

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Bethany Early Intervention Program.

The Mission of Bethany Early Intervention Program is to provide a quality, family centered Early Intervention Service to babies and young children with developmental delay in the Camden/Wollondilly areas, so that their development is enhanced and transition to the best possible education setting is facilitated.

Bethany Early Intervention Program is located at Mater Dei, Camden and offers home, centre based and family centred programs for children 0-6 years with developmental delay or diagnosed disability. Each child's individual program is guided by the needs of the child and family.

Currently we offer the following services

- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Pathology
- Physiotherapy
- Early Learning Groups/Educational Programs/Pre School Support

The main focus of the Program is to support children and families. Contact is made with other service providers who are involved with the children and families to assist with the coordination and integration of services eg preschools, medical professionals, Department of Education etc. Limited playgroup sessions may be offered to children if deemed appropriate.

Referrals can be made directly to the Program Manager by parent/carers or other health/educational professionals. However, prior to commencement of services, children must have a diagnosis written by a paediatrician.

Bethany Early Intervention Program is only one of a number of Mater Dei services. Other services include

- **Family Resource and Residential Program** is predominantly a residential program offering individualised independent living skills for students who are in Years 7-12 at Mater Dei, and support for their families. The students reside for one to four nights each week during the school term, in one of four community-based houses in Camden, Narellan, Elderslie and Leumeah.
- **Mater Dei School** is an on site co-educational school for students in Kindergarten to Year 12 who have been assessed with mild to moderate cognitive disability. The major focus of the school is inclusion for all students and the comprehensive curriculum for the compulsory school age is based on the Key Learning Areas as outlined by the NSW Board of Studies.
- **The Development Program** assists the organisation's progression and growth by building and ensuring its continued support from within and from the wider community through communication and promotion. At Mater Dei we receive 70% of our funding from government sources and the remaining 30% is raised from our Fee policy and initiatives undertaken by the Development Program eg Golf day, Annual Fundraising Dinner, Peace Egg, Mater Dei Foundation membership, preparation of submissions to trusts, foundations and licensed clubs etc.

MANAGEMENT

Mater Dei is managed by a Board of Directors through the Chief Executive Officer/Principal. Each service is managed by a Program Manager.

CEO/Principal	Mr Tony Fitzgerald	(02) 46 557481
Bethany Early Intervention Program Manager	Mrs Vida Carmody	(02) 46 557440
Family Resource Program Manager	Ms Jenine Purdy	(02) 46 557481
Assistant Principal	Mrs Pamela Templeton	(02) 46 557481
Manager, Development Program	Mrs Debbie Gates	(02) 46 557481

DETAILS OF PROGRAM STAFF

Name	Position
Vida Carmody	Program Manager
Lyn Hand	Occupational Therapist
Pam Rogers	Speech Pathologist
Karen Kelly	Early Childhood Teacher
Kerri Whitfield	Teacher/Program Assistant

THERAPY SERVICES

Bethany received funding from DADHC to provide therapy services to 0 – 6 year olds. On the principal of equity and access, Bethany will not provide services to a child who already receives therapy from another professional of the same discipline.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

Bethany received funding from DET to provide educational programs and support and transition to children 0 – 6 years. Children are only funded to receive the same service from only one provider.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Bethany Early Intervention Program is funded through
 - The Department of Ageing, Disability and Home care (DADHC) and is thus responsible for meeting the standards of the Disability Services Act.
 - The Department of Education and Training (DET), Intervention Support Program
- Staff are firstly accountable to the children and families who participate in the program. They are secondly accountable to the Chief Executive Officer through the Bethany Manager and finally to the Good Samaritan Sisters through the Mater Dei Board of Directors.

INDIVIDUAL FAMILY SERVICE PLANS (IFSP)

An Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) is written for each child/family and involves a collaborative process with the parents/guardians, representative(s) from the Bethany team, other services, and advocates directly concerned. The IFSP is a written plan of action specifying agreed priorities and outcomes for the following year and its aim is to provide consistent support, education and intervention across all areas of the child's life. IFSP meetings are planned during the year and reviewed annually or earlier if deemed necessary.

A relevant representative from the Bethany team will attend each child's IFSP meeting and a written report is taken from other relevant Bethany staff. Bethany staff who work with the child but are unable to attend the IFSP will send a written report to the meeting.

CHILDREN'S FILES

Children's files are confidential and kept in a locked cabinet in the Bethany office and contain the following information

- personal information including parents/guardian's names, address, telephone numbers, emergency contacts etc.
- medical information, including information about the child's disability, medication, contact numbers for doctor's/specialists;
- staff/parent correspondence;
- Individual Family Service Plans(IFSP), Individual Education Plans (IEP), assessments, progress notes;
- case notes including incident reports, file notes etc.;

Bethany staff ensure that all relevant information, progress notes, individual assessments and programs are entered into each child's file, accurately and promptly as part of their Individual Family Service Plan.

No information from children's files may be photocopied and/or released without the permission of the author and/or parents/guardians. Parents/guardians may have access to files on request.

Files of children who exit the program will be archived appropriately.

ADVOCACY

Bethany Early Intervention Program believes that all students and families have a right to individual advocacy which will respond effectively to the involvement of advocates on behalf of families and children.

Advocacy can be defined as "speaking on behalf of another" and can involve representing an organisation through articulating the mission and supporting and defending the organisation's message. It also relates to representing and defending the rights of individuals with disabilities which can involve taking students into the local community and supporting them so that the community can change their perceptions of people with a disability.

For further advocacy support please contact one of the following services

- NSW Council for Intellectual Disability – 1800 424 065
- Family Advocacy – 1800 620 588
- Intellectual Disability Rights Inc. – 1800 666 611
- Illawarra Citizen Advocacy – (02) 4229 4999

- People with Disability Australia – 1800 422 015

MEDICATION

Bethany staff are not required to administer medication to children as parents/carers are present during all education/therapy program activities.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Upon commencement of employment, all staff agree to respect the confidentiality of information and documents which he/she has access to in the course of, or arising from, their employment. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to

- information about the former, current and future clients of Bethany Early Intervention Program;
- client names and addresses; and
- computer data bases and computer software;
- staff names and addresses

Bethany staff must at all times, respect the program's policy of confidentiality which includes the following practices

- only information which is deemed relevant to providing effective programming will be recorded;
- all information relating to a child/family will be kept in a locked file in the Bethany office;
- written permission from the child's family will be required prior to information being released to other agencies;
- parents/carers may see files on request;
- copies of information not written by Bethany staff can only be released with written permission from the author;

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

In the event of a child having a serious accident or being ill enough during the Early Learning Group to cause concern the following procedure must be followed

- If an accident, administer First Aid and call an Ambulance, if appropriate
- If seriously ill, call an ambulance and inform Bethany Manager. If unavailable contact CEO/Principal.
- Parent/carer to accompany child to hospital and staff member, if needed.
- Record details on an Accident/Incident report and forward to Bethany Manager who will inform the CEO/Principal.

INCIDENT REPORTS

In the event of an incident or accident, irrespective of the degree or location, all staff who witness the incident/accident must complete an Incident/Accident Report Form. This must be forwarded to the Bethany Manager, as soon as possible to enable appropriate follow-up.

FIRE/EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Bethany rooms are fitted with fire extinguishers and smoke detectors. Emergency procedures are clearly displayed in each room and fire drills are held at least twice a term and outcomes recorded and forwarded to the Bethany Manager.

VISITORS

All visitors, including parents/carers to Bethany, must sign in and out and wear a blue Mater Dei lanyard while attending Bethany. Parents/carers must remain on site, at all times, while their children are attending Bethany and if they need to leave the Bethany rooms they must inform the Bethany Manager or a member of the Bethany Team of their location.

PRIVACY

Bethany Early Intervention Program is bound by the National Privacy Principles contained in the Commonwealth Privacy Act (December 2001) and uses and manages Personal Information provided to or collected by it in accordance with this legislation. Mater Dei may, from time to time, review and update this Privacy Policy to take account of new laws and technology, changes to its operations and practices, and to make sure it remains appropriate to the changing environment.

EARLY LEARNING GROUP

When attending an Early Learning Group children must be signed in and out on the Daily Attendance Sheet.

COMPLAINTS HANDLING

Bethany Early Intervention Program is committed to a just resolution of all grievances and will ensure that children, families and advocates ie service users are free to raise any grievance regarding the program and its service delivery and implementation.

- All service users have the right to complain and to have that complaint handled well.
- Internal and external mechanisms are in place and are known by all service users, families and staff.
- There is an obvious service user focus which encourages and acts on service user feedback.
- All documents used in the process of resolving any complaint are distributed on a need-to-know basis only.
- Complainants and other people who provide information are protected from any repercussions, reprisals or victimisation, which may occur as a result of making a complaint.
- All service users and staff involved treat all information as confidential.
- The process is easy to follow and written in plain English or a format appropriate to the needs of service users and staff.
- Help is offered to service users to formulate and lodge complaints.

See attached Complaints Handling Brochure

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

The Behaviour Management Policy at Bethany Early Intervention Program is based on the philosophy that all behaviour is a form of communication. The interpretation of what the behaviour attempts to communicate is the basis for the management of that behaviour. The management of behaviour at Bethany is positive and is based on the dignity and respect of the children and the consequences of their behaviour.

The positive approach requires all members of the Mater Dei community to be consistent, clear

and co-ordinated about expectations of behaviour. This ensures that the children and young people will have a safe and secure environment in which to learn.

The aim of the Behaviour Management Policy is to help our children and young people to learn the consequences of their behaviour so that they understand how their actions affect those around them. Once this is understood, they are then empowered to become self-disciplined and self-directed.

The underlying principles of the Behaviour Management Policy are

- It supports self-esteem and allows children to feel capable, competent and interact effectively with others;
- It takes into account the development level of understanding and ability of the child;
- It is expressed positively;
- It guides, gives simple explanations and offers alternatives so that the child can make choices;
- It is consistent;
- It is based on self-discipline and self-control and not coercion.
- It recognises that this is a gradual and developmental process.

Mater Dei expressly forbids the use of corporal punishment by any member of staff and does not and will not delegate or approve the use of corporal punishment by any providers or outside agencies associated with Mater Dei.