



## Melrose Rural Care CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

### **Legislation**

- *Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA);*
- *Child Care Centre Regulations 1998 (SA);*
- *Commonwealth Operational Guidelines*
- *Children's Services Act 1984*

### **Children need**

- *to have their individual needs met*
- *the opportunity for social, physical, emotional and intellectual development*
- *a warm, open environment*
- *equal opportunity*
- *a stimulating play environment*
- *to have their cultural diversity reflected*

### **Parents need**

- *information about their child's activities, involvement and development which complements their role as a parent.*

### **Staff need**

- *job satisfaction*
- *recognition of professionalism*
- *training and development opportunities*
- *adequate resources.*

### **Management needs**

- *professional staff who are able to provide appropriate programs.*

### STATEMENT

The Melrose Rural Care will provide a program that is developmentally appropriate and meets the needs of all of the children attending the centre. The program will promote the development of each child's social, physical, emotional and intellectual potential, including language skills and creativity and will complement the home environment. This will take place within a secure and happy atmosphere without substituting for the care children receive from their parents / guardians.

### HOW POLICY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED

- *The Director and Early Childhood Workers will be responsible for the development of the program and for creating an atmosphere and environment which is responsive to the needs of each individual child and to the group as a whole. The program will be based on SACSA "essential learnings" and will reflect the philosophy and goals of the centre.*
- *Staff will be provided with opportunities to further their knowledge of child development theories and practices.  
Staff and Governing Council will access relevant resources and agencies to develop and support the program*
- *Programs will aim to challenge children, expand their horizons and stimulate them to explore, think, question, hypothesise, and problem solve.*

- *Programs will be balanced, ie. provide for indoor / outdoor learning experiences, quiet / active times, individual / small group / large group experiences and individual staff / child interaction. Programs will cater for individual and group interests and for children with special needs. Programs will be flexible enough to allow for spontaneity and the unexpected.*
- *Programs will be inclusive of gender, race, religion, special needs, language, ability, and culture.*
- *Program details will be displayed where parents / guardians are able to see them. Parents / Guardians will be able to discuss any aspect of the program with staff and will be encouraged to have input into program development especially in relation to multicultural content. They will be encouraged to share other areas of interest or expertise. The extent to which parents wish to be involved will be respected.*
- *For children, religious cultures and festivals will be acknowledged as part of a multicultural program.*
- *The play and learning program will be child centred and will allow children to experience a variety of materials and pursue their own interests. There will always be alternative choices when a child does not wish to participate in a particular activity.*
- *Children will be appropriately supervised at all times. Staff will join in the children's play and encourage them to try new experiences, when appropriate.*
- *Staff will be supportive and encouraging, and communicate with children in a friendly, positive and courteous manner. They will form warm caring relationships with each child in their care. When communicating with children, staff members will ensure they are at the child's eye level. Children will never be singled out or made to feel inadequate at any time.*
- *All staff will be responsible for working co-operatively to monitor the individual development of each child in their care and for evaluating programs in relation to the stated philosophy and goals.*
- *The records developed on individual children will incorporate observations of stages of development in the context of the children's programs. Recommendations for future program planning may follow from these observations.*
- *Staff will initiate and facilitate regular ongoing communication with parents concerning their child. Recorded information will be available for discussion.*
- *When children attend the Centre, the needs of both parents and children will be respected. Parents will be encouraged to remain with their child when delivering or collecting them for as long a period as the parent and/or staff feel may be necessary to ensure the child's well being. The parent may telephone the Centre during the day for reassurance that their child has settled in. Staff will make a special point of discussing the child's day with the parent.*
- *Where possible, new children and parents will be encouraged to visit the Centre for short periods prior to enrolment to facilitate the child's orientation into the Centre.*
- *As each child arrives at the Centre they will be greeted by a staff member.*
- *Routines will be built around the regular events of the day ie. arrival, snacks / drinks, toileting / nappy change, main meals, washing, dressing, sleeping and departure. They will take into account the developmental needs of individual children, children's attendance patterns, climate and physical environment, the numbers and ages of children within a given group, children with special needs, new children entering the group and parents' expectations and diverse child rearing practices.*
- *When children are grouped the following will be considered:*
  - *available indoor and outdoor space*
  - *staff experience*
  - *staffing levels and required staff : child ratio*
  - *number and ages of children*
  - *children of diverse culture and linguistic backgrounds*
  - *continuity of care*
  - *children's individual needs*
  - *type of learning experience or play activity*
  - *children's social / emotional skill level.*

Reference: DECS Rural Care Handbook

Director

Ratified:     /     /2008

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