



St Brigid's College

Early Childhood and Care Policy

1. Rationale

Each child is a precious and sacred gift from God created as an individual with their own unique talents and abilities. St Brigid's College seeks to create environments that nurture this individuality while enhancing learning and empowering young people to live the Catholic faith in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

Childhood as "a time to be, to seek and make meaning of the world" and recognise that quality service provision in the early years provides an opportunity to foster the development of the whole child (Early Childhood Australia, 2009).

St Brigid's College celebrates parents as children's first and most influential educators and recognises that strong, collaborative partnerships between parents and educators are essential. Educators and educational leaders work collaboratively with parents to foster children's spiritual, physical, cognitive, social and emotional learning and growth. Catholic schools assist parents who wish to develop their children as Christian men and women. Also they support parishes with their responsibility of supporting parents as the first educators of their child" (Mandate, para 6).

Our Early Learning Centre offers an intimate environment, which caters for three to six-year-old children and six, seven and eight year olds within a larger school setting (Junior School). We aim to create a safe, supportive, nurturing and stimulating learning environment which consolidates and extends the children's interests and skills, and enables them to develop the dispositions to be lifelong learners. We acknowledge that the early years plays a significant role in laying the foundations for continued success in learning. As educators we hold a strong commitment to world's best practice and implement a curriculum that reflects the Kath Walker Inquiry Approach, Reggio Emilia Philosophy, the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Standards, within the framework of the PYP. Through our practice, we also recognise the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics.

Our approach to early childhood education is shaped by our image of the child as a competent and capable individual who is rich in potential. We recognise that children possess a wealth of experiences, knowledge and understandings. This is reflected in our commitment to allow the children to take an active role in their learning through our units of inquiry and project work. Our intention is for each child to develop a strong sense of identity and the confidence and skills needed to make meaning of, and to shape their world. Through active listening and observation and a close working relationship involving children, parents and fellow educators, we are committed to uncovering how each child perceives his/her world, enabling us to build on levels of understanding. Our play based approach offers children the opportunity and the time to play, to discover and explore, to question and predict, to revisit and reflect, to wonder, to imagine and to dream. This is achieved through a carefully considered balance between the intentional and emergent curriculum.

2. Definition

Early Childhood Education and Care at St Brigid's College refers to all education and care services three years to 8 years of age.

3. Scope

This policy applies to St Brigid's College community.

4. Principles

- 4.1 Leaders and educators at St Brigid's College recognise parents as children's first and most influential educators. They develop collaborative partnerships with families based on understanding one another's expectations, attitudes and strengths.
- 4.2 Each child has individual needs and potential that shall be recognised, valued and responded to within a safe, caring and positive Catholic learning environment that fosters a sense of mercy and community.
- 4.3 Early Childhood Education and Care promotes learning as a lifelong process.
- 4.4 The learning environment, curriculum and pedagogy offered shall be inclusive of all children and be developmentally and culturally appropriate.
- 4.5 Early Childhood Education and Care shall be aligned to current research on development, learning and teaching as it applies to children from Birth - 8 years old.
- 4.6 Early Childhood Education and Care at St Brigid's College shall recognise the influence of relevant system, state, national and international documents.
- 4.7 All children enrolled in Early Childhood Education and Care at St Brigid's College shall be the responsibility of the Principal, Head of Junior School and other designated staff.
- 4.8 The early childhood programs at St Brigid's College involve learning that is a balance of intentional teaching and play based learning, that provide children with opportunities to explore, discover, imagine, inquire, engage and reflect in purposeful and meaningful experiences.

5. Procedures

- 5.1 Procedures for enrolment shall be in accord with the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) policy statement 2-D5 'Student Enrolment' and Government policy. Refer to St Brigid's College Enrolment Policy.
 - 5.2 Early Childhood Education and Care programs shall be appropriately staffed according to the:
 - Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia Policy 2-C6 'Appointment of Staff in Catholic Schools'
 - Current early learning and care legislation relevant for Western Australia
 - 5.3 All educators, educating and caring for children from birth to pre-primary age, shall hold an early childhood qualification in accordance with the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) approved list. It is highly desirable for teachers of Years 1-3 to hold an Early Childhood Education qualification.
Teaching staff at St Brigid's College hold appropriate qualifications. All Education Assistants at St Brigid's College hold recognised appropriate qualifications.
 - 5.4 All educators in the early years and Principals of primary and composite Catholic schools shall implement evidence based early childhood pedagogy and be engaged in appropriate ongoing professional development.
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- 5.5 Early Childhood Care and Education services, in conjunction with Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, shall develop and periodically review written policies and procedures as outlined in current legislation relevant for Western Australia.

School

- 5.6 Period of operation:

St Brigid’s College provides a three-year-old kindergarten program. A two stream program that runs for two full days with up to 20 children in each class.

St Brigid’s College provides a Kindergarten program which hosts two classes up to 30 children per class. The program runs three days per week.

St Brigid’s College provides Pre-Primary children with five full day sessions from the commencement of the school year.

6. References

Bishops of Western Australia 2009, *Mandate of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia: 2009-2015*

Department of Education (formerly Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations), *Child Care Services Handbook, 2012-2013*

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2012 (Cth)

Department of Education (formerly Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations), *National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care, 2012*

Department of Education (formerly Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations), *Early Years Learning Framework, 2009*

Early Childhood Australia, *Early Years Positional Statement, 2009*

7. Related Documents

Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia policy statement 2-C6 Appointment of Staff in Catholic Schools

Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia policy statement 2-D5 Student Enrolment

Reviewed by:	Review Date	Next Review Due
Nicola Lee	2016	2018

