

(Revised September 2025)

## **Policy Statement:**

The Mueller College Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Service recognizes that additional support may be required when including children and young people with additional needs into the program. These procedures will support the successful inclusion of children and young people with additional needs through implementing practices which are conducive to a supportive environment for children or young people, families and educators.

## **Background:**

The Education and Care National regulations require Service providers to have Policies and procedures that ensure Service practices and interactions are inclusive of all peoples including those with additional needs.

## **Important terms:**

<b>Children and young people</b>	Refers to the children and young people present in the care environment.
<b>Educator</b>	Refers to the staff employed by the Service to provide care for children and young people attending.
<b>Parent/guardian</b>	Refers to the primary carer/s of the child or young person attending the Service.
<b>Family</b>	Refers to the group of people, including the primary carer which engage daily with the child or young person in the home environment.
<b>Additional Needs</b>	May include children or young people that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a disability or developmental delay- physical, sensory, intellectual, or autism spectrum disorder.</li> <li>• are presenting with challenging behaviours and/or behavioural or psychological disorders</li> <li>• have a serious medical or health condition</li> <li>• are presenting with trauma-related behaviours</li> </ul>
<b>Reasonable adjustment</b>	Changes to a policy, practice, procedure, program or environment that enables a person with disability to access and participate in the service on the same basis as others without imposing 'unjustifiable hardship' to the Service.

## **Legislation:**

### **National Quality Standard (NQS):**

Quality Area	1: Educational Program & Practice
	2: Children's Health & Safety
	3: Physical Environment
	4: Staffing Arrangements
	5: Relationships with Children
	6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families & Communities
	7: Governance & Leadership

<b>1.1</b>	Program	The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.
1.1.2	Child-Centred	Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.
1.1.3	Program learning opportunities	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.
<b>1.2</b>	Practice	Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development.
1.2.3	Child Directed Learning	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.
<b>1.3</b>	Assessment and Planning	Educators and co-ordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.
1.3.3	Information for families	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.
<b>2.1</b>	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
<b>3.1</b>	Design	The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.
3.1.1	Fit for purpose	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.

<b>3.2</b>	Use	The service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning.
<b>3.2.1</b>	Inclusive Environment	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
<b>4.1</b>	Staffing arrangements	Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development.
<b>4.1.1</b>	Organisation of Educators	The organisation of educators across the service supports children's learning and development.
<b>5.1</b>	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
<b>5.1.2</b>	Dignity and Rights of the Child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
<b>6.1</b>	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
<b>6.1.2</b>	Parents views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
<b>6.2</b>	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
<b>6.2.2</b>	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.
<b>7.2</b>	Leadership	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.
<b>7.2.3</b>	Development of professionals	Educators, co-ordinators and staff members' performance is regularly evaluated and individual plans are in place to support learning and development.

## Education and Care Services National Regulations

155	Requires an approved provider to take reasonable steps to ensure that the education and care service provides education and care to children in a way that (a) encourages the children to express themselves and their opinions; and (b) allows the children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem; and (c) maintains at all times the dignity and rights of each child; and (d) gives each child positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour; and (e) has regard to the family and cultural values, age, and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for by the service.
156	Requires the approved provider of an education and care service to take reasonable steps to ensure that the service provides children being educated and cared for by the service with opportunities to interact and develop respectful and positive relationships with each other and with staff members of, and volunteers at, the service.

## Education and Care Services National Law

3 (3,c)	Requires, that the principles of equity, inclusion and diversity underlie this Law;
167	Requires The approved provider and Nominated supervisor of an education and care service must ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children being educated and cared for by the service from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury.
301 (3,i)	Requires the regulations be used in conjunction with the Law in relation to the standards about educators' relationships with children, interactions and behaviour guidance and inclusion policies and practice for education and care services;

### Principals:

These Policies and procedures aim to ensure equal access to children and young people with varying needs and abilities, providing access to the necessary resources to ensure true inclusion in the Service.

The Service shall follow through with an equal opportunity enrolment process for all children and young people. This will involve collecting appropriate information about children and young people which may impact on their ability to participate in the program. Children and young people who have a disability will not be discriminated against and will be afforded access to the Service where: a place exists/they meet the required priority of access/the Service's resources are able to adequately care for the child or young person and reasonable adjustments can be made.

### INCLUSION SUPPORT PROGRAM (ISP):

To assist in the provision of an inclusive environment for children and young people with additional needs, the OSHC Service may apply for additional support through the Inclusion Support Program (ISP) if the eligibility requirements are met.

The Nominated Supervisors and educators will refer to the Inclusion Support Guidelines and consult with families to submit an application. Applications would need to be submitted for the different types of care the child accesses through our Service (before, after and vacation care). The objectives of the Inclusion Support Program are to:

- supporting Out of School Hours Services increase their capacity and capability to provide quality inclusive practices for all children and young people in the care environment.
- to improve access and participation for all children and young people in the care environment.
- support the inclusion of children and young people with additional needs

### **Procedure:**

#### **Parents/guardians will:**

- be required to provide relevant information upon enrolment about their child or young person which pertains to the child or young person's additional needs. This shall be in the format of appropriate questions on the enrolment form and interview procedure.
- possibly be requested to provide further information in regard to the child or young person's needs so far as it may impact on their ability to participate in the program and be appropriately cared for within the service including their needs, access to resources which will encourage their development and child or young person wellbeing.
- in some cases, be requested for permission to share information about the child or young person, should the Service wish to make contact with the Inclusion Support Agency. This shall be in the format as required by the ISA and will require the child or young person to already hold a diagnosis or have a permanent disability.
- not be permitted to have a private third-party specialist will not be given access to the Service room during operational hours, with the exception of nurses entering the Service area for the specific purpose of providing pre-arranged medical care to high need children or young people. (for example, those who are catheterised or have feeding tubes, that require periodic procedures outside the scope of standard educator medical practices).

#### **Educators and lead educators will:**

- complete required training associated with caring for additional needs.
- include all children and young people in the care environment equitably in the program, making reasonable adjustments where possible to enhance engagement and involvement for all children and young people.
- seek further training or advice if needed.
- follow all recommendations, policies and procedures with regard to the care of children and young people with additional needs.
- Advocate and support the safety and rights for children and young people with additional needs.

#### **Nominated supervisors and Approved providers will:**

- collaborate where needed with the head of Mueller College Learning Support to obtain advice and information about the inclusion process for children and young people attending Mueller College who have already been identified with additional needs.
- request assistance as needed from the Mueller College Learning Support Team. They may make an initial observation to offer advice and recommendations to both the Service and the parent/guardian if they are open to it, about referral to external services. They may also be able to offer information already obtained about the child.
- with the permission of the parent/ guardian, third party specialist may be engaged by the Service to better support or train staff in the care of the child or young person. This will be at the discretion of the Nominated Supervisor and will be a neutral party decided and engaged by the Service management committee only. All visitors to the Service will comply with the Service visitor policy.

- only with parent/guardian permission will the Service contact the Inclusion Support Agency as required to obtain advice and information about the inclusion process. The processes outlined in the Inclusion Support Guidelines shall be followed to establish a Strategic Inclusion Plan. This may involve professional support from the ISA as described in the Policy outline above.
- take reasonable steps to work with allied health personnel to provide the best quality care for children and young people where it is possible to do so without breaching the privacy of others in the care environment.
- will appropriately assess their capacity to make reasonable adjustments to include the child or young person within the Service through conducting a risk management process if necessary.
- maintain the right to make a decision regarding the suitable placement of a child or young person with special needs in the service based on the information, support and advice available.
- ensure appropriate training and support shall be provided for all staff to ensure continuity of care and commitment to inclusion.
- Ensure the safety and rights for children and young people with additional needs are protected and supported through integrated methods that allow them to express the ideas, opinions, needs.
- Share the 'Inclusion of Additional Needs Policy and Procedure' with all employees upon their induction and ensure it is available to staff and families at all times.
- Provide additional professional development as needed and during review processes.
- Review all Service policy annually through consultation with all stakeholders or sooner should there be identified changes or updates to legislative requirement.

**See also:**

- Mueller OSHC Anti-bias Policy and Procedure
- Mueller OSHC Child Protection and Reporting Policy & Procedure
- Mueller OSHC Anti Bullying Policy & Procedure
- Mueller OSHC Celebrating Cultural difference, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Policy & Procedure
- Mueller OSHC Respect for Children and Young People Policy & Procedure
- Mueller OSHC Visitor Policy & Procedure

**REFERENCES:**

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, Current as at October 2024
- Education and Care Services National Regulations, Current as at September 2025
- Education and Care Services National Law Act (QLD) 2011, Current as at September 2025
- Child Protection Act 1999 (Current as at 20 September 2025)
- Guide to the National Quality Framework, Revised September 2025
- My Time, Our Place – Framework for School Age Care in Australia – Produced by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments. Ver2.0, Revised 2022
- National Quality Standard, Revised 1 February 2018
- Guide to the National Quality Standard, Revised May 2022
- Child Protection Regulation 2023, Current as at 18 August 2023
- Family & Child Commission Act 2014, current as of 24 June 2024
- Education and Care Services Act 2013, Current as at Feb 2024
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Last modified 2 August 2014)
- The Code of Ethics - Early Childhood Australia Inc. (2025 update)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992, Current as at Oct 2024
- Australian Human Rights Commission, Disability discrimination, 2014
- Australian Government Inclusion Support Guidelines, July 2023
- Anti-Discrimination Act, 1991, Current as at 1 Dec 2024

## REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY:	Rachel Rose	OSHC Director	23/09/25
POLICY REVIEWED	SEPT 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	NOV 2025
VERSION NUMBER	V2.3		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated references</li> </ul>		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	PAST REVIEW DATE	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated references</li> <li>Addition of review table</li> </ul>	DEC 2024	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated legislation</li> <li>Split procedure into responsibilities</li> </ul>	MAR 2025	