

ARIAH PARK PRESCHOOL

Anti Bias & Equity Policy

Aims

In conjunction with the centre's stated philosophy, the **ARIAH PARK PRESCHOOL** will:

1. Both expect and respect diversity in all its forms and in relation to all spheres of activity/work at the centre. Thus there will be no discrimination or bias in relation to gender, disability, age, culture, religion, marital status or socio economic background. All practices and decisions at the centre will be based upon professional, objective and informed considerations and will not be influenced by stereotypical assumptions
2. In line with the early childhood field's commitment to anti bias philosophy, take an active role in encouraging positive, inclusive and open attitudes in children, including notions of fairness, tolerance and kindness to others. The centre recognises that such dispositions and 'anti-bias' awareness are lifelong influences and important ones to foster

(Note: Due to the overlap of equal opportunity with anti-bias issues, this policy will encompass both areas to avoid needless repetition as would occur if the policies were to be developed separately.)

Legislative Requirements

Education and Care Australian National Regulations 2011
Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Equal Opportunity & Discrimination Act 1986

Racial Discrimination Act 1975

Sex Discrimination Act 1984

Who is affected by this policy?

Children

Staff

Families

Management

Relevant Early Childhood Professional Standards

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| Early Childhood Code of Ethics: | I-1, I-2, 1-4, 1-7, 1-8, 1-10, II-2, II-6 III-1, III-2, V-2, VI-1 |
| Early Years Learning Framework: | Outcomes: 1.4, 2.1-2.3 Principles:1-4 |
| Education & Care Services Australian National Regulations: | 155(c & e), 234, |
| National Quality Framework: | Quality areas: 2.1.2, 4.2.1, 4.3, 4.3.4 5.1, 5.2.2, 5.3, 6.1-6.3 |

Sources/References

Australian Public Service Commission: *Guidelines on workplace diversity*.
<http://www.apsc.gov.au/index.html>

Education and Care Australian National Regulations 2011

Creaser, B, & Dau, E. (2009). *The anti-bias approach to early childhood*. Watson, Act. Australian Early Childhood Association

Jacobson, T. (2003). *Confronting or discomfort: Clearing the way for anti-bias in early childhood*. Heinemann, NH: Greenwood Publishing Group

KU Children's Services Inclusion Support: www.ku.com.au/inclusion-support/ (Retrieved January 2012)

National Childcare Accreditation Council: *Quality Practices Guide* (1st ed.). 2005

United Nations Charter, (1991). *Rights of the child (Articles 2 & 5)*:

http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf (Retrieved January 2012)

Procedures re: 1. Bias free management & administration (p3)
2. Incorporating early childhood anti-bias perspectives in the teaching program (p3)

1. Bias free management & administration

The **Ariah Park Preschool** will:

1.1 Review and reflect on practices to ensure they are consistent with the centre's philosophical statement and legislated equity provisions. Part of this reflection will involve the induction of new staff, as this process will present an opportunity for all staff to re-consider the centre's underlying principles on an ongoing basis

1.2 Provide information for families in relation to the fostering of anti-bias attitudes and values in the preschool, and welcome their interest and participation in relation to this policies and its procedures

1.3 All staff will be recruited and employed according to equal opportunity guidelines. For details see the centre's 'Staffing Policy'

1.4 No children or families will be discriminated against in relation to enrolment procedures at the centre as per those areas of discrimination identified in Aim 1 of this policy (for further details see the centre's 'Enrollment & Fees Policy'), or in relation to any other matter

1.5 The centre's Director will be aware of and able to identify discriminatory and/or harassing conduct. She/he will be responsible for informing and guiding any victim at the centre if it is deemed necessary to formally register a complaint. If this occurs the procedures in the centre's 'Grievance Policy' will be followed

2. Incorporating early childhood anti-bias perspectives in the teaching program

In the 1980s the early childhood field developed research and publications in what was a new discipline area at the time, namely 'anti-bias philosophy.' This was a strongly humanistic perspective and the first of its kind in the area of education for either children or adolescents. The application of this philosophy evolved into an anti-bias curriculum and it is from the key premises of this curriculum that Procedures 2 of this centre's Anti-Bias & Equity Policy, have been developed. The assumptions underlying anti-bias perspectives in the early childhood field which are embedded in the points below are that: (1) anti-bias education for preschoolers can and should permeate all aspects of any educational program and can be of both a formal and informal nature, (2) anti-bias education incorporates a proactive rather than passive approach. Therefore it is a conscious process that encourages children with adult scaffolding, to think about and articulate their view of what is fair and what is not, how a problem may be solved etc (3) the way in which this is taught will be developmentally appropriate in terms of pre-schoolers' cognitive development and their developing ability to begin to think logically and (4) any anti-bias education at the preschool will arise naturally out of daily experiences eg a story in a picture book, a picture, incidents that

arise when children play etc. That is, it is not taught in a formal, abstract sense and is not unrelated to the children's own experiences.

In rural preschools such as this one, there may not be many or any children from other cultures attending the centre. Nor do many Aboriginal families use this service. Because of this, the **Ariah Park Preschool** considers it is important to provide children with exposure to other cultures including Aboriginal culture, due to the fact that cultural diversity is the norm in the wider Australian society which all children attending this centre, will eventually experience.

In line with the above, the Director will ensure that the centre's educational program:

2.1 Will promote children's sense of self worth on an individual basis and in respect of the child's culture, gender and family background. This is consistent with the United Nations charter on the Rights of the Child (Articles 2 & 5) to which Australia is a signatory

2.2 Will expose children to different perspectives about things and encourage them to see the value of this. Part of this strategy will involve staff talking about their own values and attitudes and noting how these might be the same or different to each other's

2.3 Staff will model reflective listening and show empathy towards others. This modelling will encompass positive attitudes in relation to gender, disability, socio economic status, culture, language etc. They will also encourage these attitudes in children in more overt ways e.g. in response to playground incidents when explanations become necessary, using positive reinforcement methods when children are observed behaving kindly towards each other, etc. These interactions will provide examples of appropriate language and gestures that children can use themselves when next facing a similar situation

2.4 Staff will be proactive in intervening to assist children to resolve issues and will subtly but meaningfully challenge biased, prejudiced or stereotypical thinking as necessary

2.5 All educational material and equipment purchased for the centre will be monitored to ensure that negative and discriminating images of particular cultures, gender, age etc, are avoided

2.6 Where possible and as considered appropriate by the Director, educational material purchased for the centre will frequently contain images of people from a range cultures e.g. picture books, visual aids, the pictures on puzzles, dolls used in the home play area. Aspects of cultural diversity will also be explored through food, music and dance as considered appropriate by the Director and in relation

to the educational program. Should children from different cultures attend the centre, the Director will welcome involvement by these families in the sharing of their culture with the other children

The Director will ensure that this policy is maintained and implemented at all times

Review

The rationale and procedures for reviewing this policy are twofold. They are as follows:

(1) This policy will be formally reviewed after three years. All formal reviews will be conducted by the Committee of Management, the Director, parents, and interested community members if the Director feels it is necessary. For example the Director might decide that a health and hygiene policy should be considered by a local doctor or nurse as part of the formal review process. All formal reviews will be recorded as per the 'Centre Review Sheet – Formal Three Yearly Review Form' attached to each policy. Given the large number of policies that early childhood centres are now required to develop, it is considered that a formal review does not need to be taken more frequently because (1) each policy needs time for staff to adapt to and time to run so as to enable a well informed evaluation/review during the third year and (2) the formal, three year review process will be a demanding one for the preschool Committee of Management which is composed of voluntary members. Therefore it is considered that a formal review should occur regularly but not excessively so.

(2) Within this three year period however the policy will still be monitored, evaluated and minor adjustments can be made in line with daily occurrences or needs at the centre. This will occur as part of an ongoing process of review undertaken by the centre Director and staff during each calendar year. These reviews will be recorded and dated as per the 'Director's Annual Review Form' and these will also be attached to each policy, along with the formal, three yearly reviews.

The Director's annual review will occur on an ongoing basis and will thus ensure this policy is continually updated. For example if updates are received from a government department that warrant immediate change of some policy procedures, or if implementing a policy has resulted in agreement by staff that minor modifications are necessary before the policy is enacted upon again, these improvements can be made immediately through the Director's annual review process and then be presented to the Committee of Management for ratification at the next formal, three yearly review.

Reviewed 18th November 2014

Signed: Leanne Nixon

