Celebrations Policy

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice

**Standard 1.1:** An Approved Learning Framework informs the development of a curriculum that enhances each child’s learning and development.

**Standard 1.2:** Educators and co-ordinators are focused, active and reflective in designing and delivering the program for each child.

Rituals or traditions, experiences shared regularly, contribute to a sense of community and belonging, as do celebrations that are handled sensitively. These can be valuable for children, families and educators. Both the planning and preparation, and the events themselves, can be satisfying and pleasurable experiences.

It is important for us to recognise the range of celebrations, both religious and secular, that take place through the year in our community and to have an understanding of, and respect for, cultural diversity in our services.

Religious celebrations such as Eid and Ramadan and will be recognised within the Service and reflected in our programs. We encourage all cultural celebrations that are significant to our families and relevant to our broader community. We aim to embrace cultural differences so that all children and families may experience and enjoy these special times.

- We believe that it is important for children to experience the fantasy that such celebrations create. Other special days such as Mother’s Day, Father’s Day and Australia Day will also be recognised. We realise that not all families celebrate the above mentioned and respect this ensuring that we cater for this choice.

- Parents and educators are reminded that our Service is “Allergy Aware” prior to any such celebrations

- You are welcome to bring in a birthday cake for your child so that they will be able to share with their friends. Cup Cakes are recommended. Please ensure that you advise us if your child has any allergies or you would prefer they do not eat the cake. If this is the case we may ask you to bring in something special for your child so that they feel part of the celebration. We encourage that the cakes are store bought so the Service can guarantee the suitability of the ingredients

- If you would prefer that your child does NOT participate in such celebrations please let us know so that we can make alternate arrangements. If this is the case we will respect the rights and feelings of this child and will provide an alternative experience for them to participate in so that they do not feel that they are being left out.

- The use of candles will not be carried out in consideration for the children’s safety and being consciously aware that not all of our families accept birthday celebrations and therefore we attempt to remain sensitive to our children’s individual needs.

- Families are encouraged to share with the Service their own beliefs, values and special celebrations so that we are able to educate, embrace and celebrate cultural diversity.

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• The Service has an ‘Events Calendar’ that is used to support such events throughout the year. We ask that families add their celebration to the calendar so Educators can prepare the program.

• If families would like to be involved in the preparation and/or the celebration in the Service, this is not only encouraged but greatly appreciated!

• For celebrations that involve room parties, like Multicultural Day, Harmony Day or end of year celebrations we will ask families to bring in a share plate. No unhealthy party foods are to be provided on these occasions (e.g.- lollies, chips, etc.). Alternatives should be sourced if needed (e.g.- dips, fruit platters, popcorn, sandwiches, rice paper rolls, vegie sticks, dried fruit, etc.).

• Any food or drink provided requires advance planning and all parents must be advised prior to the event the nature of all food and drink to be provided. This allows for any feedback / concerns from parents. This can then be taken into account as part of the normal planning involved in such activities.

• It is imperative that safety issues are taken into account as part of the preliminary planning. E.g. does the food constitute a choking hazard (especially for babies and toddlers); does it account for all allergies in the service (both children and or educators); does it meet safe food handling requirements; is it served in a way that ensures hygiene standards are met (tongs used; separate plate or bowl for every child rather than shared communal bowls); hands are washed etc.

• As partners in the development of the children who attend our services we need to be mindful of the rights of parents to introduce or not introduce various foods. Unhealthy foods are a particular area that requires sensitivity and respect for parent’s wishes regarding their child/children.

This Policy was made with consideration to Early Childhood Australia, Early Years Learning Framework, National Quality Standards and Staying Healthy in Child Care 5th Edition

Date that the policy was last updated or revised: January 2016

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Director

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