

# Policy Regarding Children with Exceptionalities

Lilliput Land Cooperative Nursery School  
Reviewed October 2016

## Purpose of the Policy

This policy outlines the commitment of Lilliput Land Cooperative Nursery School (“Lilliput Land”) to foster the development of all children to its best ability, including those with diverse backgrounds and exceptionalities, help ensure the children’s optimal overall development.

For the purposes of this document, exceptionalities refers to delay and/or exceptional ability in any of the developmental domains (social, cognitive, language, physical and/or self-help). The type and/or severity of the delay, condition, or circumstance would determine whether the above should be considered an exceptionality or whether there should be programming sensitivity.

## Principles of Inclusion

“Inclusion” means that working to facilitate attendance by all children, regardless of ability. Children with exceptionalities and their parents are welcomed, encouraged to enroll and be involved in child care programs. The partnership between parents/caregivers and Lilliput Land staff is critical to providing the optimum environment for the child. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the identification of required supports, services and/or developmental/behavioural goals for their child/ren to be addressed in the child care centre, in consultation with regional staff (e.g., Resource Consultants, Child Care Services Consultants and/or other professionals). Identification of supports, services and/or goals is through the development and annual review of a child’s Individual Support Plan (ISP).

Lilliput Land looks to adhere to six main principles of inclusion, as follows:

- *Zero reject.* No child should ever be excluded for reasons of level and/or type of disability.
- *Naturally occurring proportions.* Child care programs should include children with exceptionalities in proportion to their occurrence in the general population.
- *Same range of options.* Children with exceptionalities should never be limited to shorter child care days or excluded from home-based or school-age care. Children with exceptionalities should have the same range of attendance options as all other children (e.g., full day, part day, flexible hours).
- *Full participation.* Necessary supports should be provided so that all children can participate in some way in all activities.
- *Parent participation.* Parents should be able to participate to the maximum extent of their comfort level.
- *Advocacy.* Staff and parents should promote ‘inclusive, accessible, affordable, quality child care’ for all children – at a centre, family child care home, in the community and as public policy.

Lilliput Land believes that:

- Inclusion is a basic human right.
- All children need a sense of belonging in their community for healthy child development and positive self-esteem.
- All children benefit from inclusive child care. Inclusion of children with exceptionalities promotes respect, tolerance and celebration of diversity among all children.
- Being with other typically developing children facilitates the development of positive social skills.
- Inclusion contributes to children leading active and independent lives.
- The potential costs, both economic and social, are minimized when children with exceptionalities are included early in child care programs.

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- Families and communities benefit from inclusive child care. Families of children with exceptionalities are able to learn about typical child development and may feel more accepted in their community. Families of children with typical development may develop relationships with parents of children with exceptionalities and possibly provide a support to them and their communities.

Most children with exceptionalities require minimal support and/or modifications (to the environment, equipment and/or programming) to be fully included in child care centre programming and activities. A small percentage of children with exceptionalities require more intensive levels of support and/or modifications to the environment, play materials, equipment and/or programming to be included in all activities in a child care centre. Every effort will be made to facilitate the least intrusive ways of including children with exceptionalities in child care when possible. Children at Lilliput Land are not removed from the classroom for the purposes of individual assessment and / or programming and other children in the classroom are welcome to participate if they are comfortable or wish to do so.

Supports offered should be appropriate to a child's or parent/caregiver's needs and/or wants. The level and/or type of support required may vary from time to time and may be dependent upon many factors, including but not limited to:

- child's diagnosis (e.g., need for routine and structure, minimal transition, sensory stimulation, dietary requirements, etc.);
- capacity of staff (i.e., their attitudes, values, experience, skill and interest) to address inclusion;
- ability of the physical location or structure of the child care centre to accommodate a child's needs
- child's developmental status (e.g., progress and/or regression in one or more areas of delay);
- factor(s) related to the child's health and/or well-being (e.g., illness, lack of sleep, poor diet, etc.); and/or environmental factors (e.g., staffing change, new child/ren in the room, family vacation, etc.).