PHILOSOPHY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW PROCEDURE

The National Quality Standards (NQS), Element 7.1.1 acknowledges that a statement of philosophy '*outlines the purpose and principles under which the service operates*'. A *Service Philosophy* is important as it provides a foundation of core values, beliefs and views to guide educators work with children, families and the wider community. The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* sets a requirement that all services must create and review a statement of philosophy that guides all aspects of the service operations (reg 55).

The *Service Philosophy* should be a statement which influences all decision-making processes and guides the educators' pedagogy, planning and practice when delivering the educational program. The *Service Philosophy* will underpin and reinforce all other documentation and the practices of the Service while reflecting the principles of the approved national framework *(EYLF V2.0/MTOP V2.0)* and the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

The *Service Philosophy* should be reviewed on an annual basis or when required, for example with changes in children and families at the service, or changes with leadership and management. During the development and review of a *Service Philosophy* children, families, educators, and the service community should be consulted to establish a shared understanding of the service goals and desired outcomes. The philosophy should remain a 'living' document. The *Service Philosophy* will be included in each new family and new educator induction and orientation process to assist in the ownership and commitment of the philosophy.

Working in conjunction with the *Governance Policy*, this procedure provides guidance for educators and management to assist with the development and ongoing regular review of a *Service Philosophy*. Actions are suggested to ensure contributions from children, families, educators and the wider community in the development and review of the *Service Philosophy*.

Education and Care Services National Law or Regulations (R. 55) NQS QA 7: Element 7.1.1. Governance practices and procedures
Related Policies: Governance Policy

STEP 1: DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICE PHILOSOPHY		
1	Provide opportunities for children to contribute to the development of the *Service Philosophy* • Discuss with children what makes them happy at the service • Discuss with children how the service helps them feel safe • Discuss how children know that educators listen to them and respect their decisions • Review draft philosophy statements with children and discuss what the values mean to them	
2	Provide opportunities for families to contribute the development of the *Service Philosophy* • Ask families to write down their hopes and dreams for their child/children	

	• Ask families what they want to see, hear and feel at the service • Ask families what the purpose of the service is • Ask families what they value the most from the service • Ask families about the importance of creating a child safe culture within the service	
3	Provide opportunities for educators to contribute the development of the *Service Philosophy* • Discuss what guides our pedagogy curriculum decisions and teaching practices • Ask educators what they want to see, hear and feel at the service • Discuss the values and practices that guide attitudes and behaviours required to create a child safe culture within the service • Discuss with educators the wishes and dreams they hope to achieve at the service	
4	Consider who should be represented within the *Service Philosophy*, are different cultures represented? Consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. How are strengths of Aboriginal culture acknowledged? Are our policies and procedures, systems and processes providing a culturally safe and inclusive environment to meet the needs of Aboriginal children and their families?	
5	Consider what values, beliefs and understandings should be represented within the *Service Philosophy*	
6	During the development of the *Service Philosophy* reflect upon how the Service Philosophy influences and aligns with: • Our commitment to providing a child safe environment • Our Code of Conduct • Our pedagogy, teaching practices and curriculum decisions • Our relationships with children and families and the community • Our approaches to access and participation • Our approaches to equity, inclusion, and diversity • Our approaches to engaging in sustainable practices and supporting environment responsibilities • Our commitment to quality outcomes for children • The Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics • The National Quality Framework and National Quality Standard • The approved learning frameworks (EYLF V2.0/MTOP V2.0)	
7	Combine all feedback from children, families and educators to develop statements of core values, beliefs and hopes that will create the draft *Service Philosophy*	
8	Draft a *Service Philosophy*, provide opportunities for children, families and educators to provide feedback before the final *Service Philosophy* is published.	
9	Confirm any changes to the draft *Service Philosophy* and publish the final *Service Philosophy*.	

STEP 2: REVIEW OF SERVICE PHILOSOPHY		
1	Provide an opportunity for educators, children and families to review the *Service Philosophy*	
2	Consult with educators regarding the review of the *Service Philosophy*	

	• Reflect upon how the *Service Philosophy* connects and reinforces our understanding of the approved learning framework (EYLF V2.0/MTOP V2.0)), decisions relating to pedagogy and teaching practices and how our service embeds child safety and wellbeing- (Child Safe Standards) • Discuss how the *Service Philosophy* and key statements are still relevant and representative of the values and beliefs of the service • Discuss if/how the *Service Philosophy* helps to achieve our goals	
3	Consult with families regarding the review of the *Service Philosophy* to ensure the philosophy is understood and supported by families of the service, see below for examples of activities to involve families with the Philosophy review.	
4	Open ongoing conversations with children, families and educators reflecting upon how the Service Philosophy influences and aligns with: • Our commitment to providing a child safe environment • Our Code of Conduct • Our pedagogy, teaching practices and curriculum decisions • Our relationships with children and families and the community • Our approaches to access and participation • Our approaches to equity, inclusion and diversity • Our approaches to engaging in sustainable practices and supporting environment responsibilities • Our commitment to quality outcomes for children • The Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics • The National Quality Framework and National Quality Standards • The approved learning framework (EYLF V2.0/MTOP V2.0)	
5	Following a review of the *Service Philosophy* complete the *Record of Service Philosophy Review* form	
6	Confirm any changes and publish review of the *Service Philosophy*	
7	Share the reviewed *Service Philosophy* with all stakeholders.	

STEP 3: PRESENTATION OF THE SERVICE PHILOSOPHY		
1	Include the *Service Philosophy* within the Family Handbook and Staff Handbook to develop a shared understanding and common goals of practices and pedagogy	
2	Communicate with new families the importance of the *Service Philosophy* and describe how the *Service Philosophy* connects to all service operations and decision-making processes (Policies and procedures and attitudes and behaviours of all staff)	
3	Ensure the *Service Philosophy* is included in the Staff Handbook and forms a part of the recruitment and induction process for new educators to develop a sound foundation for practice and relationships	
4	Ensure the *Service Philosophy* is displayed proudly within the service (e.g., foyer)	

5	Ensure the *Service Philosophy* is located within the Quality Improvement Plan	
6	Ensure the *Service Philosophy* is published on the service website	
7	Consider translating the *Service Philosophy* into languages represented within the service community	

ACTIVITIES AND EXPERIENCES TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OR REVIEW OF THE SERVICE PHILOSOPHY
Philosophy Development or Review Educator Activity- Design a new service Have educators work in teams to brainstorm key aspects of what makes a great service. What do they want to see, feel and hear within the service? What activities would you see? What areas would be a focus? What would the environment look like? What values would they like to see within the team? What practices are required to contribute to a successful service? Share these with the larger team and discuss how to turn these ideas and goals into statements to add to the *Service Philosophy*.
Philosophy Development Educator Activity Within small teams provide educators with a large sheet of paper with 1 question on each sheet. Have the educators contribute 3 answers to the question then swap the large sheet of paper with the next team. Allow time for each small team to answer each question. Review responses at the end of the activity and discuss key elements that are prevalent that can be documented within statements recorded in the *Service Philosophy* to assist in guiding all aspects of the service operations. Example questions: What do you find inspiring about our service? What do you believe we do best and why? What are our greatest achievements at the service? Can you describe the service in 15 words or less? What makes you feel good, laugh, smile or feel fulfilled while you are at the service? What do you value the most at our service? What is the role of the environment within our service?
Philosophy Development or Review Family and Educator Activity Invite each family to write down 3 words which best describes the service. Share the words during a team meeting and discuss within the team. If a pattern of themes emerges, link the words to statements of the *Service Philosophy*. Display within the service.
Philosophy Development or Review Children Group Activity

Ask each child why they love coming to the service. Display the responses on leaf shape paper and display onto tree branch. Families and educators could contribute as well.

Philosophy Review Educator Activity- Artistic creativity

Ask educators to work in teams to select a statement from within the *Service Philosophy* and create an artwork on canvas portraying an interpretation of the Service Philosophy. The team will need to work together to decide the images to draw or paint and have each team member contribute to the artwork. The finished masterpieces can be displayed within the service alongside the *Service Philosophy* to show a visual representation of how the *Service Philosophy* is embedded in everyday practices.

Philosophy Review Educator Activity- Scavenger Hunt

Ask each team member to explore their workspace (room/ office/ kitchen) and bring back 3 items or take 3 photos of items/areas that represent and symbolise values from within the *Service Philosophy*.

Share these with the team and explain how the items represent the *Service Philosophy* in action within the service.

Philosophy Review Educator Activity- Team Meeting

At a team meeting ask the team to select one statement within the Service Philosophy to review. Break into small groups to brainstorm and list 5 practices that connect and reflect the Philosophy statement. As an example, the Service Philosophy may state *Educators will be given opportunities to participate in regular training sessions to develop professional relationships and to reflect critically upon practices and research.* Practices that associate with the philosophy statement include the Professional Development policy and procedure, staff sharing Professional Development learning with the team at staff meetings, budget considerations for Professional Development.

Share the ideas with the larger team, reflect upon as many statements from the Philosophy as you can. Discuss are there are other actions that could be added as goals to work towards that would connect to the statement. Publish evidence and goals within the service/staff room to assist to create an authentic, living breathing *Service Philosophy*.

REVIEW OF PROCEDURE			
Date procedure created	04/07/2023	To be reviewed	April 2026
Approved by	Krystle Hills	Signature	
Procedure Reviewed Date	Modifications/Changes		
22/04/2025	Procedure reviewed, no changes		
April 2024	Procedure reviewed, no changes		