Introduction

Bega Valley Shire Council is the Approved Provider for education and care services across the Bega Valley. Each education and care service has a philosophy that reflects their community and guides their educational programs and practice.

Eden Child Care Centre

Our philosophy has been written and reviewed annually by children with support and input from educators, staff and families using the question: “What would be your best day and who would be there with you?” This is how we understand what children say, and what we will do to make this a reality in the education and care context.

Family is important

- We will work with families in order to understand more about how they know their child, what is important to their child and what we can do to help a child have their best day
- We will include services to families in the centre that help them to be together, to stay together, manage their lives together and ensure that they are also part of a child’s best day
- Friends are important
- We will work with children to find ways to grow friendships together over time that is pleasurable, respectful and fair.
- As part of this we will build experiences with children that enable them to work together, appreciate each other’s ideas and explore other ways of seeing the world
- We will actively critique words and actions that exclude, oppress or marginalise people in friendships

Beauty is important

- We will pay attention to our environment. In particular we will create spaces and places indoors and outdoors that encourage children to explore the potential of the natural world, care for, change and take pleasure in the natural world and treat equipment and materials respectfully
- Spaces to move and to imagine are important
- We will create spaces where children can experience pleasure in movement and in imagining the possibilities of who they are now, and who they might aspire to be

Literacies are important

- We will provide access to and encourage literacies. In particular, we will help children to engage with, critique and master a range of literacies situated in their lives. These include social and cultural literacies that are made up of ways of talking, writing, reading, valuing, consuming and behaving.
- Our program combines:
Children’s families’ and educators’ interests and passions
Children’s, families’ and educators’ ideas
Children’s families’ and educators’ questions
Children’s families’ and educators’ strengths and community contexts

These programs form:
- incidental learning moments that emerge in children’s, families’ and educators’ relationships and questions
- projects and intentions that engage children, families and educators in learning over time.

We recognise that each child will learn in their own way and in their own time through educational experiences, learning opportunities and contact with others. For these reasons we will support and broaden each child’s learning experiences by noting significant moments in a child’s understandings and relationships, questioning how we understand these moments, and speaking with families and children in order to appreciate more about how these moments create learning for each child. These conversations will then be used to generate the educational program and to reflect on how it is relevant to our community and to each child’s growth, well-being, access to learning and relationships.

Bandara Children’s Services

Bandara Children’s Services is a special place for children and families. It is a multipurpose service that provides long day care, occasional care, pre-school, before and after school care, and vacation care. The range of our services reflects the diverse needs of the community.

Our philosophy is based on three key elements that our community has identified as important. These are:

- Respect for people and for our environment.
- Families; as the most important part of children’s lives.
- Community; as the people and places that bring us together.

We believe that respectful relationships with people and the environment are important. As teachers we will work with children, families and the community to:

- Listen to children and encourage them to listen to others
- Encourage children to take responsibility for themselves and for others
- Model and value problem solving, empathy and caring
- Listen to families, ask questions about their children, draw on their insights and share our own each day
- Plan to create and use our space and resources in sustainable ways

We believe that children learn in many ways as they interact with people and with the environment. As teachers we will work with children, families and the community to:

- Create environments that are warm, calm, safe, inviting and child friendly
- Create spaces for children to observe, explore, discover, listen, talk and reflect
- Offer a range of creative structured and un-structured experiences and invite children to follow their own ideas.
- Establish flexible routines based on; who each child is, what they can do and the skills that they are building.
We believe the diversity in our community connects us in exciting ways. As teachers we will work with children, families and the community to:

- Ensure the richness of our community is reflected in the people, environment and resources that we offer
- Draw on the benefits that come from our connections with the differences and similarities in our people
- Ensure that families can be together in ways that sustain the dignity and well-being of everyone
- Support transitions between home, the centre and other services.

**Eden Preschool**

The children, families and community have said the following things are important to them.

**Respectful, life-enhancing relationships**

We will work with everyone to promote, develop and support:

- A sense of belonging
- An appreciation of diversity – of individual children, families, cultures and experiences
- Interactions and relationships that value care and respect for others
- Friendships that grow over time

We will include services to children and families that help them to see themselves as:

- Valued and constructive participants and contributors to their community

**The learning environment**

We will work with everyone to promote, develop and support:

- Care for the natural environment
- Outdoor and indoor spaces that encourage creativity, exploration and investigation

We will pay attention to our learning environment, treat equipment and materials respectfully and take pleasure in our natural world.

**The uniqueness of each child**

We will work with everyone to promote, develop and support each child’s:

- Readiness and preferred way of learning
- Communication and literacy skills
- Natural curiosity, within a stimulating and culturally relevant learning program

We will broaden and make the most of each child’s learning experiences by noting significant moments in a child’s understandings and relationships, questioning how we understand these moments, and speak with families and children in order to appreciate more about how these moments create learning for each child. These conversations will then be used to generate the educational program and to reflect on how it is relevant to our community and to each child’s growth, wellbeing, access to learning and relationships.

**Sapphire Mobile Children’s Services**

At the Sapphire Mobile Preschool we aim to provide the best quality care which caters to the changing needs of children, families, staff, management, program, community and social issues.
Children’s learning is an ongoing process, from birth through to adulthood they draw knowledge from the world and people around them. We believe that as Educators we have a very special and important role, to help all children to grow and develop to their fullest potential as unique individuals.

All children develop at individual rates with individual strengths and weaknesses, using their own learning styles. The children of today are our future adults, so they need to be provided with extensive knowledge that allows them to form their own opinions about the world and society around them.

As Educators we believe that all children learn and develop when:

- They are active participants in their own learning, and should be given choices and paths to help guide their learning they acquire skills through interacting with the environment and others.
- They are given ample time to observe and experience activities, for individual thoughts.
- Children feel comfortable, safe and secure in their environment, and that learning is pleasurable and stimulating
- They are given limits and boundaries, which they have been active participants in forming.
- They are accepted and taught acceptance of differing situations and others, when children value themselves and their accomplishments they can feel in control of their actions and the world around them.
- They are given the opportunity to express their opinions and to question ideas and concepts, to be praised for input.
- Parents and families are encouraged to become involved and strong links and continuity are established between home and the preschool

We recognize and respect the role that management plays and aim to be involved in decision making along with management, taking into account the values and needs of the Preschool, children, families and community.

As Educators we believe our role is to influence and guide children in their learning, to provide a curriculum that:

- Will prepare children for the world with real-life experiences and knowledge to be able to deal successfully with life.
- Teaching concepts should be organized around activities, to form a focus, to allow exposure to a variety of ideas and concepts, to open new learning. A curriculum needs to provide as much information as possible for children to learn about the world around them.
- Values that interactions are the best form of learning, with the world, peers and adults, interactions allow expansion of current skills.
- Promotes the education of diversity incorporating cultural experiences, beliefs and values integrating these to form an anti-bias program.
References

- Approved National Curriculum