ways. Our Educators implement responsive, equitable, individualised opportunities and additional support if barriers to success are identified.

We believe that connections are the core of everything we do at S.O.C.C.S. Positive relationships with children, their families, the community and the curriculum form our foundations:

In our relationships with Children:

We acknowledge and advocate children's rights as outlined in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNICEF, 1989).

We believe every child deserves the best. We recognise our responsibility to support who they are becoming and give them a sense of agency.

We create a safe, explorative and stimulating learning environment for children to investigate and be empowered to solve problems and make numerous discoveries.

We guide children to recognise and express their own feelings as well as to be perceptive to those of others.

We value and respect children's voices. We plan and implement learning through play as we empower children to take the lead and we then support children in achieving learning outcomes.

We aim to build strong relationships with the children as we get to know them and recognise their individual needs, interests and abilities to support their own journey. We ensure that all children have opportunities to experience inclusive and equitable quality education and care as we observe, ask questions and involve families to help support this.

In our relationships with Families:

We respect all families and all that they bring to S.O.C.C.S. We celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of our families and actively seek ways to incorporate this into our program.

We acknowledge that the family is the most powerful influence on each child's life. We support families in their parenting role. We believe that the learning outcomes are most likely to be achieved when we work in partnership with families to ensure the experiences planned for children are meaningful.

We develop respectful and genuine relationships with families to foster strong connections between home environments, the centre and the wider community. Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.

We welcome families to share in, contribute to and be part of the centres daily program and practices. We invite families to support us in our commitment to continuous improvement by helping to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement.

In our relationship with the Community:

Our diverse community is reflected within the curriculum. We incorporate the practices, values and beliefs of our families within the day-to-day program. Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued. We work together with the Aboriginal community to enhance our learning and incorporation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures within our daily program. We promote greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing and being.

We aim to build close connections and relationships with members of the local community. Building connections and relationships with people in the community helps children to learn more about various cultures that exist with Australia, including knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' perspectives, identity, histories, cultures and places of significance in their local community (National Quality Standard 6.2.3).

Experiences of relationships and participation in communities contribute to children's belonging, being and becoming (EYLF, 2009). We look for opportunities for children to visit places in the community to experience connections and be engaged in their local community.

We look for opportunities to invite the community to our centre to implement experiences in the program to support children's understanding of the community in which they live.

We incorporate books, resources and images in the learning environment that provides a balanced view of our community.

Our team of staff:

We are passionate, dedicated, involved, reflective, intentional and skilled Educators. We support each other to be the best we can be and acknowledge each other's talents, experience and diversity. We love celebrating culture, our passions and talents.

We believe that the practices and relationships we form with children and families have a significant effect on children's involvement and success in lifelong learning.

We reflect on our practice and commit to continuous high-quality education. We support one another's ongoing professional and personal development. We share in one another's learning as we continuously seek ways to build on our professional knowledge as we take part in professional development.

We support our Educators to develop their professional journey by giving them opportunities to upskill and take on further roles in the Early Childhood Profession.

We advocate the rights of children and families and the profession of early childhood education and care and its vital role in our community.

Our Curriculum:

In accordance to the Early Years Learning Framework, we aim to extend and enrich children's learning from birth through to the transition to school. A specific emphasis is on play-based learning. Educators engage in intentional teaching, as it is deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful. Our learning environments are set up with Learning Centres that are the foundation of our program and planning.

Critical reflections play a major role in the decisions made. We critically reflect to achieve best outcomes for children, families and our service, to share knowledge and engage in collective decision-making and to highlight our professional capacity to educate. 'Learning together with colleagues draws upon the diverse knowledge, experiences, views and attitudes of individuals within the group'. (Educator's Guide to the EYLF, p.7)

At S.O.C.C.S. we provide ways for sustainability to be integrated to inspire and empower children, families and educators to engage in transformative change at many levels – our thinking, our ways of being and our ways of acting to regenerate the Earth.

References:

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, (2011).
- National Quality Framework - Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace, (2009).
- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations [DEEWR], 2009. BEING, BECOMING, BELONGING, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.