



# Aurora School

## LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION STATEMENT

### AURORA POLICY STATEMENT (NOVEMBER 2020)

At Aurora School, children and their families are immersed in a language rich community where they have an opportunity to thrive socially and in their learning. They have opportunities to mix with children who are deaf, hard of hearing (HoH), and hearing, and work closely with staff including Teachers of the Deaf, Deaf / Hearing Educational Support and Speech and Language Therapists.

Bilingualism is an approach to teaching young Deaf children that uses both Auslan, the language of the Deaf community and English. We value these languages equally and want our children to be competent in both. We acknowledge and value children's home language which may be other than English and understand this supports a positive identity and sense of wellbeing. We know how important it is for children to be able to code switch to match their use of language to suit different audiences and situations.

Each child is treated as an individual and we are committed to meeting their individual language needs. This enables each child to achieve the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) outcomes including the development of a positive sense of identity and wellbeing; to be confident learners and participate in the broader community and their families' cultures.

#### **Auslan**

Every child and their family has the opportunity to be exposed to and develop Auslan. As well as supporting their language acquisition, Auslan allows all deaf children and adults to communicate with each other and forms part of their Deaf identity. We strive for children and families to be bilingual so that they feel included in both deaf and hearing communities.

Our Auslan program aims to develop children's receptive and expressive skills, and understanding of how the language works. This enables each child to develop language for interacting, learning and socialising.

Our team consists of deaf adults whose first language is Auslan and hearing staff with Auslan skills. Through exposure to deaf role models and proficient users of the language, children are acquiring skills appropriate to their development.

Deaf Teachers oversee the development of Auslan.

#### **English**

We actively promote the development of literacy (speaking, listening reading and writing) skills in order for children to learn across the curriculum. We use spoken English, Sign Supported Speech and Auslan as appropriate for each individual child to ensure the development of literacy and communication skills. Speaking and listening skills are developed through collaboration and in partnership with families.

Programs are developed to maximise each child's potential to apply these skills and to enable them to communicate with hearing people to the best of their ability. Staff work closely with Speech and Language Therapists in order to support the development of these skills. Exposure to spoken English is designed to meet the particular needs of the child and their family.



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### Speech and Language Programs

Based on Early Childhood practice and following the VEYLDF Practice Principles children are supported through a range of ways:

- Play based learning – in home sessions; playgroups, other Early Childhood or community settings
- Explicit teaching opportunities - focusing on specific aspects of communication in small group, paired or individual sessions
- Tailored language programs where deaf children learn skills and to communicate successfully with hearing and/or deaf/HoH people (using English, Sign Supported Speech, or Auslan, depending on the child's needs).

### Audiology

The children are actively encouraged to wear and use their hearing aids and cochlear implants daily. The school also maintains strong links with audiology clinics and is supported by an Educational Audiologist. Most of our children have some residual hearing and use different types of hearing aids and cochlear implants. We ensure that the children have the opportunity to develop the best use of their hearing in order to communicate and to support their learning and development.

Staff work closely with families and Audiologists at Hearing Australia to ensure the right amplification for the children. Our onsite educational Audiologist manages the children's hearing aids and auditory programmes. All students are supported in making the best use of their residual hearing through targeted speaking and listening opportunities.

### EVALUATION

[This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three year cycle and is due for review in 2023.](#)