



## Catholic Education Office Catholic Early Learning Centres Philosophy Statement

“Our image of the child is that of being competent, intelligent, a co-constructor of knowledge and a researcher actively seeking to make meaning of the world, often in collaboration with others.”

- Reflections ‘Reggio Emilia Principles within Australian contexts’. Jan Millikan 2003:33.

At the Catholic Early Learning Centre (CELC) we believe that each child is a valuable and unique individual created by God. We value each child as an individual who can make choices about their own learning. We believe that children are theory builders and problem solvers, who learn best by making meaning of their world through play, relationships and experiences. We value children as social beings and recognise that they co-construct knowledge with peers, their families and our staff.

We value play as a learning process that enables each child to learn through concrete “hands on” experiences such as doing, creating, experimenting, predicting, imagining, achieving, investigating, and identifying strengths.

Learning through play is how children “organise and make sense of their social worlds” Using innovative and creative activities as enriching learning experiences. Children will be encouraged to discover ‘self’ and feel safe to explore within the world around them. We will encourage children to have ownership of their learning, which will empower them and build a passion for knowledge. Children should feel a sense of belonging in their environment; we will nurture their being while celebrating their present and future and what they are becoming.

Our CELC aims to provide young children with opportunities to maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success in learning . We work collaboratively with families in promoting children's learning by implementing the Early Years Learning Framework and applying best practice as reflective of the National Quality Framework.

We provide an enriching inclusive environment that recognises diversity, including culture and ability. We work in partnership with families, Catholic school leaders and Catholic parishes to promote Gospel values and traditions while respecting the individuality of families and children.

CELC educators work in collaborative partnerships with the school community, intervention services and families. The CELC staff members value all stakeholders’ knowledge and contributions by embedding trust and free communication in a reciprocal relationship that is respectful of one another by sharing insights and perspectives concerning each individual child.



Catholic Early Learning Centre  
Blessed John XXIII Parish  
Glenwood – Stanhope Gardens

*Our Vision*

*“Preschool is not a preparation for life but life itself” Jerome Bruner.*

Together we are creating a quality learning environment where children can live, learn and grow. We value positive relationships and see this as the heart of our community. We work collaboratively to develop rich learning environments that promote inquiry and research. We are committed to fostering our image of the child as connected, creative, inquisitive, reflective and spiritual. We nurture our children in their ongoing relationship with the world around them.

*Bringing the CEO CELC Philosophy to Life*

We believe that young children come to CELC with a wealth of knowledge and experiences. They are seen as dynamic, inquisitive, innovative and purposeful learners. We honour the spiritual uniqueness of children and families by promoting an atmosphere of collaboration and community. We strive to create a centre of excellence through inclusive practices that are reflective of the mission of Catholic education.

*Being recognises the significance of the here and now in children’s lives. It is about the present and them knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life’s joys and complexities, and meeting challenges in everyday life.*

*(BELONGING, BEING AND BECOMING: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, 2009)*

Children are naturally researchers who are given the opportunity at CELC to learn through self selected investigation, creativity and play. We value play and creativity as ways for children to express their ideas and build new theories. We believe that providing a safe and stimulating environment encourages their ability to observe perceive, investigate, imagine and problem solve the world around them.

Becoming reflects this process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as young children learn and grow.

*(BELONGING, BEING AND BECOMING: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, 2009)*

Relationships are essential to building belonging and shaping who we are and who we become. We seek ways to build an inclusive environment that encourages and respects diversity. We recognise and value the cultures children bring and nurture them in their search for meaning, connection and joy in life – their “spirituality”. We respect the beliefs and values of the families who belong to our community. We support our children in their growing understanding of Catholic values and traditions that are central to our ethos.

Belonging acknowledges children’s interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities.

*(BELONGING, BEING AND BECOMING: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, 2009)*

## Living our Philosophy

Our Educators will:

- Listen to each child's melody when they are using "the hundred languages" (Malaguzzi), their bodies, their movement, their eyes, their hands, their silences, their words and their "being".
- Observe and value the process of thinking as our children develop new understandings through constructing, investigating, and creating in their "becoming".
- Develop mutually respectful partnerships with both children and families within the context of our parish community, Blessed John XXIII so as to build "belonging".
- Value the child not only as an individual but also as a member of their family, cultural group and the wider community by helping them find their place in them.
- Ensure that documentation is visible through recording our children's everyday experiences and discoveries in order to develop their individual potential and allow them to reflect on their learning journey. *"Our task ... is to help children climb their own mountains, as high as possible."* – Malaguzzi.
- Encourage children to be self guided learners through questions, provocation and problem solving in order to empower our children to build a passion for learning. We believe *"the mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be ignited."* – Plutarch.
- Create an environment that engages, captures and honours the interests of our children by stimulating their imaginations, promoting creativity and enhancing the aesthetics of the environment so it becomes the third teacher.
- Respect the needs and rights of the children to make choices by empowering them to take responsibility for their actions, their environment and their learning.
- Recognise that children are living and learning in a technology rich society by incorporating the use of digital technologies in learning.
- Value our role as educators by taking part in constant inquires, investigations and professional development around our knowledge of how children learn in order to deepen our understandings.

**"What we want to see is the child in pursuit of knowledge and not knowledge in pursuit of the child" – George Bernard Shaw.**