

SUBJECT: Inclusive Childcare	POLICY NO: SL-4.1	LAST REVIEWED: October 2022
APPROVED BY: Executive Board	MANAGED BY: Director, Childcare	NEXT REVIEW: January 2024

SUMMARY

Policy Statement

BCIT Student Association Child Care Services (BCITSA – CCS) is committed to inclusion where children are welcomed and know they belong. Inclusion of children’s diverse abilities and care needs, development, culture, spirituality, family composition, and identification allow all children to participate meaningfully in all aspects of our child care programs.

Purpose of This Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Facilitate an inclusive childcare environment where children are welcomed, respected, supported and valued
- Outline the guiding principles that will establish an inclusive environment
- Establish an equitable, consistent, and supportive response when children may be withdrawn from care

Application of This Policy

This Policy applies to all employees, and to Parents and/or Legal Guardians of children who are registered at the Childcare Centre.

Related Documents and Legislation

Legislation

- N/A

BCITSA

- Policy SL-4

Forms Associated with This Policy

- N/A

Amendment History

- Created October 2022

DEFINITIONS**Childcare Centre**

The Childcare Centre is defined as the location on BCIT property that houses the childcare operations of the BCITSA. Furthermore, Childcare Centre shall normally refer to all Childcare Centre operations, including any operations that are age-specific, unless specifically stated otherwise.

Parent or Legal Guardian

For the purpose of this policy, a Parent or Legal Guardian will be considered the primary caretaker(s) for an individual child.

Supported Child Development Program

The Supported Child Development Program is a program administered by the BC Centre for Ability, maintained to provide additional supports for childcare programs, such as consultation services, and extra staffing assistance for children who have a demonstrated need for additional supports.

Inclusive Child Care

Inclusive Child Care includes programs that support the individual strengths and needs of each child by providing children of all abilities equitable access to quality childcare.

Cultural Competency

Cultural Competency is the ability to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Director, Childcare

The Director, Childcare is responsible for the interpretation and enforcement of this policy, including but not limited to:

- ensuring there is purposeful learning for children with additional needs within the programs
- regularly reviewing with staff, the planning and resources provided for children with diverse needs to ensure inclusion and relevance
- supporting staff to obtain the appropriate knowledge and cultural competency skills for the implementation and maintenance of this policy

Guiding Principles

At the BCITSA Childcare Centre, we are committed to following the principles of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in our programming and services. We believe that:

1. Inclusive and diverse programs are quality programs
2. We must be responsive to the needs of our community
3. Our programming should be reflective of the varying needs and diverse backgrounds of the children and families accessing our services
4. All children are welcome and bring value to our program
5. Fair treatment does not mean equal treatment
6. Good programming requires dedicated staff who are flexible in their approach, and who are provided with relevant learning opportunities wherever possible

Commitment to Inclusive Childcare

At the BCITSA Childcare Centre, we are committed to providing inclusive learning and play environments for all children. We intend to foster this environment through appropriate staff training, collaboration with BCIT's Indigenous Initiatives and families to celebrate diverse holidays and cultural traditions, and provide additional support to low-income families, families new to Canada, and to young families.

Commitment to Decolonization

At the BCITSA Childcare Centre, we recognize the traumatic impact colonization has on children from Indigenous communities. We are committed to learning, unlearning, and relearning our practices to ensure that we are not further contributing to harm caused by colonization. We aim to foster this environment through ongoing, quality training for our staff, hosting Indigenous Elders

to teach the children about Indigenous culture, and respectfully integrating Indigenous practices into our programming.

Procedures:

Inclusion is reflected in all BCITSA – CCS policies and practices, staffing, and environments.

Our aim is to support the individual needs of each child. All children are welcomed, respected, supported and valued allowing them to participate meaningfully in all aspects of the program.

We are committed to modeling inclusion for the entire childcare centre, and to maintaining an inclusive environment with equitable access, support, and participation for all children.

We learn about each child from the family first upon registration. Inclusion means knowing the family and welcoming family participation.

Our program adapts to meet the needs of all children, so children of all abilities have equitable access to quality childcare. Knowledge of each child's growth, development, and needs allows the program to adjust with an awareness of the child.

Our educators work as a team to collectively meet the needs of all children. Enhanced staff may be added to meet the needs of all children in the group.

We support families through referrals and partnerships with other organizations (Fraser Health, BC Centre for Ability, Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD)) that offer specialized/additional services to children who require extra supports.

We welcome early intervention service providers into our childcare programs including speech language pathologists, physio, occupational and behavioural therapists, ASCD specialists and others are appropriate.

We develop individual care plans for children with diverse abilities. These plans are developed in cooperation with other early intervention specialists working with the child.

This policy reinforces our commitment to providing equitable service to all children regardless of abilities, physical or health needs, gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin, religion or belief.

Practices:

To provide inclusive childcare, BCITSA Childcare Services strives to ensure that:

- All interior and exterior learning and care areas in our childcare centres are accessible for all children attending our programs.

- Adaptations to furniture, equipment, and spaces, where necessary, are made to reduce or remove barriers for children’s diverse abilities.
- Learning experiences reflect the unique interests, abilities, cultures and needs of the children in our programs.
- Learning materials, equipment, toys, and books reflect people of diverse abilities and diverse cultures.
- Learning materials are visible and at the children’s level so that every child can access materials independently.
- Adjustments are made to routines and transitions, so every child’s learning experience is positive.

Professional Development and Training:

BCITSA – CCS aims to hire educators who have completed their Special Needs Post Basic training.

BCITSA – CCS employees are required to complete the Ministry of Children and Family Development’s “The Foundations of Inclusive Child Care Training” within six (6) months of being hired.

Additional training on inclusion is encouraged and supported by BCITSA – CCS.

When a child with complex needs is enrolled in our program all educators within that program will receive specialized training from the appropriate professional(s) to support the safety, well-being and successful inclusion of the child.