



1.01 OUR PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

Purpose Statement

This Philosophy has been developed in alignment with obligations and requirements set out under the National Quality Framework, which includes the National Education and Care Services Law 2011 and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.

This Philosophy outlines our vision for children and their families which include the development and delivery of services where:

- Windermere recognises the importance of getting in early to make a difference in the lives of individuals, families and communities, with an overall focus on 'wellbeing'
- children are respected, healthy, safe and able to reach their full potential
- families are valued in their nurturing role, confident and capable of ensuring the health and wellbeing of their children
- communities are strong, supportive and inclusive of children and families.

Approach

The Importance of Children

1. Windermere Early Childhood Education and Care is a community based service committed to providing quality education and care that supports positive early learning opportunities for all families in our communities.
2. Children's interests drive learning and discovery; through the provision of open ended experiences and natural materials. Children are encouraged to explore, invent and create; having the opportunity to experiment and take supported risks. Allowing children to develop the skills and strengths needed to grow as happy, self-confident and capable people is critical. Fundamental to the framework is a view of children's lives as characterised by belonging, being and becoming.
3. Quality education develops each child's dispositions and abilities to their fullest potential. It encourages children to respect their families, their cultures and other cultures¹. The five Learning Outcomes are designed to capture the integrated and complex learning and development of all children across birth to five age range. The Outcomes are;
 - a. Children having a strong sense of identity
 - b. Children are connected with and contribute to their world
 - c. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
 - d. Children are confident and involved learners; and
 - e. Children are effective communicators.
4. Children are given the opportunity to participate in incursions and excursions where they have the chance to explore, learn about and become part of their wider community, as these relationships are greatly valued. We treat children, families, people in our community and each other with consideration, respect, impartiality and fairness. We value secure, respectful and reciprocal

¹United Nation version of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 29.



1.01 OUR PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

relationships. Windermere recognises children's rights to play and be active participants in all matters affecting their lives as we support all children to be;

- a. Seen as competent, capable, knowledgeable and with sense of agency (Being)
- b. With right to play, explore and participate (Belong)
- c. Empowered and supported through the challenges (Becoming).

Supporting families

1. We believe that families should feel supported in their journey in educating and caring for their child and feel that Windermere is an extension of their home and community.
2. We recognise and respect the diversity of our families and are committed to working closely with parents/guardians, through valuing open communication and regular exchange of information to ensure continuity of care for children and the building of trusting relationships with all persons involved in the children's care. We welcome all families in our community and respect every child's right to an education regardless of their race, colour, family structure, ability or financial status. This is supported by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that:
 - a. The Convention applies to everyone whatever their race, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say and whatever type of family they come from²
 - b. Children have the right to an education.³
3. Windermere encourages family involvement in developing policies, procedures and making contributions to the curriculum. Educators design and promote a learning environment where children, families and educators work together in shared thinking to create a stimulating learning environment, based on the principles outlined in the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).
4. Families input and participation with their child's environment is valued. We are committed to ongoing learning, reflective practice and continuing improvement. We believe that all our decisions need to be made with the children's interests put first.

Community collaboration

1. We hold the highest expectation of our service; we are committed to supporting research in the early childhood sector and participating in ongoing professional development.
2. We respect the original designs of our home and centre based environments and will continue to develop professionally ensuring that we use these unique environments to their full potential supporting children's learning and creating a space for creativity and imagination. We will collaborate with our community to create:
 - a. Opportunities for learning and connection
 - b. Opportunities to support children to reach their full potential
 - c. Playgroups and Play sessions (Home Based Services)
 - d. Partnerships that support research and inform our practice

² United Nation version of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 2

³ United Nation version of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 28



1.01 OUR PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

- e. Supportive networks.

Windermere's approach

1. Windermere's Purpose, Vision and Values drive us to get in early and make a difference in the lives of others. This approach is aligned with the development and delivery of Early Childhood Education & Care Services (ECEC's) which are committed to enabling children and families to reach their full potential. Windermere's Purpose, Vision and Values reads:

Purpose

We get in early to make a difference in the lives of individuals, families and communities

Vision

A stronger, connected and supported community

Values

We believe that everyone is someone in our community where:

- *Equity is viewed as a natural right* -
- *Fairness embraces and incorporates difference* -
- *Collaboration results in social good* -
- *Opportunity creates empowerment and inclusion* -

2. Windermere plans and delivers services in a respectful way that recognises each individual's personal worth and individuality. In planning and co-ordinating consumer based services, Windermere is committed to utilising an 'Appreciative Inquiry' (AI) approach, with an overall focus on 'wellbeing'. An 'appreciative eye' provides educators with an opportunity to create new energy and develop the strengths and wellbeing of all individuals.
3. For wellbeing to exist, a person requires:
- a. A sense of his or her own identity to promote confident development and growth;
 - b. Support to enjoy the best possible experience of the world;
 - c. An interest in learning and a curiosity about their world;
 - d. Connection to others and the capacity to form and maintain relationships;
 - e. A sense of belonging, recognition of his/her importance to others and boundaries in order to develop self-respect and emotional robustness.

Relevant Standards/Legislation

- National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care Services including:
 - Education and Care Services National Law 2011
 - Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Related Policies & Links

- *Windermere's Strategic Plan*
- *Family Day Care Procedure Manual*