Diversity, Representation, and Inclusion Policy — Board Policy

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1. The oldest continuous culture of care

We acknowledge the richness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures as the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we live, learn, and work. For over 65,000 years, First Nations peoples have engaged in the continuous practice of educating, nurturing, and caring for children in community. This profound, enduring knowledge is the original foundation of community-based child rearing in Australia.

While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples represent 3.2% of our national population, their ongoing connection to culture, family, and country is central to our identity. We hold an unwavering commitment to meaningful reconciliation, and to ensuring that First Nations voices and perspectives actively shape the future of early childhood education.

2. What we carry

Policy sets out numbers and commitments. This section sets out what sits underneath them.

We know the anxiety of every parent who sends their child off to school in the morning, knowing they cannot protect them from every act of racism that day might bring.

We know what it takes to build a life, a career, or a business far from where you grew up — the extra proving, the small daily judgments about an accent, a name, or a background that don't go away even after years of contribution.

And we know that wearing an article of faith — a hijab, a kippah, a turban — does not make a person exotic or foreign. It is simply how they dress.

None of this is abstract to the educators, managers, and parents who make up this Alliance. It is why this policy exists, and why it says what it says.

3. The strength and reality of diverse voices

The Family Day Care Alliance Victoria recognises that our true strength lies in the rich cultural and linguistic diversity of the families, children, and educators we serve. We acknowledge the

reality of our community: Victoria has the second-highest share of overseas-born residents of any Australian state, at 29.9%, and 32.8% of Victorians speak a language other than English at home. In Greater Melbourne alone, our community spans 128 distinct countries of birth — including 27 different African nations — meaning diversity here is genuinely global. We celebrate this reality, because this diversity is the very foundation of the home-based education and care we provide.

4. The challenge of representation

While our community is incredibly diverse, we must boldly acknowledge the challenges of representation. There is a systemic imbalance in power and decision-making. We can't point to a single figure for who holds the decisions affecting our lives, our businesses, and our children's futures — no comparable data source publishes one — but the pattern is visible in what public sector data does report. In Victoria, 18.1% of public sector employees speak a language other than English with family or community, against 27.6% of the Victorian population; at the Commonwealth level, 22.4% of Australian Public Service employees were born overseas and 16.4% come from a non-English-speaking country, against 29.7% and 20.9% respectively for the Australian population. Both governments run a public service that is measurably less diverse than the community it serves.

What neither data set does is break those figures down by seniority. The Commonwealth publishes a detailed classification breakdown for gender (women were 29.0% of the Senior Executive Service in 2002, and 51.4% by 2021) and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees (almost half work at the lowest APS 3–4 classification bands) — but no equivalent breakdown exists for cultural or linguistic diversity, at either level of government. Nobody can say how many senior decision-makers are culturally or linguistically diverse, because nobody publishes it. That silence is itself part of the imbalance we are naming.

This same gap shows up closer to home. Since February 2026, every early childhood education and care worker in Australia has been required to complete new national child safety training, backed by up to $40 million a year in Australian Government funding drawn from the Child Care Subsidy. The training is delivered through Geccko (Get Early Childhood Compliance Knowledge Online), the Government's national online learning platform for the sector, and was developed by the Australian Centre for Child Protection at the University of South Australia, in partnership with the Queensland Government on behalf of all Australian governments, with the sector and child safety experts consulted along the way. What isn't published anywhere is a breakdown of the cultural or linguistic backgrounds of the people who shaped that content. We're not suggesting the training is worse for that — only that when this kind of information isn't tracked or made available, culturally and linguistically diverse educators and families have no way to see themselves reflected in decisions made about the sector they work in, or to check that representation actually happened. We want government, regulation, and childcare leadership

that is representative of our lived experience — and transparent enough that representation can actually be checked.

5. A seat at the table: comfort, security, and community

To the First Nations, minority, and culturally diverse educators, managers, and parents in the Family Day Care sector: you belong here. When you read this policy, we want you to feel a profound sense of comfort in finding people who understand your journey.

More importantly, we want you to feel complete security in knowing you have a seat at the table. We are committed to changing who has a genuine say in the decisions that affect our lives, our businesses, and our children's futures. The policy of this Alliance strives to ensure that the people most directly affected by regulatory decisions are the ones who get a seat at the table, and who contribute in meaningful, authoritative ways.

6. Our aspirational commitment

We are building an alliance where leadership reflects the 35.7% of Greater Melbourne residents born overseas, the vibrant tapestry of languages spoken in our homes, and the ancient wisdom of Australia's First Peoples.

- We will ensure that those most impacted by childcare regulations actively guide our advocacy and governance.
- We will protect what is unique about Family Day Care by championing culturally diverse, community-driven approaches to early childhood education.
- We will consistently push back against top-down decisions that ignore the realities of our diverse sector.
- We will advance meaningful reconciliation by prioritising Indigenous knowledge and representation in our operational and advocacy frameworks.

Through this policy, we strive to make government, regulation, and the entire childcare sector truly representative of our lived experience.

Sources (Section 4):

- National child safety training: Safety in early education and care update — Ministers' Media Centre; Geccko: Get early childhood compliance knowledge online — Department of Education; National Child Safety Training for the Education and Care Sector — Australian Centre for Child Protection, University of Adelaide.

- Public sector diversity: Cultural background and home life 2025 — Victorian Public Sector Commission; Diversity — APS Employment Data, 31 December 2021, Australian Public Service Commission.