Kindergarten TO Year 2
IMPROVEMENT APPROACH

Kindergarten TO Year 2
IMPROVEMENT APPROACH GUIDE

Department *for* Education, Children and Young People

Tasmanian Government

We acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as the traditional and continuing custodians of Lutruwita, where the Palawa People have cared for their children and prepared them for life since the beginning of time.

We honour Elders, past and present and pay our respects to all First Nations Australian colleagues, families and friends.

We also acknowledge that we live, work, play and learn on what always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

Together we are committed to ensuring all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are known, safe, well and learning – the strong and successful Community members of tomorrow.

Australian Curriculum
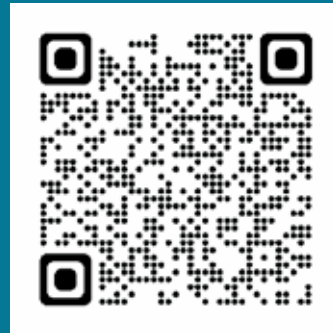
Belonging, Being and Becoming

Early Learning Years (birth to Year 2)

K to Y2 Improvement Approach

K to Y2 Improvement Approach Webinars

K to Y2 on Canvas

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This Guide has been developed with reference to National Quality Framework resources published by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, and the Guide to the National Quality Standard for Western Australian Public Schools.

INTRODUCTION

The Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) is committed to implementing evidence-based practices that support improvement in teaching, learning and leading at a classroom and system level. The *Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach Guide* (this Guide) sets a benchmark for quality early childhood experiences that support the foundation for children's future learning and development.

This Guide uses seven quality areas to support quality teaching, learning and leading in the early years. The Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach aligns with Our Approach to School Improvement to strengthen children's educational experiences.

The purpose of the Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach is to:

» improve the educational and developmental outcomes for children attending Kindergarten to Year 2

» promote continuous improvement in teaching, leading and learning

» promote the protection, safety and wellbeing of children in the early years

» build on whole school quality improvement plans

» develop a school-wide culture of continuous improvement.

BACKGROUND TO THE KINDERGARTEN TO YEAR 2 IMPROVEMENT APPROACH

The Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach includes the Tasmanian Quality Standards (TQS). The TQS draws on the standards and quality areas of the National Quality Standard (NQS). The quality areas have been tailored to suit the Tasmanian teaching and learning context.

The National Quality Standard (NQS) was developed as a key component of the National Quality Framework (NQF). The NQF was introduced in Australia in 2012 to raise the quality of education and improve developmental and learning outcomes for children in the early years. The NQS includes seven quality-areas that are integral to the provision of quality education for children in the early years. The quality areas are founded on evidence-based research to deliver high quality programs in the early years.

To support continuous improvement in Tasmanian Kindergartens a school specific version of the NQS was adapted and tested in Tasmanian schools via a test and trial project in 2021. This involved the application of the NQS in 18 Tasmanian Government Kindergartens. The test and trial was found to be effective, and the decision was made to expand the program in 2023.

THE TASMANIAN QUALITY STANDARDS

The Tasmanian Quality Standards (TQS) include seven quality areas informed by evidence-based research. In each quality area, there are two or three standards. These standards are high-level outcome statements. Under each standard, there are elements that describe the outcomes that contribute to the standard being achieved.

The seven quality areas are listed below

QUALITY AREA 1 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE

QUALITY AREA 2 CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

QUALITY AREA 3 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

QUALITY AREA 4 STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

QUALITY AREA 5 RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

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QUALITY AREA 7 GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

The TQS set a high benchmark for children's education and care. To be considered as 'Meeting' the TQS, it is necessary to meet every element that makes up every standard within all seven quality areas.

The following table includes the 15 standards and 40 elements that make up each quality area of the TQS. Each standard and element is represented by concepts that support schools to understand and reflect on the TQS.

Summary table of TQS quality areas, standards and elements

QA 1 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE

STANDARD 1.1	**Program**	**The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.**
ELEMENT 1.1.1	**Approved learning framework**	Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.
ELEMENT 1.1.2	**Child-centred**	Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.
ELEMENT 1.1.3	**Program learning opportunities**	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.
STANDARD 1.2	**Practice**	**Teachers facilitate and extend each child's learning and development.**
ELEMENT 1.2.1	**Intentional teaching**	Teachers are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.
ELEMENT 1.2.2	**Responsive teaching and scaffolding**	Teachers respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback.
ELEMENT 1.2.3	**Child directed learning**	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.
STANDARD 1.3	**Assessment and planning**	**School leaders and teachers take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.**
ELEMENT 1.3.1	**Assessment and planning cycle**	Each child's learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection.
ELEMENT 1.3.2	**Critical reflection**	Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.
ELEMENT 1.3.3	**Information for families**	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.

QA 2 CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

STANDARD 2.1	**Health**	**Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.**
ELEMENT 2.1.1	**Wellbeing and comfort**	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for rest and relaxation.
ELEMENT 2.1.2	**Health practices and procedures**	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
ELEMENT 2.1.3	**Healthy lifestyle**	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
STANDARD 2.2	**Safety**	**Each child is protected.**
ELEMENT 2.2.1	**Supervision**	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
ELEMENT 2.2.2	**Incident and emergency management**	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, are practised and implemented.
ELEMENT 2.2.3	**Child protection**	School leaders, teachers and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

QA 3 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

STANDARD 3.1	Design	**The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a school.**
ELEMENT 3.1.1	**Fit for purpose**	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
ELEMENT 3.1.2	**Upkeep**	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.
STANDARD 3.2	Use	**The school environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning.**
ELEMENT 3.2.1	**Inclusive environment**	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
ELEMENT 3.2.2	**Resources support play-based learning**	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.
ELEMENT 3.2.3	**Environmentally responsible**	The school cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.

QA 4 STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

STANDARD 4.1	Staffing arrangements	**Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development.**
ELEMENT 4.1.1	**Organisation of teachers**	The organisation of teachers across the school supports children's learning and development.
ELEMENT 4.1.2	**Continuity of staff**	Every effort is made for children to experience continuity of teachers at the school.
STANDARD 4.2	Professionalism	**School leaders, teachers and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical.**
ELEMENT 4.2.1	**Professional collaboration**	School leaders, teachers and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills.
ELEMENT 4.2.2	**Professional standards**	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.

QA 5 RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

STANDARD 5.1	Relationships between teachers and children	**Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.**
ELEMENT 5.1.1	**Positive educator to child interactions**	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
ELEMENT 5.1.2	**Dignity and rights of the child**	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
STANDARD 5.2	Relationships between children	**Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.**
ELEMENT 5.2.1	**Collaborative learning**	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.
ELEMENT 5.2.2	**Self-regulation**	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

QA 6 COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

STANDARD 6.1	**Supportive relationships with families**	**Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.**
ELEMENT 6.1.1	**Engagement with the school**	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the school and contribute to school decisions.
ELEMENT 6.1.2	**Parent views are respected**	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
ELEMENT 6.1.3	**Families are supported**	Current information is available to families about the school and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
STANDARD 6.2	**Collaborative partnerships**	**Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.**
ELEMENT 6.2.1	**Transitions**	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.
ELEMENT 6.2.2	**Access and participation**	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.
ELEMENT 6.2.3	**Community engagement**	The school builds relationships and engages with its community.

QA7 – GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

STANDARD 7.1	**Governance**	**Governance supports the operation of a quality school.**
ELEMENT 7.1.1	**School philosophy and purpose**	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the school's operations.
ELEMENT 7.1.2	**Management systems**	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality school.
ELEMENT 7.1.3	**Roles and responsibilities**	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the school.
STANDARD 7.2	**Leadership**	**Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.**
ELEMENT 7.2.1	**Continuous improvement**	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.
ELEMENT 7.2.2	**Educational leadership**	The program leader is supported and leads the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle.
ELEMENT 7.2.3	**Development of professionals**	Teachers and staff members' performance is regularly evaluated and individual plans are in place to support learning and development.

THE KINDERGARTEN TO YEAR 2 IMPROVEMENT APPROACH IN TASMANIAN SCHOOLS

The Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach, this Guide and the Tasmanian Quality Standards (TQS) have been purposefully adapted from the NQS to suit the Tasmanian school environment including school-based Kindergartens, legislative context and quality assurance requirements of the Tasmanian Government education system.

Key features of the Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach are as follows:

» The approach informs quality early years practice and identifies and documents areas that require improvement for participating schools.

» The approach applies to children from Kindergarten to Year 2.

» The TQS, in particular, the seven quality areas, 15 standards and 40 elements as outlined in this Guide, provide a benchmark to improve quality early childhood experiences that support the foundation for children's future learning and development.

» Early years teachers and school leaders determine whether their school is 'Meeting' or 'Working Towards' each quality area in the TQS. Schools enter their self-assessment into the online *Kindergarten to Year 2 Reflection and Self-Assessment Tool*. This information may be incorporated into school improvement planning processes.

» To be considered as 'Meeting' a quality area, it is necessary to meet every element that makes up each standard. It follows that 'Working Towards' means that one or more elements have not yet been met in one or more classrooms. These elements are potential priorities for improvement. Determinations also take into consideration the typical day-to-day practices across all Kindergarten to Year 2 classes in the school.

Applying the Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach to Tasmanian Schools

The provision of high-quality early years education benefits all children's learning and development. The Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach assists in fostering a culture of professional learning and growth. It deepens teaching and learning expertise by increasing each school's capacity to reflect, develop skills and knowledge, collaborate and in turn improve children wellbeing and learning.

This Guide supports teachers in strengthening quality practices and processes across the early years. Teachers from Kindergarten to Year 2 measure their practices against the seven quality areas, standards and elements of the TQS.

Applying the TQS in Tasmanian Government schools supports ongoing quality improvement and reflective practice, based on cycles of inquiry as outlined in the Department's Strategic Plan. Tasmanian Government schools are encouraged to work towards meeting the TQS contained in this Guide and continue to improve their practice across the early years.

Steps in the Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach

The steps that apply to the Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach for Tasmanian Government schools, are as follows:

1. Reflect and Review

As part of their improvement planning, early years teachers (including teacher assistants working with classes across Kindergarten to Year 2) will use the TQS to critically reflect on and review their practice and processes against the seven quality areas. This TQS self-assessment will be undertaken by early years teachers throughout the year as part of their improvement planning.

The *Kindergarten to Year 2 Reflection and Self-Assessment Tool* is available to support teachers to complete a review of their practice[1] and identify areas of strength and areas for improvement.

Examples of reflective practice could be:

Observe – teachers observe what children, families and other staff are doing

Sight – teachers gather and review documentation as evidence to support practice

Discuss – teachers engage in discussions about why and how practices occur at the school.

2. Collaborate and Record

Insights about existing early childhood practices are observed and documented through the self-assessment process and priority areas are identified for ongoing quality improvement.

Following the reflection and review by the early years teachers of their classrooms, a discussion will take place between them and school leaders about the findings of the self-assessment.

These discussions will see the school leaders and early years teachers collaborate to record findings of the strengths and areas for improvement.

The *Kindergarten to Year 2 Reflection and Self-Assessment Tool* is available online for teachers to enter their self-assessments and areas of strength and areas for improvement. The Principal or school leader will be notified to submit the school's findings online (by the end of Term 2).

The school's *Kindergarten to Year 2 Reflection and Self-Assessment Tool* will then be validated by an Early Learning Coach (ELC) during Term 3 or Term 4. The ELC will work collaboratively with the early years teachers and school leaders to validate the assessments, which will then inform improvement priorities.

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1   The *Kindergarten to Year 2 Reflection and Self-Assessment Tool* and other resources and information are available on Canvas which is located on the Department's staff intranet. All schools have access to the Canvas space.

3. Visit and Reporting

The ELC visits the school in Term 3 or 4 to observe practices against the TQS, as well as engaging in conversations with the early years teachers and school leaders.

An agreed record of the validation will be prepared by the ELC, and a copy will be sent to the Principal including, a record of the school's self-assessment. Schools reflect on the TQS report and incorporate recommendations into improvement planning.

Using this Guide

This Guide is a point of reference for school leaders and early years teachers (Kindergarten to Year 2) in Tasmanian schools to support a clear and consistent understanding of the Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach as well as the standards and elements that make up each quality area of the TQS. You are encouraged to use this Guide to reflect on practices, identify strengths, select priorities for improvement, and monitor progress.

For an explanation of the key terms and icons used in this Guide, please refer to *Appendix 1 – The Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach Guide glossary – Guide Icons legend.*

Working with Quality Areas and Standards

The Guide provides an introductory statement for each quality area and standard to understand their intent and context. These introductions describe the importance of each standard in determining quality.

Reflective questions are included for each standard to assist school leaders and teachers working in the early years to consider current practice and processes in their school in relation to the TQS.

Working with Elements

The elements specify the requirements of each standard. This Guide provides tangible examples of what the element may look like in everyday practice via a list of features you may observe, discuss and sight as indicators of individual elements being met. The examples are indicative only and are not exhaustive.

Any given element is likely to look different from one class to another, as each class and school reflects and is responsive to the needs of its community. Therefore, it is important to maintain a clear view of the intent of each element, standard and quality area when reading these examples, and not to treat them as a checklist.

Each school and class are unique and how the standards and elements are met will reflect that particular school's context, including its local environment; the needs, interests and abilities of its children; and the aspirations of its families and wider community.

**QUALITY AREA 1
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM
AND PRACTICE**

Overview

Quality Area 1 focuses on ensuring the educational program and practice of teachers are child centred, stimulating and maximise opportunities for enhancing and extending each child's learning and development. It recognises that a quality program that builds on children's individual knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests is likely to have long term benefits for children and for broader society.

Schools provide programs for all children that are informed by two learning frameworks:

» Kindergarten to Year 2 – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF)

» Prep to Year 10 – The Australian Curriculum (AC)

These learning frameworks are used in conjunction with the Guide and the Early Learning Teaching Practices model (birth to Year 2) to promote reflective practice and high-quality programs from birth to Year 2.

The key documents supporting the TQS are:

» Belonging, Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF)[2]

» The Australian Curriculum

» The Early Learning Teaching Practices model (ELTP model)

A quality educational program views children as capable and competent learners who have agency and learn best through an inquiry-based program that necessarily includes play and is manifest in different forms according to children's ages and abilities.

Play-based and inquiry learning provides a context for learning as children actively engage with people, objects, symbols and the environment. While the nature of play-based and inquiry-based learning changes as children progress through Kindergarten to Year 2 and beyond, in all of its manifestations, it:

» provides opportunities for children to learn as they discover, create, improvise and test theories

» enables expressions of personality, cultural identity and uniqueness

» promotes positive learning dispositions, such as curiosity, creativity, problem-solving and innovation

» assists children to develop relationships, concepts, skills and confidence in their capacity as a learner and a thinker

» provides opportunities for children to demonstrate their understandings in a range of ways.

Teachers draw on their knowledge of individual children, the EYLF, AC, ELTP model, TQS and the Department's policies and guidelines when designing learning programs and considering practices they will use. With their knowledge of the children, families, and the community in which they are located, teachers make informed decisions about how to optimise children's learning.

Teachers take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the educational program by using an assessment and planning cycle and critically reflecting to improve programs and practice. They provide uninterrupted and prolonged periods of time to pursue lines of inquiry within scaffolds of planned provocations and support. Teachers share the program with families and ensure they are informed of their child's learning and developmental progress.

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2   The EYLF also supports and enhances the delivery of the Australian Curriculum Prep – Year 2.

Standards and elements

Quality Area 1 has three standards that focus on the educational program, educational practice, and assessment and planning for each child's learning and development. These standards are crucial to delivering quality outcomes for children because:

» an educational program based on an approved learning framework is child centred and contributes to children's development as competent and engaged learners

» intentional teaching is a recognised approach to facilitate each child's learning and development

» responsive teaching values, scaffolds and extends each child's skills, knowledge, interests and ideas, and promotes children's agency

» critical reflection informs the assessment and planning cycle and drives improvement in program and practice, resulting in continuous enhancements to children's learning

» communicating children's learning progress to families who are informed about the program and are better equipped to engage with the school and collaboratively make decisions that strengthen their child's learning, development and wellbeing.

QA 1 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE		
STANDARD 1.1	**Program**	**The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.**
ELEMENT 1.1.1	**Approved learning framework**	Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.
ELEMENT 1.1.2	**Child-centred**	Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.
ELEMENT 1.1.3	**Program learning opportunities**	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.
STANDARD 1.2	**Practice**	**Teachers facilitate and extend each child's learning and development.**
ELEMENT 1.2.1	**Intentional teaching**	Teachers are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.
ELEMENT 1.2.2	**Responsive teaching and scaffolding**	Teachers respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback.
ELEMENT 1.2.3	**Child directed learning**	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.
STANDARD 1.3	**Assessment and planning**	**School leaders and teachers take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.**
ELEMENT 1.3.1	**Assessment and planning cycle**	Each child's learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection.
ELEMENT 1.3.2	**Critical reflection**	Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.
ELEMENT 1.3.3	**Information for families**	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.

STANDARD 1.1 Program

The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.

How standard 1.1 contributes to quality teaching and learning

Teachers providing quality educational programs use the EYLF and AC to guide curriculum decision-making and facilitate a shared understanding of children's learning and development. Their perspectives, understanding of, and support for quality education practices ensure program continuity and cohesion as each child progresses from Kindergarten to the end of Year 2 and beyond. As children transition through the early years the principles, practices and learning outcomes of the EYLF support and enhance the delivery of the Australian Curriculum.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 1.1

Educational program

» How do we learn about each child's knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests?

» How do we ensure we know our children and where they are in their learning?

» How do we ensure that experiences and routines are child-centred and include evidence informed teaching practices?

» How do we ensure children develop effective literacy and numeracy skills and have opportunities to work independently as well as collaboratively?

» How do we provide problem-solving, inquiry and challenge-based learning experiences to build upon children's prior learning while also extending them to develop new reading, writing, speaking and listening and numeracy skills?

» How do we provide a differentiated curriculum that supports children's varying capabilities, learning styles and interests?

ELEMENT 1.1.1 Approved learning framework

Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.

What element 1.1.1 aims to achieve

The approved learning frameworks guide program planning and delivery as an ongoing cycle of observation, documentation, analysis, planning, implementation and reflection. Curriculum decision making is guided by the principles, practices, learning outcomes and standards of the EYLF and AC. Teachers draw on their pedagogy, in-depth knowledge and understanding of each child.

Approved learning frameworks

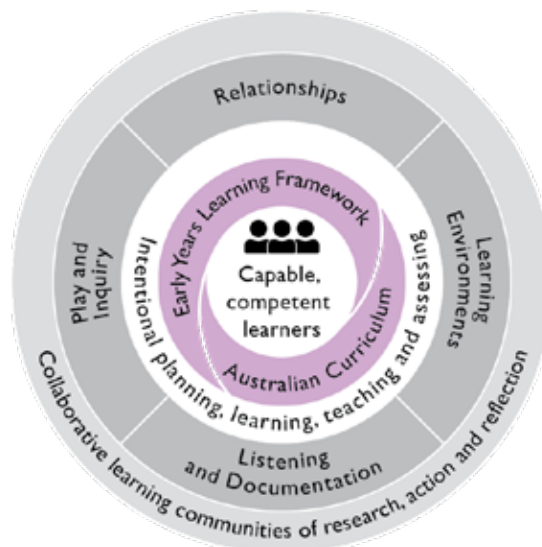The approved learning frameworks for the early years include:

» Belonging, Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF)[3]

» The Australian Curriculum

The approved learning frameworks guide school leaders, and teachers in their curriculum decision making; and assists them in planning, delivering and evaluating quality programs across the early years of schooling.

Curriculum decision-making

As children participate in planned, stimulating and age-appropriate learning programs, they develop new knowledge, skills and interests and construct their own identities and understandings of the world. Teachers have high expectations for all children and make curriculum decisions that uphold all children's rights to learn and reach their potential; including the right to have their ideas, culture, knowledge, abilities and interests acknowledged and valued in the context of their families and communities.

**Connection to the ELTP model –
Frameworks and Curriculum**

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3   The EYLF also supports and enhances the delivery of the Australian Curriculum Prep – Year 2.

Considerations for meeting element 1.1.1

Approved learning frameworks inform curriculum decision-making

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» incorporating tools and contemporary resources to effectively teach curriculum content to improve children's learning capabilities

» **teachers**

- providing experiences for children that reflect outcomes, development needs and learning opportunities set out in the approved learning frameworks and are appropriate to children's strengths, abilities and interests
- using effective evidence-based strategies to teach reading and to build children's knowledge of language, phonics and text structure through explicit practise and child-led experiences
- talking explicitly about phonological concepts, such as rhyme, letters and sounds when sharing texts with children.

» **children**

- displaying behaviours and engaging in activities consistent with the evidence for outcomes and standards as described in the approved learning frameworks, for example:
  - o expressing a range of thoughts and views constructively and displaying a sense of belonging
  - o participating in daily opportunities to make choices and solve problems to meet their needs
  - o interacting with materials and moving around and through their indoor and outdoor environments confidently and safely
  - o responding to questions and being curious and enthusiastic participants in their learning
  - o using quality texts to develop and practise reading skills including, phonemic awareness, phonic knowledge, decoding and fluency
  - o using digital technologies effectively to access, create and communicate information and ideas, solve problems and work collaboratively.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how the learning frameworks inform teaching, learning and assessing in the early years

» how the Department's Strategic Plan and approach to school improvement guides pedagogy and teaching decisions

» how the Department's key documents including literacy and numeracy frameworks guide pedagogy and teaching decisions

» the plans and strategies used to promote learning across all aspects of the program and how the curriculum is integrated for example, a science activity that also supports literacy skills and the development of working collaboratively.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» the documented learning program (planning) including the setup of environments and resources to support ongoing learning

» observations and reflections on children's learning and how these inform individual and group planning

» records of children's learning are assessed against the EYLF and the AC. Documented Individual Education Plans (IEP), where necessary, are developed in collaboration with families and if required, other professionals and support agencies.
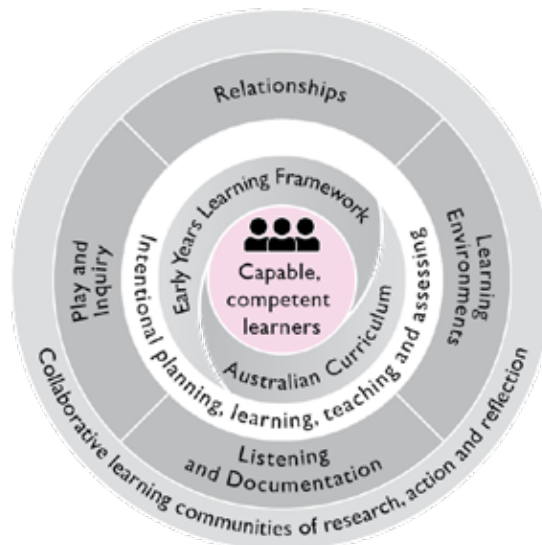
ELEMENT 1.1.2 Child-centred

Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.

What element 1.1.2 aims to achieve

Teachers communicate with families and previous teachers and use a variety of methods to gather information about each child's knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests as the foundation of a child-centred and differentiated educational program. The diversity of family experiences means children experience a sense of belonging in many different ways.

As children participate in planned learning programs, they develop interests, build their identities, understanding of the world and new skills. Learning about each child and identifying their strengths and capabilities assists teachers to make informed decisions about how to further support children's learning and what they have yet to learn across the full breadth of the curriculum. Teachers plan and engage with children in a range of experiences where children are active participants and decision-makers.

**Connection to the ELTP model
– Capable, Competent Learners**

Considerations for meeting element 1.1.2

Child-centred program

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» clear evidence that teachers observe children as capable and competent learners and plan accordingly

» **teachers:**

- observing, listening, talking and reading with children to enhance language development and literacy skills
- using intentional teaching to incorporate children's abilities, ideas, culture, existing understandings and interests in the program to ensure learning experiences are meaningful, challenging and engaging
- planning for and delivering differentiated and inclusive programs that provide appropriate supports and adjustments that cater to each child's learning style, temperament, current level of understanding, skills and interests
- supporting and maximising children's engagement in learning experiences and encouraging children to persevere, collaborate and try new approaches
- providing learning opportunities that support and integrate children's social, emotional and physical development with cognitive tasks
- building on children's diverse experiences, unique perspectives, knowledge and skills in the program
- implementing a cross-curricula approach to develop children's language, reading, writing, and numeracy skills.

» **children:**

- initiating and contributing to learning experiences that emerge from their own ideas and interests
- practising new vocabulary to develop oral language and reading skills
- repeating, revisiting and adding to projects or experiences that they have initiated
- developing strong foundations in the culture and language of their family and in that of the broader community, without compromising their cultural identities
- indicating their deep involvement in experiences that are rich and meaningful to them through verbal and non-verbal responses, and sustained concentration
- shaping their own learning by exploring ideas and theories through inquiry and play and being encouraged to use innovation, imagination and creativity.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» teachers' current understanding of individual children's knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests, and how they have developed this understanding of each child

» assessments and observations of children's learning progress and how this informs planning

» how teachers support children to actively participate in experiences and guide their own play and inquiry learning

» how teachers encourage families to share information about their child to support program planning strategies:

- used by the school to ensure that all children have a sense of belonging in the school and classroom
- used to ensure that the requirements and interests of children are reflected in program planning and delivery.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» documented programs that are responsive to children's knowledge, strengths, needs, ideas, culture, abilities and interests, including Indivudal Education Plans (IEP)

» documented information about each child's developmental needs, interests, experiences, participation and progress.

ELEMENT 1.1.3 Program learning opportunities

All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.

What element 1.1.3 aims to achieve

All aspects of the educational program, including interactions, experiences, routines, and events (both planned and unplanned) provide opportunities for children's learning and development. Teachers interact with children in meaningful ways that empower children's agency, choice and ownership, and extend their understandings and learning capabilities.

Teachers are responsive to opportunities to extend children's learning during planned and unplanned experiences and use 'teachable moments' to consolidate learning. They support children to follow their personal interests and to engage in shared play as well as scaffolded inquiry.

Effective routines and transitions are designed to support children and are regarded as equally important as planned, or spontaneous play experiences, or group activities. Effective transitions reduce stress and support children's sense of belonging.

**Connection to the ELTP model –
Intentional Planning, Learning, Teaching and Assessing**
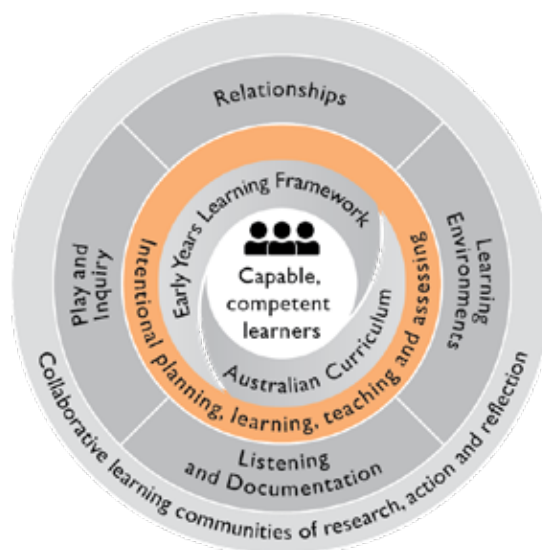
Considerations for meeting element 1.1.3
Program learning opportunities

Examples of what you may **observe:**

» **teachers:**
- providing opportunities for children to engage in personal and shared learning experiences
- providing learning environments that are inclusive, diverse, open-ended, stimulating and inviting
- using all aspects of the program including transitions and everyday routines to build literacy and numeracy capabilities
- using a range of teaching strategies and instructional techniques including, cooperative learning, integrated technology and graphic organisers
- observing and responding to children's engagement in both planned and unplanned learning experiences to progress and extend their understandings and capabilities
- minimising the time children are expected to do the same thing at the same time, or to wait for long periods without engaging in learning, play, interactions, and turn-taking
- using a variety of assessment techniques to allow all children to show their knowledge, skills, and understandings of what has been learnt
- providing opportunities for co-designing and collaborating with children about the learning program, routines and everyday classroom procedures
- providing a literacy-enriched environment, a wide range of books, including chapter books, digital stories, decodable and predictable texts, and other reading and writing opportunities and (where applicable) displaying print[4] in home languages and in English.
- supporting children to understand numeracy and scientific concepts during everyday routines and learning experiences, including when caring for the environment and living things.

» **children:**
- participating collaboratively in authentic learning experiences and having opportunities to contribute to decisions
- being given choice, voice and autonomy during routines and transition times
- engaged in a range of learning experiences throughout the day, including play, personal and shared inquiry, literacy, numeracy, science and digital technology
- having opportunities to extend their interests, experiences and activities, such as being able to continue working on a construction or artwork.

Examples of what you may **discuss:**

» how the school:
- organises its programs and routines to optimise opportunities for children's learning
- maximises continuity of learning as children progress across the early years of schooling

» how children are involved in their own learning by listening, observing, asking questions, investigating and problem solving and how everyday routines, transitions and programs have been planned to promote inclusion, participation and success.

Examples of what you may **sight:**

» documentation that reflects on all aspects of the program, for example:
- incidental and planned teaching and learning
- experiences and learning outcomes that maximise opportunities for learning

» review of curriculum content and pedagogy documented programs that include planned experiences and/or strategies to support individual children's goals.

4   This could include Braille and Auslan Signbank

STANDARD 1.2 Practice

Teachers facilitate and extend each child's learning and development.

How standard 1.2 contributes to quality teaching and learning

Teachers are deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions. They are responsive to children's ideas, and extend their learning through quality open-ended questions, meaningful interactions and purposeful feedback. They promote each child's voice and agency to help them make choices and decisions that influence their world.

Teachers' professional judgements and curriculum decisions are central to their active role in facilitating children's learning, development and wellbeing. In making professional judgements, teachers use their:

» professional knowledge, skills and experience, including deep and broad knowledge of the approved learning frameworks and evidence-based pedagogical practices

» knowledge of the children and their families, and the broader community

» awareness of how their own beliefs, cultural perspectives, worldview and values impact on their preferences and practices, and (ultimately) on children's wellbeing and learning.

Teachers also draw on their creativity, imagination and insight to help them improvise and adjust their practice to suit the time, place and context in order to optimise children's learning.

Intentional and responsive teachers actively engage in children's learning and share decision making with them. They use everyday interactions with children during planned experiences including play, routines and ongoing projects to stimulate children's thinking and to enrich their learning.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 1.2

Educational practice

» How do we demonstrate that we value children's ideas, thinking and interests?

» What intentional strategies do we use to support children's development in literacy, numeracy and physical capabilities?

» How do we extend or modify the program and experiences being offered to each child and/or groups of children?

» Do we provide children with the opportunity to make choices in circumstances where we promote their agency?

» How can we improve the ways in which we engage children in making decisions about their own learning?

ELEMENT 1.2.1 Intentional teaching

Teachers are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.

What element 1.2.1 aims to achieve

Intentional teaching is being deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in decisions and actions. Intentionality includes actively promoting children's learning through challenging experiences and interactions that foster high-level critical thinking skills.

Intentional teaching utilises professional knowledge and strategies that reflect contemporary evidence-based research about children's play, inquiry and learning. Intentional teachers are able to explain what they are doing and why they are doing it.

Intentional teachers:

» recognise that learning occurs in social contexts and that interactions and communication are vitally important for learning

» use strategies (such as modelling, demonstrating, open-ended questioning, speculating, explaining and engaging in shared conversations) to extend children's thinking and learning

» move flexibly in and out of different roles and draw on different instructional strategies as the context of children's inquiry, insights and needs change

» use their professional knowledge of curriculum in relation to their knowledge of what children already know or can do to plan programs that maximise learning.

**Connection to the ELTP model –
Intentional Planning, Learning, Teaching and Assessing**

Considerations for meeting element 1.2.1

Intentional teaching practice

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» **teachers:**
- extending critical thinking skills through provocations and open-ended questioning
- using a range of pedagogies (for example, hands-on activities, explicit instruction, play and inquiry, and supported reflections) to encourage engaged and active learners.
- sharing meaningful and constructive learning intentions and success criteria
- engaging with children by listening, showing interest and asking open-ended questions to encourage thinking and conversation
- using teaching strategies and flexible, deliberate group compositions that complement the goals they have for children's learning at any given time
- reflecting at a point of time and changing or altering experiences which are not engaging children
- who are mindful of opportunities to provide children time and space to 'be'.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» plans and strategies used to promote learning across all aspects of the program and how the curriculum is integrated (for example, a science activity that also supports literacy and numeracy skills, and teamwork capabilities)

» adjustments implemented to support a child requiring additional assistance, and how those changes have been adapted and sustained over time to benefit the learning of other children and build respect for inclusion and diversity

» how teachers use intentional teaching strategies, including the grouping of children, the positioning of resources and the structuring of the learning environment.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» documentation of reflections on intentional teaching strategies

» planning documentation, including notations of the strategies and resources to be used

» documented adaptations to written plans in response to what has worked, and what can be improved

» documentation and monitoring of children's learning, development, wellbeing and engagement.

ELEMENT 1.2.2 Responsive teaching and scaffolding

Teachers respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback.

What element 1.2.2 aims to achieve

Children's learning is extended when teachers make decisions and implement actions that respond to children's ideas, current understandings and skills. Responsive teaching and scaffolding involve:

» building on children's ideas and interests with open-ended questions and positive feedback

» considering how children are grouped for learning experiences and play

» implementing experiences that support peer scaffolding or extending children's learning through engagement with other children

» using spontaneous 'teachable moments' and incidental opportunities to scaffold learning and integrate science, literacy, numeracy and play into everyday experiences.

Responsive teaching is achieved by valuing and building on children's current and evolving strengths, skills and knowledge to ensure their wellbeing, motivation and engagement in learning. Children learn best when the experiences they have are meaningful to them and are focused on the 'here and now'. As children constantly learn new skills and gain new insights into their world, teachers continuously assess, evaluate and implement responsive teaching strategies.

Teachers reflect on the inclusiveness of their practice, and whether they are responsive to individual children and acknowledge all children's contributions to the group. Their knowledge of individual children assists them to differentiate learning experiences, and plan new and follow-up experiences that are meaningful to each child. All of these experiences are implemented within a social context where peer interactions are encouraged and supported, building a sense of belonging for all.

**Connection to the ELTP model –
Play and Inquiry**

Considerations for meeting element 1.2.2

Responsive teaching and scaffolding

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» **teachers:**
- intentionally scaffolding children's understanding and learning, including daily opportunities to make choices in reading, collaborating with their peers and engaging in shared conversations
- responding to children's learning dispositions by applying a range of strategies and providing encouragement and additional ideas or provocations
- making use of spontaneous 'teachable moments' to extend children's thinking and learning
- responding to children's ideas and using their interests as a basis for further learning and exploration
- noticing when children apply their learning in new ways or in different contexts and talking about this with them to build their understanding (for example, 'notice, narrate and nudge' the development of new insights)
- actively promoting children's investigation of ideas, complex concepts and thinking, reasoning and hypothesising by, for example, engaging children in discussions about symbol systems, such as letters, numbers, time, money and musical notation
- talking about and explicitly teaching concepts such as rhyme, letters, sounds and words when sharing texts with children, and using or building metalinguistic terminology
- using effective questioning to check for understanding and/or scaffold children's knowledge, based on a framework such as Blank's or Blooms questioning techniques
- supporting children to contribute constructively to mathematical and scientific discussions and arguments
- engaging children in the exploration of creative arts, the environment and scientific phenomena
- planning and delivering meaningful teaching and learning programs for children who require additional adjustments including English as an Additional Language (EAL).

» **children:**
- being curious and enthusiastic participants in their learning
- using their own ideas to develop and test solutions to problems, taking risks and exploring ideas through play-based learning and personal and shared inquiry.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how teachers:
- scaffold children's learning through the use of literacy and numeracy strategies, problem solving, open-ended questioning and hands-on learning
- use of loose parts, open-ended resources and materials that allow children to express themselves (rather than using templates, stencils or resources that limit children's capacity to create, interpret, experiment and explore)
- provide learning environments that are flexible and open-ended with appropriate levels of challenge where children are encouraged to explore, experiment and take acceptable risks in their learning

» teachers' expectations of each child's capabilities and how they maintain high expectations for every child.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» documented programs, including examples of scope and sequence, documentation or planning showing a mix of open-ended, scaffolded, and intentional learning opportunities

» documented planning that references the principles, practices or outcomes of the EYLF, AC and the elements of the ELTP model

» project or inquiry work that provides opportunities for children to collaborate with peers, teachers, family or community members.

ELEMENT 1.2.3 Child directed learning

Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.

What element 1.2.3 aims to achieve

When teachers promote child-directed learning, they foster children's agency, build on the key concepts of belonging, being and becoming, and support children to develop a strong sense of identity. Promoting children's agency recognises their right to make choices and decisions, and that they are capable of initiating their own learning.

Children are provided with opportunities to co-construct their learning experiences and are encouraged to make decisions, solve problems, work in teams and take shared responsibility for their learning. Teachers provide opportunities for them to develop skills in assessing risk. Children who are confident and capable recognise their influence and significance in the world.

Teachers listen to and respect children's ideas, recognise their capabilities and help them develop the sense that their ideas and opinions matter. They support children to explore their world, to ask questions, to express ideas and to learn from their mistakes. Teachers support children to develop decision-making skills to make appropriate choices for their own wellbeing and to realise that the choices they make may impact on others. When children are given choices and control, they begin to understand the connection between actions and consequences and learn to assess what risks are appropriate and how they may be managed.

Teachers promote child-directed learning by encouraging children to make decisions about, plan for and help set up their own play experiences, inquiry learning or projects.

**Connections to the ELTP model –
Capable, Competent Learners, and Play and Inquiry**
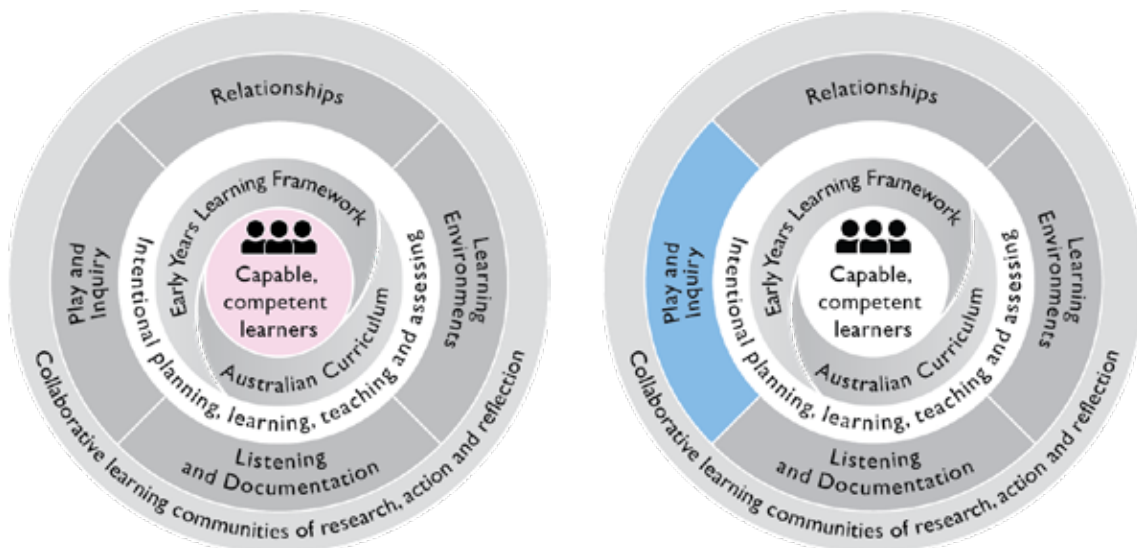
Considerations for meeting element 1.2.3

Child-directed learning

Examples of what you may observe:

» **teachers:**

- arranging learning activities, routines and physical environments so that children have a range of opportunities to make choices about what they will do and how they will do it
- acknowledging children as capable and confident, and encouraging them to act autonomously and make choices and decisions
- providing children with strategies to make informed choices about their behaviours
- responding to questions about the natural and social world by using child-friendly explanations and providing opportunities for conversations
- incorporating children's ideas and suggestions in planning and experiences
- encouraging and displaying enthusiasm for children's attempts to gain new skills and knowledge
- noticing and listening carefully to children's concerns and discussing diverse perspectives regarding learning opportunities, issues of inclusion, aspirations for the future, and local knowledge.

» **children:**

- initiating play and participating in learning that develops, oral language, reading, writing and numeracy skills
- participating collaboratively in events and experiences and having opportunities to contribute to decisions
- regardless of background, age, additional supports, gender or ability, being supported to fully participate and engage in the learning program as valued members of the group
- having opportunities to extend their interests, experiences and activities, such as being able to continue working on an investigation, construction or artwork
- developing autonomy by taking increasing responsibility for self-help and basic health routines
- having opportunities to develop the skills of questioning, researching, negotiating, sharing and problem solving
- making choices and decisions about matters that affect them (for example, whether they want to play with other children or play independently)
- beginning to display understanding and willingness to negotiate and share with others
- showing leadership, making decisions and following directions given by other children
- leading their learning, designing experiences and having opportunities to make choices about their participation in experiences
- being supported to assess and manage risk
- artefacts of project or inquiry work where children are given the opportunity to take the lead in an investigation or collaborate with peers, teachers, family members and other members of the community.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how teachers:
  • support opportunities for children's decision making that are appropriate to the child's age, skills and learning disposition
  • provide opportunities for children to influence what happens to them and to exercise choice
  • support children to explore different identities and points of view through play and everyday experiences
  • reflect on what decisions children can make and the extent of those decisions
» what responsibilities children have and how this contributes to their sense of agency
» whether teachers have high expectations for all children (across ages, genders, abilities, and cultural, linguistic or family backgrounds)
» what strategies are used to include the choices and voices of children in planning and seeking their input.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» the school's philosophy statement (or similar) that recognises children's rights and evidence of how these are enacted in the classroom
» samples of work developed by children (independently or with others) with minimal educator input
» documented reflections that demonstrate changes in practice to support children's agency.

STANDARD 1.3 Assessment and planning

School leaders and teachers take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.

How standard 1.3 contributes to quality teaching and learning

Teachers collect a range of information on each child and their learning within the context of the approved learning frameworks. They use this information to plan future learning experiences, implement the program and reflect on what has been learned.

Planning ensures that the educational program and practice responds to children's strengths, capabilities and interests, and scaffolds and extends their learning. It ensures that teachers' practice is intentional and optimises children's progress towards the learning outcomes of the approved frameworks.

Critical reflection encourages teachers to engage in analytical and diagnostic thinking to consider in detail all aspects of the program, their professional practice and children's development and learning.

Teachers work in partnership with children, families and colleagues to collect information and plan for each child's development and learning. They seek to keep families informed about the program and their child's progress. Children's views and opinions also contribute to this process.

Refer to the Department's reporting requirements guidelines for current information regarding assessment and reporting requirements.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 1.3
A planned and reflective approach to program implementation

- » How can we work collaboratively with each family to regularly share information about children's learning and development and participation in the program?
- » How do we support continuity of learning between school, home, other education and care services (e.g. family day care, long day care, outside hours care) and other settings?
- » How does information gathered about each child inform planning for continuity of learning?
- » What do we do to critically reflect on and evaluate the program, how is this documented and how are our evaluations used to make informed curriculum decisions to improve outcomes for children?
- » How do we critically reflect on all aspects of pedagogical practice so that quality improvements occur?

**Connections to the ELTP model –
Intentional Planning, Learning, Teaching and Assessing**

ELEMENT 1.3.1 Assessment and planning cycle

Each child's learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection.

What element 1.3.1 aims to achieve

Planning and implementation

The assessment and planning cycle is the ongoing process used to design programs that enhance and extend each child's learning and development. This process includes observation, analysis of development and learning, planning, documentation, implementation and reflection.

Teachers:

» understand the context of the school and how the school's statement of philosophy (or similar), improvement plan and operational systems guide their decision-making

» collect information in a variety of ways about each child's knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests that demonstrate the individuality of the child

» plan the program including:

  • strategies and experiences for individual children, which may include their goals

  • experiences to support the achievement of group goals

  • experiences to extend emerging strengths, abilities and interests

  • experiences related to relevant community events

  • experiences drawn from the cultures and interests of the families.

» implement planned experiences, and at the same time, identify and utilise 'teachable moments' to respond to and support children's newly emerging strengths, abilities and interests

» reflect on individual children's learning and participation, and the program as a whole, to support further planning for learning.

Observation, analysis, reflection

Reflection occurs at every stage of the assessment and planning cycle as teachers think about their practice and decisions, and children's engagement and progress.

Teachers reflect to:

» ensure that sufficient information has been collected to provide an accurate record of each child's progress, and what they know, can do and understand

» determine the extent to which each child is making progress towards learning outcomes and identifying what may be impeding their progress

» identify children who may benefit from additional support, how that support can be provided and how families are assisted to access specialist assistance

» review the effectiveness of learning experiences, environments and approaches used to support children's learning

» ensure their pedagogical practices are developmentally appropriate for the children with whom they are working.

Documentation

Documentation of children's experiences makes learning visible to children, teachers and families and promotes shared learning and collaboration. It promotes relationships between children, teachers and families and demonstrates professionalism. It also enables the assessment and planning cycle to be visible to school leaders, teachers and families, and where appropriate, children.

**Connections to the ELTP model
– Intentional Planning, Learning, Teaching and
Assessing, and Listening and Documentation**

Considerations for meeting element 1.3.1

Assessment and planning cycle

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» **teachers:**
- observing children and recording information about what they know, can do and understand
- implementing the teaching and learning program based on planning documentation
- differentiating the levels of difficulty or content to reflect the abilities and developmental stages of each child.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how teachers:
- gather and analyse information about each child to make assessments of their strengths, interests, needs and progress towards specific capabilities and learning outcomes and plan programs accordingly
- include children's voice in planned learning experiences, and gain information from other stakeholders including families about the planned program.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» progress information that reflects the breadth of the EYLF learning outcomes and the AC
» documented evidence of each child's developmental needs, interests, experiences and participation in the program
» documentation that has been gathered in a variety of ways about children's progress towards learning outcomes and standards.
» the information collected is:
- systematic, accurate, well organised and regularly updated
- appropriate to the age of the child
- shared with children and their families in a collaborative way that encourages comments and feedback about the program.

ELEMENT 1.3.2 Critical reflection

Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.

What element 1.3.2 aims to achieve

Reflective practice is an ongoing dynamic process that involves teachers thinking about all aspects of the program, the principles that guide them, the practices they use and the learning outcomes for children. School leaders and program leaders support teachers to analyse their actions objectively and motivate them to reflect and explore new ideas and approaches as part of daily practice.

Critical reflection helps teachers to build on their knowledge and skills, identifying practice that can be continued as well as what might need to be improved or changed. Teachers identify ways to improve opportunities for children's participation, learning and development to ensure all children and families are included.

School leaders support teachers to consider questions such as:

» How do we currently examine our practices and decision-making, and identify improvements as well as successes?

» Have we considered which children may be advantaged and whether any child is disadvantaged?

» How are we creating opportunities for conversations, debates, and collaborative inquiries as a team, ensuring all voices are heard and responded to with respect?

» What questions do I have about my work? What am I challenged by? What am I curious about?

**Connections to the ELTP model –
Collaborative Learning Communities
of Research, Action and Reflection**
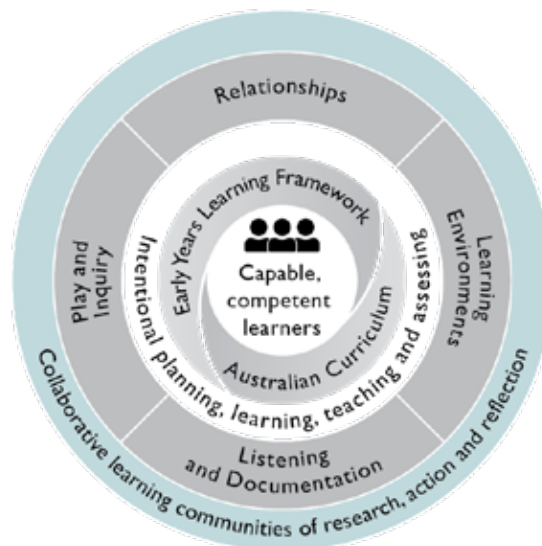
Considerations for meeting element 1.3.2

Critical reflection

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» **teachers:**
- using a variety of methods, such as jottings, children's comments and conversations, photographs and examples of children's work to assist their reflection on children's experiences, thinking and learning
- focusing on adapting the program to include all children
- reflecting-in-action by changing or altering activities that are not engaging children
- observing each other's practice and providing feedback.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how teachers:
- use critical reflection to improve their program and practice
- use the approved learning frameworks as a reference for reflection
- evaluate the inclusivity of programs and indoor and outdoor environments with a view to identify and address potential barriers to participation.

» strategies that demonstrate inclusion and diversity are valued

» opportunities for children to provide feedback regarding their learning and the program, and how this is considered in the reflection process

» the effectiveness of methods used to demonstrate evidence of children's participation and progress in reading, oral language and numeracy skills. Effectiveness of approaches used to document children's knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities, interests, relationships, learning and participation.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» documentation that shows evidence of critical reflection, such as adjustments to work plans

» documentation that reflects on all aspects of the program and may include notes about:
- transitions and routines
- the environment and experiences provided
- the effectiveness of resources and equipment
- review of curriculum content and pedagogy.

» differentiated teaching and learning programs, including IEP's

» plans for the teaching and learning program and/or environment that reduce barriers to participation.

ELEMENT 1.3.3 Information for families

**Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.**

What element 1.3.3 aims to achieve

Quality schools engage with families to provide information about the educational program and their child's learning, development and wellbeing. Learning outcomes are best achieved when teachers work in partnership with families, for example encouraging families to actively contribute to program planning. School leaders support teachers to share information sensitively, taking into account the child and family's right to confidentiality.

Teachers inform families of their child's participation and progress and share documentation about their children's learning and development in meaningful ways. This enables families to understand their child's strengths, abilities and knowledge.

Teachers encourage families to share in decision-making about their child's further learning, development and wellbeing.

**Connections to the ELTP model –
Collaborative Learning Communities
of Research, Action and Reflection**
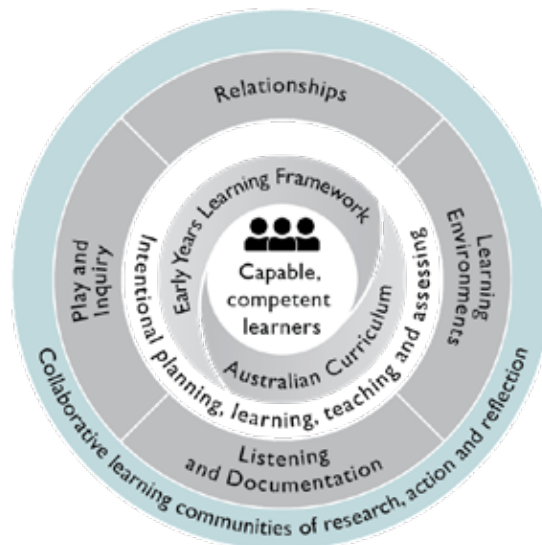
Considerations for meeting element 1.3.3

Information for families about their child's progress

Examples of what you may observe:

» teachers sharing information (including documentation) with families about their child's learning and development
» information provided to families in accordance with the Department's reporting guidelines.

Examples of what you may discuss:

» the school's range of strategies to share information with families in meaningful, useful and accessible ways
» how the school communicates learning progress and outcomes for children with their families
» how documentation about their child will be made available to families and whether it is informative, understandable and meaningful to them
» how arrangements are made to exchange information with families at mutually convenient times.

Examples of what you may sight:

» the educational program and examples of children's learning is made available to families in ways that are accessible, understandable and meaningful
» documented information about each child's developmental needs, interests, experiences, participation and progress that is shared with families
» examples of children's representation of their learning and other work is displayed in sensitive and respectful ways.

**QUALITY AREA 2
CHILDREN'S HEALTH
AND SAFETY**

Overview

Quality Area 2 reinforces children's right to experience quality teaching and learning in an environment that provides for their health and safety. Teachers support this when they promote each child's wellbeing and healthy lifestyle, and encourage each child's growing competence, confidence and independence. All school staff have responsibility for supporting the health, protection, safety and wellbeing of all children. Teachers access resources and professional learning to understand their responsibility and role as mandatory reporters. to prevent, respond and report safeguarding concerns. All staff, including relief, and visitors/volunteers must take reasonable care to protect children from foreseeable risk of harm, injury and infection.

Learning about healthy lifestyles, including nutrition, personal hygiene (such as toileting, hand washing, dental hygiene and ear care), physical fitness, emotions, and social and respectful relationships, is integral to children's wellbeing and self-confidence. When children develop resilience, their ability to take increasing responsibility for their self-help and basic health routines promotes a sense of independence and confidence. As children become more independent, they take greater responsibility for their own health, hygiene and personal care and become increasingly aware of their own and others' safety and wellbeing.

Standards and Elements

Quality Area 2 has two standards that focus on children's health and safety. These standards are crucial to delivering quality outcomes for children because:

» children's health, comfort and wellbeing strongly impact on their learning, confidence and self-esteem

» all children have a right to safety and protection from harm

» adequate supervision and effective management of incidents and emergencies are paramount at all times to support children's safety and engagement in the educational program.

QA 2 CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
STANDARD 2.1	**Health**	**Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.**
ELEMENT 2.1.1	**Wellbeing and comfort**	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for rest and relaxation.
ELEMENT 2.1.2	**Health practices and procedures**	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
ELEMENT 2.1.3	**Healthy lifestyle**	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
STANDARD 2.2	**Safety**	**Each child is protected.**
ELEMENT 2.2.1	**Supervision**	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
ELEMENT 2.2.2	**Incident and emergency management**	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, are practised and implemented.
ELEMENT 2.2.3	**Child protection**	School leaders, teachers and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

STANDARD 2.1 Health

Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted

How standard 2.1 contributes to quality teaching and learning

Children's health and physical wellbeing contribute to their ability to concentrate, cooperate and learn. Being active and healthy assists children to participate happily and successfully in the learning environment. It is also important that children are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing.

Working together with families and, where relevant, health care professionals, the school has effective processes to support all aspects of children's health. This can include:

» being aware of and meeting each child's physical health and comfort requirements

» encouraging physical activity, active play and the development of fundamental movement skills

» supporting children's wellbeing by providing opportunities for physical activity, rest and relaxation

» implementing effective hygiene practices to control the spread of infectious diseases

» managing injuries and illnesses

» promoting healthy eating and the health benefits of physical activity

» teaching children that healthy lifestyle choices underpin everyday routines and experiences.

The Kindergarten Development Check (KDC) – is a screening and assessment tool to support teachers to observe children's developmental progress. Information from the KDC is used to inform teaching and learning programs for all children.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 2.1

Wellbeing and comfort

» How do we seek and respond to information from children and families about children's wellbeing, physical comfort or personal needs, and support children sensitively while at school?

Health practices and procedures

» How do we keep informed of and implement current policies, practices and guidelines in relation to:
  - immunisation
  - allergies and anaphylaxis
  - food safety and hygiene practices
  - administration of medication
  - sun safe practices?

» How do we find out about individual children's health requirements, and ensure specific care and health documents (such as Action Plans and Medical Management Plans) are visible and accessible to all relevant staff members?

» How do we ensure that families are informed about and follow the school's policy and guidelines for health-related issues, such as the exclusion of ill children?

» What arrangements are in place to regularly review and update child health related procedures?

Healthy lifestyle

» How do we incorporate discussions and activities about healthy eating, physical activity and allergies into children's everyday experiences so that each child is encouraged to make healthy lifestyle choices?

» How do we set up the environments and resources to encourage and support children to engage in fundamental movement skills, active play and physical activity as part of everyday learning?

ELEMENT 2.1.1 Wellbeing and comfort

Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for rest and relaxation.

What element 2.1.1 aims to achieve

Wellbeing and comfort incorporate both physical and psychological aspects and are central to children's learning and development. Without a strong sense of wellbeing, it is difficult for children to develop a sense of belonging, to trust others and feel confident in being themselves and to participate in experiences that support learning and personal growth.

'Child wellbeing refers to a state where learners feel loved and safe; have access to material basics; have their physical, mental and emotional needs met; are learning and participating; and have a positive sense of identity.[5]

Rumble's Quest is an optional early years tool to measure social and emotional wellbeing

Considerations for meeting element 2.1.1

Ensuring children's wellbeing and comfort

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» children being supplied with clean, appropriate spare clothes when needed and knowing where they can access them independently
» children's needs for privacy during toileting or dressing times
» children being supported sensitively and positively when they are learning to use the toilet or require assistance with toileting
» physical spaces being made available for children to engage in rest and quiet experiences
» teachers supporting children to manage their emotional and regulation needs
» teachers incorporating learning experiences that enable children to explore their own sense of self
» teachers maintaining positive classroom environments that promote respectful relationship.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how teachers:
  • negotiate arrangements for relaxation, 'downtime' or 'brain breaks' with children
  • provide for individual children requiring 'self-regulation' breaks or additional equipment
  • teach respectful relationships and prevent bullying, harassment and discrimination
» privacy arrangements for children's toileting and personal hygiene requirements
» how the experience of family members and other stakeholders are used to inform the supports used with a particular child.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» planning that reflects the input of children into rules and routines of the school that relate to the wellbeing of individuals and the group
» space/s provided in the environment intentionally designed to allow for rest and relaxation.

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5   *2022 Wellbeing for Learning – Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy*, page 5.

**Connections to the ELTP model –
Relationships and Learning Environments**

ELEMENT 2.1.2 Health practices and procedures

Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.

What element 2.1.2 aims to achieve

Illness management and hygiene practices

Effective illness management practices and maintaining high standards of hygiene significantly reduce the likelihood of children becoming ill. This involves reducing children's exposure to materials, surfaces and body fluids that may cause infection or illness. For more information, refer to the Department's student health and safety policies and procedures.

Injury management

The Department's student health and safety policies and procedures provides advice for school leaders and teachers to ensure the safety and welfare of children in their care. School leaders are responsible for ensuring the provision of first aid in the school, conducting a risk assessment, developing a first aid plan and making sure a suitable number of staff are trained.

Considerations for meeting element 2.1.2

Hygiene practices

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» safe and hygienic storage, handling, preparation and serving of all food and drinks consumed by children
» all teachers and staff:
  • implementing the school's health and hygiene policy and procedures
  • actively supporting children to learn hygiene practices (including hand washing, coughing, dental hygiene and ear care)
  • maintaining a hygienic environment for children.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how the school complies with Department policies about health, hygiene and safety and how this information is used to inform practices
» how often dress-up clothes, cushion covers, and other washable materials are laundered and how often hands-on equipment/resources are cleaned
» how cleanliness of the school's indoor and outdoor learning areas is consistently maintained.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» policies and procedures relating to safety, health and hygiene, including COVID-19 guidelines
» information about correct hand-washing procedures displayed in relevant areas of the school.

Illness and injury management

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» groupings of children arranged to minimise the risk of illness and injuries
» **teachers:**
  • promptly responding to signs of illness and injury in children
  • involving children in developing guidelines to keep the school environment healthy and safe for all
  • communicating with families about children's health requirements in culturally sensitive ways
  • implementing appropriate practices when administering medication in keeping with the Department's student health and safety policies and procedures
  • maintaining a safe environment for children to minimise potential injuries.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» the school's guidelines for the exclusion of ill children and teachers
» how families are advised of cases of infectious illnesses in the school, including information about the nature of the illness, incubation and infectious periods and the school's exclusion requirements for the illness
» how the school responds to a serious accident or health-related emergency involving a child
» how the school communicates information about a child's individual health requirements to relevant staff members
» how information about a child's individual health is kept confidential
» availability of staff trained in first aid at any given time.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» policies and procedures relating to incident, injury, trauma, illness and medical conditions
» the school's policy and procedures for dealing with infectious disease, including notifying families of cases of infectious illnesses and exclusion of ill children, that is consistent with current Department policy
» up to date first aid kits readily available (including in the school and on excursions)
» enrolment records containing health information, including immunisation status and Medical Management Plans and Action Plans for children with specific health care requirements
» individual health care management plans accessible to teachers for children with a specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition, at risk of seizure, anaphylaxis or asthma
» a written process for, and records of, the administration of medication for children.

**Connections to the ELTP model –
Capable, Competent Learners and Collaborative Communities**
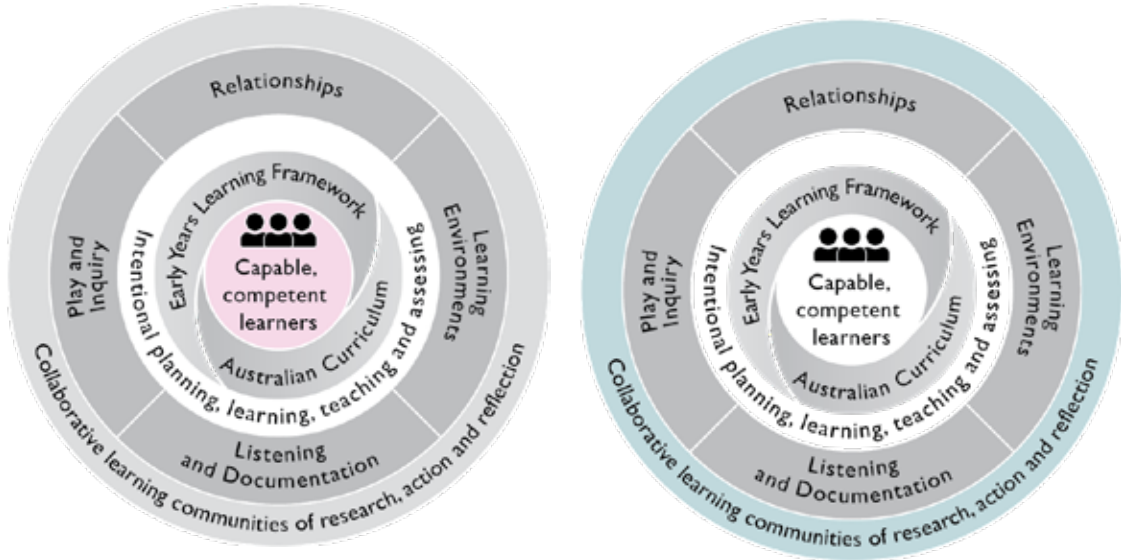
ELEMENT 2.1.3 Healthy lifestyle

Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.

What element 2.1.3 aims to achieve

Healthy eating and physical activity contribute to children's ability to socialise, concentrate, cooperate and learn. Learning about healthy lifestyles, including nutrition and physical fitness, is integral to wellbeing and self-confidence.

The Kindergarten Development Check (KDC) – is a screening and assessment tool to support teachers to observe children's developmental progress. Information from the KDC is used to inform teaching and learning programs for all children.

Considerations for meeting element 2.1.3

Healthy eating

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» **teachers:**
  - engaging children in experiences, conversations and routines that support relaxed and enjoyable meal breaks and promote healthy, balanced lifestyles
  - never using food to reward or punish children.

» **children:**
  - showing an awareness and developing an understanding of healthy lifestyles and good nutrition
  - participating in 'Move Well Eat Well' or similar programs
  - being able to independently access food and water throughout the day.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how the school:
  - consults with families and children to learn about individual requirements for food and any culturally appropriate food requirements
  - respectfully encourages families to provide lunches and snacks that are nutritious and healthy
  - works with canteen organisers to provide healthy food and participates in recommended school programs.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» the school's relevant policies, including canteen, nutrition, food, drink and dietary requirements
» canteen menus on display, detailing the food provided for children that are healthy and nutritious.

Physical activity

👁 Examples of what you may **observe**:

» **teachers:**

» implementing physical games and activities as part of the program, including fundamental movement skills and movement sequences that support children's motor development

» encouraging and supporting children to participate in new or unfamiliar physical activities according to each child's capability

» encouraging children to identify and manage risks in their play, including providing opportunities for children to problem-solve.

» **children:**

• having frequent opportunities to engage in physical activity and active play

• being encouraged and supported to use increasingly complex sensory motor skills and movement patterns that:

o combine gross and fine motor movement and balance

o increase their spatial awareness

o use their problem-solving skills

• helping to plan and set up physical play activities and equipment.

» indoor and outdoor areas that are organised in ways to promote safe physical play and activity.

### 💬 Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how the school:

• manages risk while providing a stimulating learning and play environment for children

• considers children's voices in planning physical activities, including opportunities for physical play that support the abilities, diversity and backgrounds of each child.

🔍 Examples of what you may **sight**:

» how the learning program incorporates physical activity that meets each child's capabilities and extends their development, including how it balances quiet or passive play times with more energetic outdoor play

» evidence that information about the importance of physical activity to children's health and development is communicated to families.

Connections to the ELTP model –
Play and Inquiry, and Intentional Planning, Learning, Teaching and Assessing
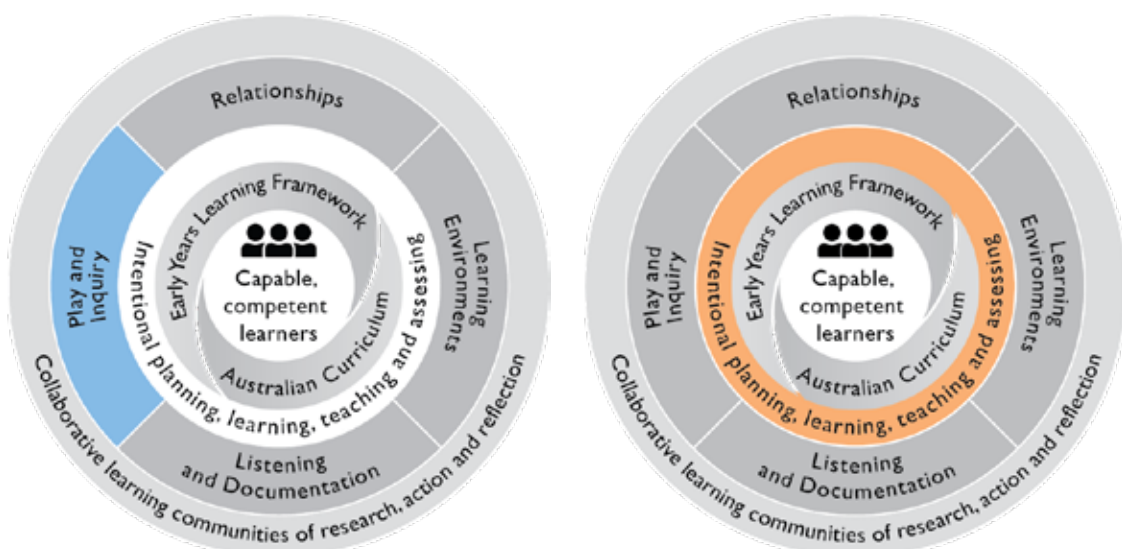
STANDARD 2.2 Safety

Each child is protected.

How standard 2.2 contributes to quality teaching and learning

Children have a fundamental right to be protected and kept safe when at school. Unsafe settings and situations can negatively impact on children's physical health and wellbeing, which in turn can negatively affect their experiences, learning and wellbeing in the present and throughout their lives. This includes raising awareness of bullying and its impact on individuals and ensuring any Departmental or school resources are known and implemented.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 2.2

Protecting each child

» How do we plan to ensure that all areas used by children are effectively supervised, including when children are participating in high-risk activities or undertaking new challenges?

» How do we ensure children are alerted to safety issues and encouraged to develop the skills to assess and manage risks to themselves and peers?

» How do we ensure children develop knowledge and skills to use technology safely and responsibly?

» How do we identify, assess, manage and record hazards and potential risks for children, such as potentially dangerous products, plants, objects and animals at the school, and how often do we do this?

» How do we ensure that all equipment and materials used in the school are safe, including sun protection resources and equipment?

» How do we conduct risk assessments for potential excursions and plan for children's safety during excursions?

» How do we identify which emergency procedures and specific action plans are required for our school and how often do we practise these?

» How do we maintain an awareness of the people who have contact with children at the school and where required, ensure clearances are current?

» How do we share information about Safeguarding Children and Young People, to ensure that all staff and families understand how to report their concerns about child protection issues?

» How do we keep up to date with current information on travelling safely, such as bus travel and bike safety?

ELEMENT 2.2.1 Supervision

At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

What element 2.2.1 aims to achieve

Supervision is a key aspect of ensuring that children's safety is maintained at all times in the school environment and while on excursions.

Considerations for meeting element 2.2.1

Adequate supervision

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» children being supervised in all areas of the school, by being in sight and/or hearing of a teacher.

» **teachers:**

• supervising children closely when they are in a situation that presents a higher risk of injury (for example, during water play or woodwork experiences or on an excursion)

• adjusting their levels of supervision depending on the area of the school and the skills, age mix, dynamics and size of the group of children they are supervising

• talking with children about safety issues and correct use of equipment and the environment and, where appropriate, involving children in setting safety rules

• following the school's procedures for releasing children and ensuring they are released only to parents or authorised guardian

» equipment, furniture and activities arranged to ensure effective supervision while also allowing children to access private and quiet spaces.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how school leaders:

• inform both new and relief teachers about the school's supervision arrangements and their responsibilities in relation to implementing the Department's student health and safety policies and procedures

• ensure supervision arrangements are flexible to allow supervision of individuals or small groups, such as when indoor and outdoor experiences are offered concurrently

• balance supervision requirements with children's needs for privacy and independence.

» how teachers:

• raise children's and families' awareness of the risks associated with online activities

• provide appropriate supervision for children using online services on school sites.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» evidence of planning for the supervision of children in outdoor and indoor areas

» a written or digital record for monitoring who enters and leaves the school premises.

Reasonable precautions

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» teachers and/or other staff:
  • implementing regular safety checks and monitoring the maintenance of buildings, equipment and the environment
  • implementing Department policy regarding use and storage of dangerous products
  • removing identified hazards immediately or securing the area to prevent children from accessing the hazard.

» children being unable to access potentially hazardous items, such as medications, cleaning products and garden chemicals, and that such items are clearly labelled at all times

» clear warning signs where potentially dangerous products are stored

» poisonous or hazardous plants identified, explained to children and in some instances removed or not made accessible to children, or children are adequately supervised

» a tobacco and drug free learning environment

» climbing equipment, swings and other large equipment having stable bases and/or securely anchored and located over soft fall surfaces that meet the Australian Standards for Playgrounds.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» the processes in place to ensure children have suitable levels of access to online sites that are appropriate to their age and development

» how regular safety checks of learning resources, equipment and the general environment are conducted

» the school's approach to sun protection

» how safety and hygiene are maintained when animals are included in the teaching and learning program

» where the school transports children:
  • how the school complies with Department policy on transporting children and using child restraints in vehicles.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» School procedures or written documentation for conducting regular safety checks to ensure the safety of buildings, equipment and resources.

» in relation to excursions:
  • the school's policy and procedures for excursions
  • documented evidence of detailed information provided to families regarding excursions that comply with Department policy.

» the school's policy on dealing with water safety, including safety during water-based activities

» the school's policy and procedures on sun protection and evidence that information about the school's approach to sun protection is shared with families.

Connections to the ELTP model –Relationships, Learning Environments and Intentional Planning, Learning, Teaching and Assessing
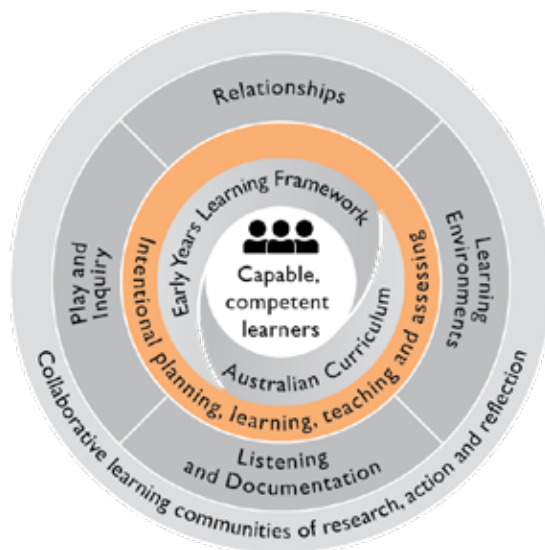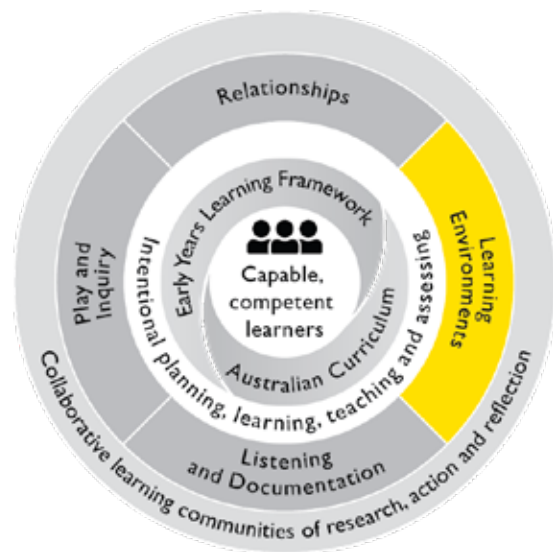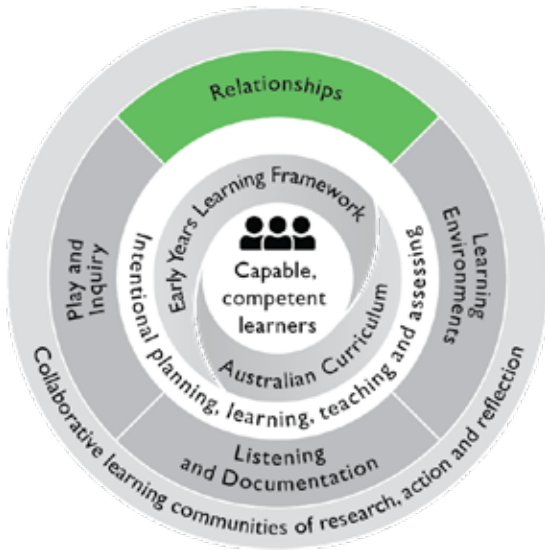
ELEMENT 2.2.2 Incident and emergency management

Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, are practised and implemented.

What element 2.2.2 aims to achieve

Planning to manage incidents and emergencies assist schools to protect children, adults and staff, maintain children's wellbeing and a safe environment; and meet the requirements of relevant Department workplace health and safety policies. Having a clear plan for the management and communication of incidents and emergencies assists teachers to handle these calmly and effectively, reducing the risk of further harm or damage.

Considerations for meeting element 2.2.2

Incident and emergency management

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» emergency procedures displayed prominently throughout the premises
» nominated teachers having ready access to an operating telephone or other similar means of communication
» school emergency contact telephone numbers displayed near telephones or easily accessed digitally
» school staff having ready access to emergency equipment, such as fire extinguishers and fire blankets.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how the school:
  • complies with the Department's Critical Incident and Emergency Procedures
  • communicates information to children and families about the school's emergency procedures and plans to manage incidents
  • ensures that staff are informed about and understand the emergency procedures and plans
» the frequency of emergency drill practise
» the provision of training for nominated staff in the use of emergency equipment.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» procedures for managing incidents and emergencies and providing a child-safe environment (for example, Bushfire Management Plan in bushfire prone areas)
» evaluations of emergency drills
» written emergency, evacuation and lockdown procedures that include instructions for what must be done in the event of an emergency, and an emergency evacuation floor plan
» a current, portable record of children's emergency contacts that can be carried by teachers in case of emergencies, evacuations or lockdowns
» written plans to manage an emergency that may be likely to affect individuals at the school
» (for example, the management of an asthma flare-up, anaphylactic reaction or epileptic seizure)
» written communication with families about the school's emergency procedures and plans to manage incidents
» evidence that emergency equipment is tested as recommended by recognised authorities.

**Connections to the ELTP model –Collaborative Learning
Communities of Research, Action and Refection,
and Listening and Documentation**
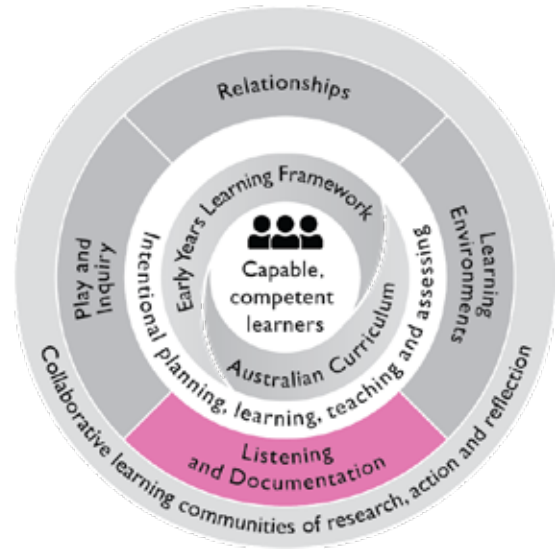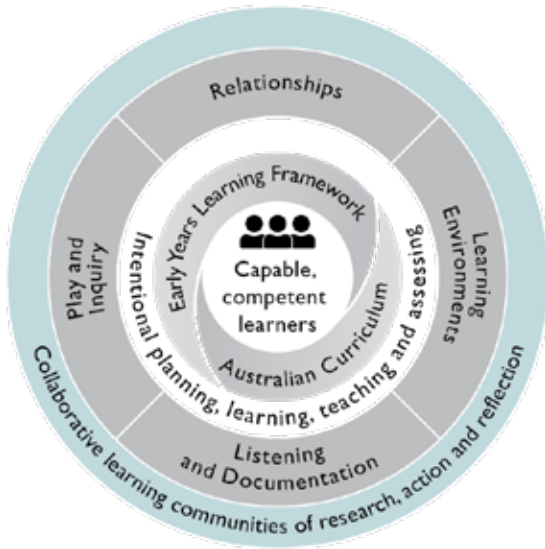
ELEMENT 2.2.3 Child protection

School leaders, teachers and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

What element 2.2.3 aims to achieve

Teachers and other staff must be aware of current child protection policy and procedures, including their legal responsibilities, and act when required to protect any child who is at risk of abuse or neglect.

Considerations for meeting element 2.2.3

Awareness of role and responsibility to protect children

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» **teachers:**
- listening and responding to families' comments about their day-to-day observations of their child and the events occurring in their lives
- remaining vigilant about observing and responding to signs or indicators of child abuse and/or neglect.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how school leaders, teachers and staff members are meeting the Department's expectations for safeguarding children that are aligned to the National Child Safe Standards

» how new, relief teachers, volunteers and other staff are made aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection and the particular protection needs of individual children in the school

» documented plans are in place for children in relation to any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plans including Out of Home Care arrangements or Care and Protection Orders

» the training and role of the Safeguarding Lead to ensure every staff member knows their responsibility in relation to protecting children in their care

» risk management plans and safeguarding risk assessments are in place

» support mechanisms in place for staff members who identify children at risk.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» evidence that:
- all staff are provided with current information about child protection requirements and the Department's safeguarding procedures
- staff have completed training or professional development on safeguarding children
- teachers work collaboratively with other authorities and/or professionals to support children who have specific protection needs.

» a current list of local community resources that can provide information and support for children, families and staff in relation to children at risk of abuse and/or neglect.

Connections to the ELTP model –Collaborative Learning
Communities of Research, Action and Refection,
and Listening and Documentation
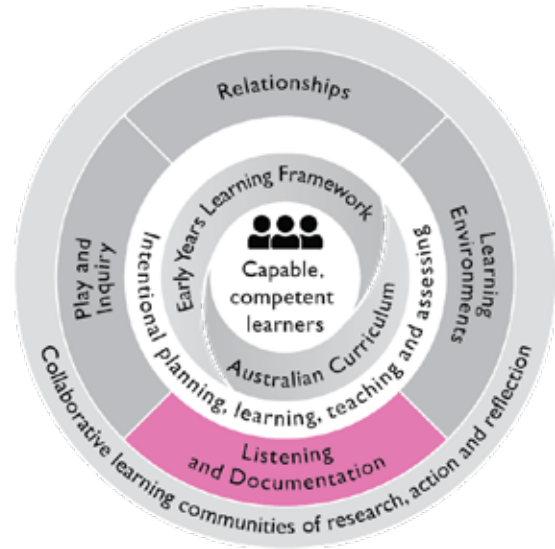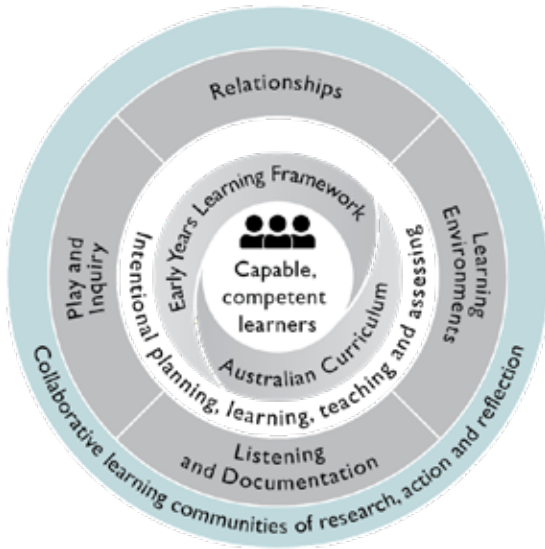
**QUALITY AREA 3
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

Overview

Quality Area 3 focuses on the physical environment. The physical environment is critical to:

» contributing to children's wellbeing, sense of belonging, creativity and developing independence

» providing a diverse range of experiences that promote children's learning and development

» keeping children safe

» creating or organising spaces to reduce the risk of injury.

Standards and elements

Quality Area 3 has two standards that focus on the design of school facilities and the use of the school's physical environment to support children's experiences. These standards are crucial to delivering quality learning outcomes for children because:

» when appropriately resourced, inclusive built and natural environments in indoor and outdoor spaces, promote intentional play-based learning

» well maintained, fit-for-purpose facilities keep children safe and support each child's access to facilities and participation in experiences and activities

» the physical environment significantly impacts on the quality of children's experiences and encourages children to become environmentally responsible.

QA 3 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT		
STANDARD 3.1	**Design**	**The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a school.**
ELEMENT 3.1.1	Fit for purpose	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
ELEMENT 3.1.2	Upkeep	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.
STANDARD 3.2	**Use**	**The school environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning.**
ELEMENT 3.2.1	Inclusive environment	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
ELEMENT 3.2.2	Resources support play-based learning	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.
ELEMENT 3.2.3	Environmentally responsible	The school cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.

STANDARD 3.1 Design

The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a school.

How standard 3.1 contributes to quality teaching and learning

The way in which the school environment is designed, equipped and arranged determines how children use space and resources. The school environment should reflect the unique geographical, cultural and community context of the school. The environment also impacts on the behaviours and interactions of children and adults.

Indoor environments are characterised by spaces that provide children with opportunities to be involved in allocated, self-chosen or negotiated experiences. These may be quiet or active learning situations including independent play, inquiry experiences or routines with small and large groups.

Quality indoor spaces:

» recognise children as active learners and competent decision makers

» support the emerging interests of every child and enable them to demonstrate their innate creativity and curiosity

» reflect the cultures, interests, abilities and learning styles of every child.

Outdoor environments are characterised by both active and quiet zones that comprise a balance of fixed and moveable equipment, open space to engage in physical activities, and spaces that promote learning, investigation and respect for the natural environment.

Outdoor spaces that are dynamic and flexible:

» provide opportunities for unique play and learning

» complement and extend indoor learning experiences

» offer children opportunities to be active, make mess and noise, and be wholly engaged in play.

To maximise children's engagement in positive experiences and support the access of every child, schools should consider:

» access between indoor and outdoor environments

» the availability of furniture, equipment and resources, and arrangement of classrooms

» how the placement of buildings, fixtures and fittings supports the access of all children and families

» visibility and set-up of the environment to support effective supervision

» impact of internal and external noise levels on children's learning, participation and behaviour

» being aware of the air quality

» ventilation and access to natural light.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 3.1

Appropriate design and upkeep

» How do the indoor and outdoor environments promote and foster children's learning, development and wellbeing?

» How does the environment support the access of all children and families enrolled at the school?

» How do teachers organise the learning environments to ensure adequate supervision for children and appropriate spaces and activities meet children's need for privacy and autonomy?

ELEMENT 3.1.1 Fit for purpose

Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.

What element 3.1.1 aims to achieve

To support each child's access to indoor and outdoor environments, schools should have sufficient space, equipment and facilities that are fit for purpose and promote children's learning and development. Well-designed indoor and outdoor spaces:

» support children's, growing independence, and confidence as learners

» are flexible, welcoming and accessible

» reflect the diversity within the local and broader communities

» support the health and safety of children, staff and families

» enable convenient and integrated access between indoor and outdoor areas, as well as convenient access to toilet and hand-washing facilities

» are environmentally sustainable

» promote an understanding of and respect for the natural environment

» support the grouping of children in ways that minimise the risk of injury or conflict and promotes their learning and development

» have age and developmentally appropriate furniture and equipment.

**Connections to the ELTP model –
Learning Environments**

Considerations for meeting element 3.1.1

A fit for purpose school environment

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» a physical environment that is safe and includes adequate space for independent play; and for children to work, play and talk together in small and large groups

» outdoor spaces with shaded areas

» environments designed to support each child's access and assist teachers to:

- adequately supervise children
- group children in ways that minimise the risk of injury and conflict, reduce prolonged exposure to excess noise, and promote children's learning and development

» fencing (as appropriate) that provides safety

» facilities that enable interaction and convenient access between indoor and outdoor spaces

» appropriate areas for food preparation and storage

» access to spaces for teacher and staff breaks, private conversations and consultation with families

» appropriate areas and resources for children to rest and relax.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» appropriate spaces available to consult and discuss confidential matters with families

» where relevant, how the school has considered the impact of any building modifications and/or the installation of new furniture, storage areas and fixed equipment on the unencumbered space available

» how teachers plan adjustments to the environment to accommodate the needs of all children.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» the school's approach to organising classes where consideration is shown for the most appropriate learning space in relation to the age and capabilities of the children

» intentionally planning for the indoor and outdoor learning environment.

ELEMENT 3.1.2 Upkeep

Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.

What element 3.1.2 aims to achieve

The upkeep of buildings, furniture and equipment impacts directly on the safety of children and staff. Every child has the right to be safe.

Upkeep refers to the responsibility of schools to implement effective maintenance, cleaning and appropriate safety precautions, which also helps prevent injuries and the spread of infectious diseases.

Considerations for meeting element 3.1.2

Effective upkeep

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» premises, furniture and equipment that are safe, clean and well maintained
» teachers and other staff members regularly check and monitor the safety of equipment and resources
» teachers responding quickly to rectify any identified hazards, spills or other potential safety issues
» teachers following safety advice from recognised authorities and manufacturers when arranging equipment, furniture and experiences
» areas used by children are regularly cleaned.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» the processes in place to monitor the cleanliness and safety of the indoor and outdoor furniture and equipment
» arrangements the school has for appropriate handling and laundering of soiled items.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» documented procedures and correspondence relating to:
  • maintenance and safety checks
  • the cleaning of resources and equipment
» where relevant, risk assessments of the physical environment
» where relevant, a management plan that is in place to protect the safety of children, families and staff while major work is occurring at the school.

STANDARD 3.2 Use

The school environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning.

How standard 3.2 contributes to quality teaching and learning

A school environment that is inclusive, promotes competence in children and supports investigations, inquiry and intentional play-based learning, creates the context for children to learn and build relationships with others. Welcoming, inclusive and flexible environments support children's learning, creativity and exploration and are responsive to the individual requirements of each child. A quality physical environment caters for different learning capacities and learning styles, and encourages children and families to contribute ideas, interests and questions.

Exploration of the natural environment helps to build children's competence and provides opportunities for investigations, inquiry and play-based learning. It also encourages children to develop an appreciation of the natural world, and of their connection to place. Children develop an awareness and understanding of the impact of human activity on the environment, and ways in which they can contribute to a sustainable future.

Resources should reflect the breadth of age groups and interests and capabilities of children that are sharing the environment. Resources need to be accessible to children so they can choose and be responsible for their actions.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 3.2

Inclusive environment

» Is the environment welcoming for all children and families?

» What opportunities do we provide for children to be involved in planning, setting up and modifying the environment?

» How is the environment equipped and organised to cater for all capabilities?

» How are the backgrounds and cultures of families and the broader community reflected in the environment?

» How can the physical environment be adapted to include all children and provide for their needs and interests?

Promoting competence, supporting exploration, investigations and play-based learning

» How can we organise environments and spaces to provide children with opportunities to:

  • engage in self-directed and supported inquiry?

  • participate in small and large group interactions?

» How does the organisation of the indoor and outdoor environments allow for a variety of uses by children and teachers?

» What adaptions can be made to the environment or additional resources introduced to provoke interest, creativity, curiosity, sustained shared conversations and collaborative learning?

» What equipment do we provide that allows for multiple uses?

» What features in the physical environment encourage open-ended interactions, spontaneity, risk taking, exploration, discovery and connection with nature?

» How do we regularly evaluate the effectiveness of learning environments and draw links to intended learning outcomes?

» What strategies can we implement to support teachers to model environmentally responsible practices, and foster children's capacity to value and respect the broader environment?

» How do we foster children's capacity to understand, care for and respect the natural environment and the interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land?

ELEMENT 3.2.1 Inclusive environment

Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.

What element 3.2.1 aims to achieve

Schools provide an inclusive environment when indoor and outdoor spaces are designed to support the diverse interests, preferences and learning styles of all children. Teachers enhance inclusion by identifying aspects of the environment that can be adapted to support each child's participation.

Flexible arrangements of furniture and equipment, together with materials that allow for multiple uses, encourage children to become flexible thinkers and investigators. A secure and predictable environment with adequate space and appropriate facilities and resources enables children to participate in experiences and activities of their choice, and take increasing responsibility for their own health, hygiene and personal care. This supports children to increase their self-confidence and competence and provides them with a strong sense of self-identify.

Schools provide many opportunities for children to develop relationships and should make spaces available for small and large groups to gather. Indoor and outdoor environments should be organised and adapted to support all aspects of children's learning and invite conversations between children, teachers, families and the broader community.

Connections to the ELTP model – Learning Environments and Intentional Planning. Learning, Teaching and Assessing
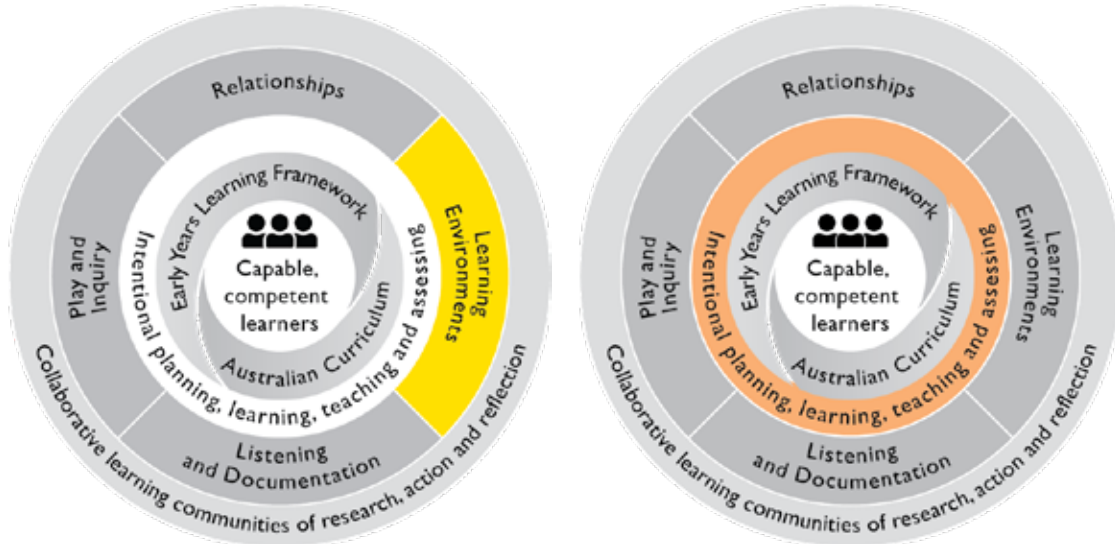
Considerations for meeting element 3.2.1

Environments that support participation and quality experiences

Examples of what you may **observe:**

» clear pathways that direct children and staff around, rather than through, areas being used by others

» safe shelving and storage areas from which children can access equipment and resources that are age and capability appropriate

» **teachers:**

- setting up and adapting the indoor and outdoor environments to:
  - o support the inclusion and participation of every child in all learning experiences
  - o promote small and large group interactions, inquiry and purposeful play
  - o provoke, stimulate and reflect children's interests and learning
  - o assist children to function autonomously in distinct learning or interest areas
  - o enable small groups of children to work together on their own projects
- planning, implementing, modifying or changing learning resources to:
  - o encourage each child's participation
  - o 'layer the play and inquiry' by responding to children's changing interests, to build their understanding
  - o encouraging the use of natural materials in all learning environments
- re-organising and re-setting the environment with assistance from children to provide order and predictability, attract their interest to the area and stimulate learning.

» **children:**

- actively engaged in a variety of rich, meaningful, and intentional inquiry-based experiences in both outdoor and indoor environments
- contributing to decisions made about the arrangement of, and resources in, the environment
- accessing areas with natural features such as plants, trees, edible gardens, sand, rocks, mud and water
- exploring relationships with living things and observing and responding to change.

Examples of what you may **discuss:**

» how teachers involve children in discussions about the use of space and resources, materials and equipment

» how the indoor and outdoor spaces have been designed to invite open-ended interactions, spontaneity, risk-taking, exploration, investigations and connection to nature.

Examples of what you may **sight:**

» documented learning programs that outline opportunities for children to engage in outdoor and indoor experiences, such as dramatic play, construction, investigations and exploration

» documented plans for the organisation of the indoor and outdoor environments including adjustments in place to ensure inclusion of all children

» documents that describe the school's approach to inclusion

» documented evidence that indicates school leaders and teachers work collaboratively with family members, specialists and/or agencies to plan for the inclusion of children with additional needs and access adaptive equipment to support children's requirements.

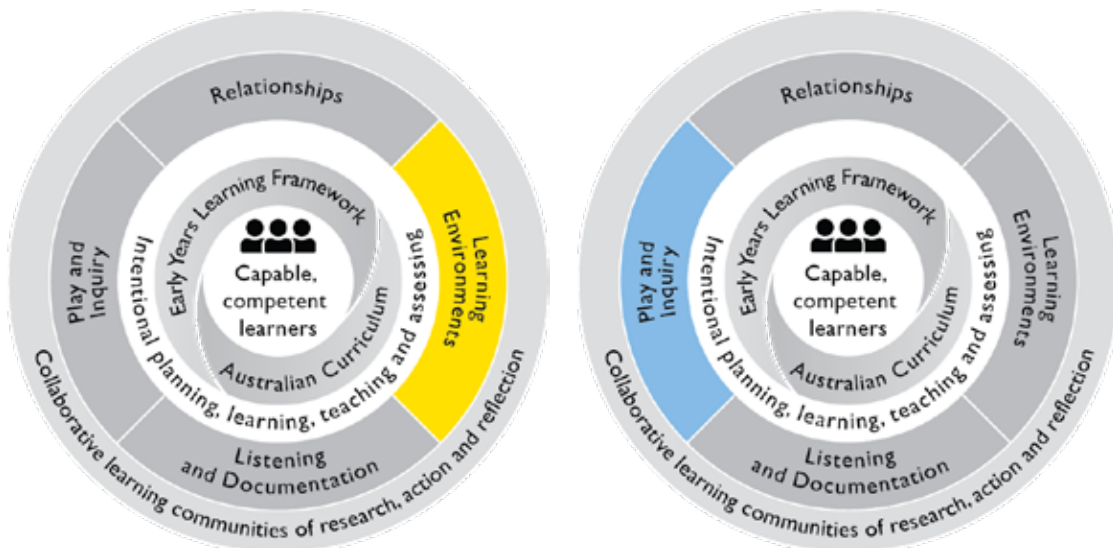## ELEMENT 3.2.2 Resources support play-based learning

Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.

What element 3.2.2 aims to achieve

Learning environments should be sufficiently resourced to support intentional and spontaneous play-based learning and encourage children to explore, solve problems, create and construct. Teachers can provide additional interest, variety and challenge for children by choosing equipment and materials that can be used in multiple ways. Resources and materials should be sufficient in number, accessible to children, and reflect the breadth of ages, interests and capabilities of children who are sharing the environment.

Teachers should consider how they offer appropriate levels of challenge to encourage children to explore experiment and take appropriate risks, as they learn to regulate themselves and contribute to the social environment.

**Connections to the ELTP model –
Learning Environments and Play and Inquiry**

Considerations for meeting element 3.2.2

Sufficient resources to support play-based learning

Examples of what you may observe:

» resources, materials and equipment in the indoor and outdoor environment which are of sufficient variety and number to:

- meet the range of interests, ages and abilities of the children
- avoid overcrowding and ensure that children do not have to wait for long periods to participate or access resources or facilities
- offer a range of challenges and experiences that reflect the breadth of ages, interests and capabilities of the children
- stimulate children's curiosity and provide a range of experiences
- encourage children to explore, discover and experiment.

» **teachers**:

- choosing resources, materials and equipment with children and using them in a way that supports children's sense of belonging, relationships, creativity and learning
- providing sufficient time and resources for children to initiate and become actively involved in experiences
- introducing appropriate tools, technologies and media to enhance children's learning
- demonstrating the potential of resources to children and suggesting new and different ways to use them
- structuring the environment so that it is flexible to allow children to move resources and equipment to extend learning opportunities
- using outdoor environments not only as places for children to engage in physical activity but also for exploration, problem solving, investigations and creative expression
- collaborating with children to select samples of work and other documentation (individual and group) for display such as photographs of children using materials and equipment in a variety of ways.

» **children**:

- being supported to take on challenges and try new activities and experiences
- using a variety of technologies such as tablets, interactive whiteboards and digital cameras to support their learning
- exploring, solving problems, creating, constructing and engaging in critical thinking
- being supported to handle equipment and manage tools with increasing competence and skill.

Examples of what you may discuss:

» the strategies used to engage with families and children to ensure their views are considered and incorporated in plans to re-design outdoor and indoor learning spaces.

» how resources and materials reflect children's abilities and support their engagement in the educational program.

Examples of what you may sight:

» documentation and learning programs that demonstrate links between the arrangement and choice of resources, materials and equipment and learning outcomes for children

» plans for the arrangement of indoor and outdoor spaces to create inviting learning environments and documentation of how children's ideas have influenced these plans.
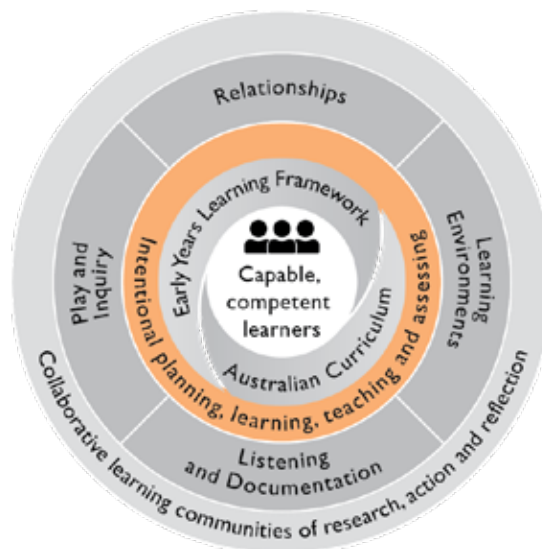
ELEMENT 3.2.3 Environmentally responsible

The school cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.

What element 3.2.3 aims to achieve

Schools are places where children learn about themselves, others and the world, including environmental responsibility. Teachers play a role in helping children develop an understanding of, and respect for, the natural environment and the interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land. This element aligns sustainable operations within the school and children's learning about environmental responsibility. Environments and resources can emphasise accountability and advocacy for a sustainable future and promote children's understanding of their responsibility to care for the environment on a day to day and long-term basis. Children learn about place and their connection to the past and present.

Connections to the ELTP model –
Intentional Planning, Learning, Teaching and Assessing

Considerations for meeting element 3.2.3

Supporting environmental responsibility

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» **teachers:**
  - integrating environmental awareness in teaching and learning programs
  - fostering children's capacity to understand and respect the natural environment and interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land

» spaces that promote the development of life skills, such as growing and preparing food, waste reduction and recycling, and children being actively engaged in these experiences

» **children:**
  - being supported to appreciate and care for natural and constructed environments
  - participating in environmentally sustainable practices that:
    - o increase their awareness of the impact of human activity
    - o build a sense of responsibility for caring for the environment
    - o are meaningful, relevant to the school context and community, and connect with the educational program and practice.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» the development and implementation of strategies to support children to be environmentally responsible and to show respect for the environment

» strategies used to support every child to engage in quality experiences in the natural environment.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» evidence of children's learning about environmental and sustainability practice

» policies that promote children's understanding about their responsibility to care for the environment and the development of life skills (such as growing and preparing food, waste reduction and recycling)

» learning documents, including photographs and displays highlighting children's understanding and knowledge of the natural environment, including their investigations.

QUALITY AREA 4
STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

Overview

Quality Area 4 focuses on the professionalism of qualified teachers who build warm, respectful relationships with children, create predictable environments and promote children's active engagement in the learning program. A collaborative and ethical culture, where professional standards guide all aspects of practice is critical in high performing schools. School leaders and teachers play a vital role in establishing effective and ethical practices.

Standards and elements

Quality Area 4 has two standards that focus on the organisation and professionalism of school leaders, teachers and other staff. These standards are crucial to delivering quality outcomes for children because:

» professional and collaborative relationships between school leaders, teachers and other staff support continuous improvement, leading to improved learning experiences and outcomes for children

» considered staffing arrangements contribute to continuity of support for each child's learning and development

» professional standards set quality benchmarks for teachers' practice and relationships.

QA 4 STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS		
STANDARD 4.1	**Staffing arrangements**	**Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development.**
ELEMENT 4.1.1	**Organisation of teachers**	The organisation of teachers across the school supports children's learning and development.
ELEMENT 4.1.2	**Continuity of staff**	Every effort is made for children to experience continuity of teachers at the school.
STANDARD 4.2	**Professionalism**	**School leaders, teachers and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical.**
ELEMENT 4.2.1	**Professional collaboration**	School leaders, teachers and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills.
ELEMENT 4.2.2	**Professional standards**	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.

STANDARD 4.1 Staffing arrangements

Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development.

How standard 4.1 contributes to quality teaching and learning

Having teachers available at all times when children are present enables the school to deliver quality teaching and learning programs. Responsive relationships are strengthened as teachers and children engage and learn together. The school is encouraged to organise staff in ways that support positive experiences for all children at all times.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 4.1

Staffing arrangements

» How do we engage in reflective practice to support and encourage each other to focus on quality improvement?

» How do our staffing arrangements support each child's learning and development?

» How do our staffing arrangements support teachers to develop positive and respectful relationships with families?

» How do we support relief staff to learn about and understand the school's policies and processes?

» How do we inform children and families of relief arrangements when a teacher is away for a period of time?

ELEMENT 4.1.1 Organisation of teachers

The organisation of teachers across the school supports children's learning and development.

What element 4.1.1 aims to achieve

The organisation of teachers across the school is a key factor in supporting all children to have opportunities to engage in meaningful learning experiences. The school follows the Department's supervision expectations and requirements to ensure the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children while at school and during excursions. The presence of adequate numbers of qualified and experienced teachers has been consistently linked with quality interactions and positive learning experiences for children.

Considerations for meeting element 4.1.1

Organisation of teachers

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» how the organisation of teachers throughout the day supports children's learning and development and ensures adequate supervision of children at all times

» teachers communicating with families about their child's learning progress, achievement, wellbeing and engagement in the program.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» teachers' qualifications working in Kindergartens and the school's approach to maintaining a 2:25 ratio in the Kindergarten learning environment

» how staffing arrangements are managed to promote the participation of all children

» how the school provides non-contact time to enable teachers to undertake tasks such as:

- curriculum planning (For example, Professional Learning Communities and Professional Learning Teams) meeting with families (For example, phone calls and face-to face conversations)

- meeting with inclusion support professionals for example, Support Teachers and Speech Pathologists.

- networking with relevant organisations, such as local long day care providers, outside school hours care coordinators, Child and Family Learning Centres and school networks

» the number of staff with first aid and anaphylaxis training is in accordance with Departmental guidelines.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» recess and lunch duty rosters for teachers

» program plans or information that includes Teacher Assistant responsibilities.
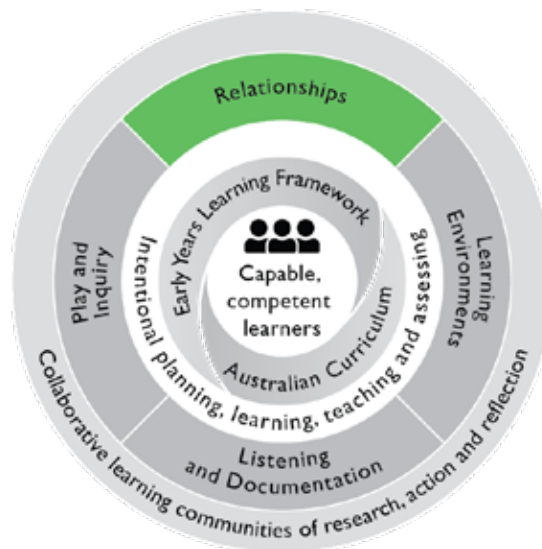
ELEMENT 4.1.2 Continuity of staff

Every effort is made for children to experience continuity of teachers at the school.

What element 4.1.2 aims to achieve

Continuity of teachers on a day-to-day basis and over time assists them to build secure relationships with children and plays a significant role in promoting learning and wellbeing. Teachers who work closely with children understand each child's interests, strengths and areas where support may be required. They are able to provide continuity of experiences to extend and enrich children's learning.

Connections to the ELTP model – Relationships

Considerations for meeting element 4.1.2

Continuity of teachers

Examples of what you may observe:

» children happily responding to teachers and having conversations and initiating interactions with them and seeking their assistance and company
» all staff demonstrate positive and respectful interactions with families and children.

Examples of what you may discuss:

» how the school helps to build staff cohesion and a culture of continuous improvement
» how teachers know their children and where they are in their learning.

Examples of what you may sight:

» induction information for new teachers and relief teachers and other staff.

STANDARD 4.2 Professionalism

School leaders, teachers and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical.

How standard 4.2 contributes to quality education and care

Professionalism is demonstrated when school leaders, teachers and other staff develop and maintain relationships with each other that are based on the principles of mutual respect, equity and fairness. Team collaboration, based on understanding the expectations of team members, builds on the strength of each other's knowledge and supports respectful and professional relationships. These relationships reduce the likelihood of misunderstanding and conflict. For more information see the Department's values and Conduct and Behaviour Standards that provide a set of general principles to guide Department staff in their conduct as employees.

When staff communicate effectively and respectfully with each other, they promote a positive, orderly and calm environment at the school, supporting children to feel safe and secure and contributing to the development of positive relationships between children and teachers.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 4.2

» What makes our school a positive place to work?

» How do we acknowledge the individual strengths, professional experiences and diversity that our colleagues bring to our work?

» How do we promote professionalism, confidentiality and ethical conduct?

» What opportunities do we provide for teachers and other staff to have professional conversations and discussions to further develop their skills, or to improve practice and relationships?

» How do we ensure that everyone's voice is heard and considered?

» How do we use critical reflection to challenge our beliefs?

» How regularly do we refer to the Department's values and Conduct and Behaviour Standards and our own school's philosophy/vision to ensure that our practices and policies align with current evidence-based approaches?

ELEMENT 4.2.1 Professional collaboration

School leaders, teachers and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills.

What element 4.2.1 aims to achieve

In a collaborative environment, all staff are encouraged to respect and value the diverse contributions and viewpoints of their colleagues. Staff also share resources, provide constructive feedback, and work together respectfully and professionally to solve problems. Interactions between school leaders, teachers and other staff are guided by the Department's Conduct and Behaviour Standards and the school's philosophy. By collaborating effectively, staff model successful working relationships for children.

A culture of professional inquiry is established when school leaders and teachers all contribute to continuous improvement at the school. Staff members can raise and debate issues including program quality, environment design, inclusion and equity, children's wellbeing and working with families. Professional discussions enhance the team and provide opportunities for teachers to revise their practice and implement strategies for improvement.

Updating and maintaining teachers' professional knowledge is the responsibility of both school leaders and teachers. This can be achieved by following the Department's expectations for improving early learning and providing professional learning to inform quality practices.

**Connections to the ELTP model –
Collaborative Learning Communities of Research, Action and Reflection**
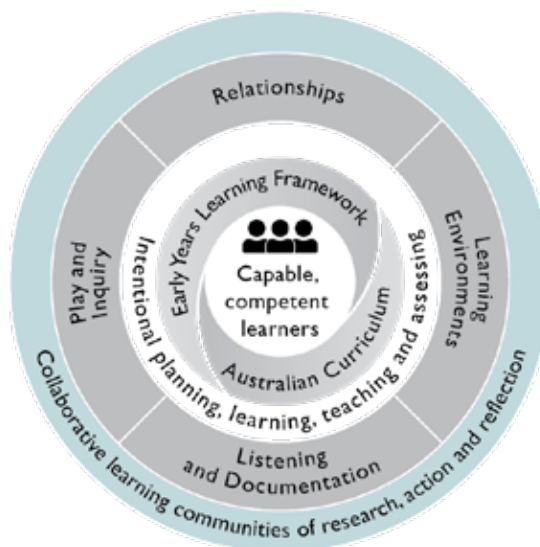
Considerations for meeting element 4.2.1

Developing a culture of professional collaboration, recognition and continuous improvement

Examples of what you may **observe:**

» positive working relationships within the school

» new teachers and staff members being supported by other team members

» teachers sharing their knowledge and discussing and reflecting constructively on the needs of particular children and families

» teachers and other staff members:

- responding promptly to support other team members in difficult situations

- discussing and adopting inclusive practices and strategies that best support each child

- demonstrating a commitment to learn more, regardless of their experience and current knowledge and skills.

Examples of what you may **discuss:**

» opportunities for meetings such as, Professional Learning Communities to enable teachers to engage in conversations, that challenge, support and provide opportunities to learn from each other, share new information and further develop the team's skills

» how teachers and staff members are encouraged to support and mentor each other

» how the school ensures that all interactions, convey mutual respect.

Examples of what you may **sight:**

» evidence recorded in staff and team meeting minutes that demonstrate teachers collaborate and reflect on the impact of teaching practices on children's learning and development.

» documented examples of projects or teamwork.

ELEMENT 4.2.2 Professional standards

Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.

What element 4.2.2 aims to achieve

School leaders and teachers use professional standards and ethical principles to guide professional conduct in decision-making and practice. School leaders provide clear guidance to all staff about their responsibilities in relation to one another and to the families and children attending the school.

All staff should know and understand the requirements of the TQS, the EYLF and AC, the Department's Conduct and Behaviour Standards as well as the school's philosophy, policies and procedures. Teachers and other staff are aware that their attitudes, values and beliefs impact their work. Teachers benefit from working together to identify where biases may have influenced their values and minimise the impact of bias in their practice and relationships with children, families, colleagues and the local community.

Considerations for meeting element 4.2.2

Professional conduct

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» all school staff demonstrating:
  - professional conduct in interactions with children, colleagues, families and members of the community
  - care, empathy and respect for children, colleagues and families in their everyday practice
  - interactions and practices that positively reflect Tasmania's Aboriginal Education Framework.
» school leaders and teachers taking responsibility for:
  - implementing the EYLF and AC
  - understanding the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
  - working in ways that meet the requirements of the TQS.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» the ways school staff access and use:
  - the Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach and TQS
  - the EYLF and associated guides
  - the AC
  - the *Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership* Standards
  - the school's statement of philosophy (or similar)
  - the school's policies and procedures
  - the school's staff handbook and code of conduct or documents similar
  - the Tasmania's Aboriginal Education Framework
» how up-to-date information is communicated to teachers (For example, school/Department information and changes or updates that impact on practice)
» how teachers recognise and minimise the impact of personal biases on their practice and relationships with children, families, colleagues and the local community
» inclusion and what it means to teachers, children and families
» where information can be found to assist staff to resolve differences.

Examples of what you may sight:

» the school's statement of philosophy/vision and/or Department's Conduct and Behaviour Standards are accessible to all staff.

QUALITY AREA 5
RELATIONSHIPS WITH
CHILDREN

Overview

Quality Area 5 focuses on school leaders and teachers developing responsive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships with children that promote their wellbeing, self-esteem, sense of security and belonging. Respectful relationships of this kind encourage children to explore environments and engage in play and learning.

All children need a sense of connection with others to support the development of their identity and social and emotional competence. Exploring and learning to work and socialise appropriately with others, to manage feelings, behaviours and responsibilities is a complex process. When school leaders and teachers take a positive approach to guiding children's behaviour, they empower children to self-regulate and develop the skills required to interact and negotiate effectively with others.

Relationships with peers take on increasing importance as children develop. Supportive relationships with teachers enable children to grow in confidence, including the ability to express themselves, work through differences, engage in new experiences and take calculated risks.

Standards and elements

Quality Area 5 has two standards that focus on relationships between teachers and children, and between children and their peers. These standards are crucial to delivering quality outcomes for children because supportive and respectful relationships enable children to:

» develop their confidence and a strong sense of identity
» develop communication skills and the ability to express themselves effectively
» participate in collaborative learning and build meaningful relationships with others
» regulate their own behaviour and learn to negotiate complex social situations and relationships.

QA 5 RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
STANDARD 5.1	**Relationships between teachers and children**	**Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.**
ELEMENT 5.1.1	**Positive educator to child interactions**	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
ELEMENT 5.1.2	**Dignity and rights of the child**	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
STANDARD 5.2	**Relationships between children**	**Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.**
ELEMENT 5.2.1	**Collaborative learning**	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.
ELEMENT 5.2.2	**Self-regulation**	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

STANDARD 5.1 Relationships between teachers and children

Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.

How standard 5.1 contributes to quality teaching and learning

When children experience respectful relationships with teachers, they develop an understanding of themselves as competent, capable and respected. Consistent emotional support contributes to children developing a strong sense of wellbeing and belonging. Relationships are the foundation for the construction of identity, and help shape children's thinking about who they are, how they belong and what influences them.

Teachers who are actively engaged in children's learning also share decision-making with them. They use their everyday interactions, including routines, play and ongoing projects, to stimulate children's thinking, support their development and enrich their learning. These relationships provide a solid foundation from which to guide and support children as they develop the self-confidence and skills to manage their own behaviour, make decisions and relate positively and effectively to others.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 5.1

Positive relationships

» How do we build close, secure relationships with children of diverse, abilities, gender and backgrounds?

» What strategies and questioning techniques do we use to extend and build on children's learning, comments and conversations?

» How do we ensure all children feel that they belong and are included in the school, can participate in all learning experiences, and that their contributions are appreciated and recognised?

» How do we promote children's social and emotional competence?

» How do we identify and overcome potential barriers to inclusion at the school so that each child's participation is supported?

» How do we respond to the distress some children experience when they have to adapt to new routines, people or places?

Dignity and rights of every child

» How do we ensure teachers' practices promote the dignity and rights of each child?

» How do we assist children to understand their rights and the rights of others?

» How do we identify and minimise the impact of our own biases on our practices and relationships with children and families?

ELEMENT 5.1.1 Positive educator to child interactions

Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.

What element 5.1.1 aims to achieve

Positive interactions between teachers and children involve teachers viewing each child as capable and competent, with a right to a voice and able to contribute to decisions that affect them. Warm and supportive one-on-one interactions are important to children's wellbeing and development. Respectful and reciprocal relationships enable children to develop their independence, leadership and social skills, and a strong sense of identity and agency.

Teachers who are responsive to children's thoughts and feelings are supporting them to develop a strong sense of wellbeing. By interacting positively and meaningfully with children, teachers help children to feel accepted and to develop a sense of attachment and trust.

**Connections to the ELTP model –
Relationships and Capable, Competent Learners**

Considerations for meeting element 5.1.1

Building trusting relationships

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» a learning environment that is relaxed and happy and reflects the lives of the children, their families and local community

» staffing arrangements and interactions that support the establishment of secure relationships between teachers and children

» **teachers:**

- assisting new children to settle into the program by talking with them or their families about their interests
- responding openly, positively and respectfully to children's comments, questions and requests for assistance
- engaging in sustained conversations with each child about their individual interests, questions and curiosities
- acknowledging children's efforts and achievements, and supporting children to experience success
- modelling reasoning, predicting, reflective processes and appropriate language
- collaborating with children about routines and experiences, and providing opportunities for them to make decisions and choices
- comforting children who cry or show other signs of distress.

» **children:**

- demonstrating a sense of belonging, security and comfort in the environment
- communicating their need for comfort and assistance
- initiating conversations with teachers about their experiences inside and outside the classroom
- confidently expressing ideas and feelings and sharing humour
- having the confidence to ask teachers for assistance when they engage in new experiences, take on challenges and attempt to complete tasks independently

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» ways in which teachers learn more about the histories, cultures, languages, traditions and lifestyle choices of families in the school community

» how plans for the inclusion of children requiring additional support are shared and communicated with teachers and other staff members

» the ways in which teachers use information gained from their observations and interactions with children to extend children's thinking and learning

» how teachers use their interactions with children to support the maintenance of home languages while learning English as an additional language.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» Examples of information gathered from:

- families to support their child during the settling-in process
- other professionals or support agencies that work with children, including children who require additional support and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

» the school's approach to equity and inclusion, documented in the statement of philosophy (or similar)

» plans for the inclusion of children who require additional support.

ELEMENT 5.1.2 Dignity and rights of the child

The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.

What element 5.1.2 aims to achieve

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a universally agreed set of obligations founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each child, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth status or ability. By agreeing to this, Australia has committed to protecting children from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally.

**Connections to the ELTP model –
Relationships and Capable, Competent Learners**

Considerations for meeting element 5.1.2

Dignity and rights of children

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» spaces, resources and routines are arranged to minimise times when children are likely to experience stress or frustration or made to wait unnecessarily

» **teachers:**

- talking to children about the importance of empathy, treating others equally and celebrating similarities and differences
- guiding children's behaviour using developmentally appropriate strategies
- pre-empting potential conflicts or challenging behaviours by monitoring children's experiences and play, and supporting interactions
- responding promptly to bullying or disruptive behaviour
- reassuring children when they are upset
- modelling and encouraging children to identify and challenge discrimination when they observe inappropriate behaviour or hear inappropriate comments.

» **children:**

- are supported to make choices and to experience the consequences of these where there is no risk of harm to themselves or others
- being acknowledged when they make positive choices in regulating their own behaviour
- working collaboratively with others.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how the school:

- implements the Department's policy and procedures that support behaviour management to ensure a consistent approach to guiding children's behaviour
- celebrates diversity, including supporting each child's sense of identity and guiding children's understanding of diversity in its various forms

» maintains an environment of cultural inclusion and cultural responsiveness

» develops a culture that empowers children to feel safe and secure to raise concerns when they or others are experiencing or witnessing bullying

» how teachers reflect on, identify and minimise the impact of their own biases on their practices and relationships with children and families.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» classroom guidelines developed with children's input

» individual behaviour support plans for children experiencing behavioural difficulties developed in consultation with families, and if required, other professionals and support agencies.

STANDARD 5.2 Relationships between children

Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.

How standard 5.2 contributes to quality teaching and learning

Positive relationships provide children with the confidence and agency to explore and learn about their world. Developing respectful relationships with others is a key part of children's social development and these relationships also provide a strong foundation for children's learning.

An important aspect of children's 'belonging, being and becoming' involves them learning how their behaviours and actions affect themselves and others. By learning to make appropriate choices about their behaviour, children develop the skills to regulate their actions independently and understand the benefits of positive behaviour. When children have opportunities to contribute to decisions and participate collaboratively with others in everyday settings, they learn to live interdependently and make informed choices.

Teachers assist by developing positive and respectful strategies for guiding children's behaviour.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 5.2

Supporting sensitive and responsive relationships

» How do we promote a sense of community within the school?

» How do we model positive and respectful relationships for children?

» How do we support children to form and maintain positive relationships with others?

» How is a culture of respect, equity and fairness, including acceptance of diversity promoted at the school?

» How is this communicated and modelled to children and families?

Collaborative learning

» How do we plan the program and routines to ensure adequate time for children to engage in play experiences, projects and inquiries of their own choosing, with a variety of peers?

» What opportunities exist for collaborative learning that enables children to experience different roles and tasks as a member of a group or team?

Guiding children's behaviour

» How do we reflect on our own experiences, beliefs and attitudes that may influence the way in which we guide children's behaviour?

» What opportunities do children have to make decisions about rules, expectations and outcomes in relation to their own and others' behaviour?

» How do we manage situations where we experience challenges in guiding the behaviour of a child or a group of children?

» How do we work with families, other professionals and support agencies to ensure that behaviour guidance strategies maintain the rights of each child to be included in the environment and program at all times?

» How are different expectations managed?

ELEMENT 5.2.1 Collaborative learning

Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.

What element 5.2.1 aims to achieve

Schools provide a range of opportunities for children to learn how to work with others collaboratively and effectively, including through inquiry learning and intentional play-based experiences. Teachers support children to learn about and experience cooperation by modelling cooperative behaviours themselves and acknowledging cooperation when it occurs. By promoting respectful and reciprocal relationships among children, teachers support children to value collaboration and teamwork.

**Connections to the ELTP model –
Relationships, and Play and Inquiry**

Considerations for meeting element 5.2.1

Supporting cooperation and collaboration

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» **teachers:**
  - incorporating small group and personal inquiry-based activities into the learning program
  - supporting children's social and emotional development that enables them to interact confidently with their peers
  - modelling collaborative behaviour through their interactions with colleagues and children
  - supporting children to understand how to communicate, negotiate and relate respectfully with each other
  - allocating time for relaxed, unhurried experiences that enable children to collaborate and direct their own learning together
  - asking follow-up questions to extend children's learning in group situations
  - acknowledging children's complex relationships and sensitively intervening in ways that promote social inclusion.

» providing opportunities and resources for children to:
  - direct their play and learning experiences with peers
  - assume leadership roles.

» **children:**
  - engaged in ongoing collaborative projects that involve research, planning, problem-solving and shared decision-making
  - encouraging each other, responding positively to peers' questions and suggestions, and offering constructive suggestions and support
  - being sensitive to the feelings and needs of others, including inviting others to join in during play and learning experiences
  - negotiating roles and relationships in play and class experiences.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how grouping (and re-grouping) arrangements support positive relationships between children
» how teachers:
  - support the inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds and capabilities in collaborative play, projects and experiences with others
  - differentiate the curriculum to engage children with varying levels of knowledge and skills in collaborative learning experiences
  - learn about children's shared interests and use this information for further or alternative learning experiences.

» opportunities provided for children to take on leadership roles.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» presentation of children's work that is thoughtfully selected to demonstrate stages in the collaborative learning process or a completed group inquiry or project.

ELEMENT 5.2.2 Self-regulation

Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

What element 5.2.2 aims to achieve

Self-regulation becomes increasingly important as children develop. They become more mindful of the way others interact with them, and at the same time, develop understandings of how their actions affect the way others feel and behave. Teachers work with young children to model and promote positive ways to relate to others.

Connections to the ELTP model – Relationships
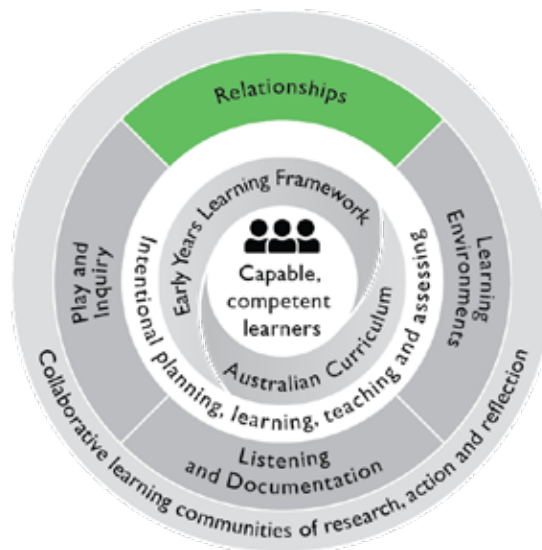
Considerations for meeting element 5.2.2

Relating positively with others

Examples of what you may **observe:**

» **teachers:**
- implementing planned and spontaneous discussions about emotions, feelings and issues of inclusion and exclusion, fair and unfair behaviour, bias and prejudice
- modelling respectful behaviour and providing supportive language approaches to enable children to communicate their concerns
- encouraging children to listen to other children's ideas, consider alternative behaviours and solve problems together
- mediating conflict resolution when required and assisting children to negotiate.

» **children:**
- being patient and empathetic with each other
- challenging other children's behaviour when it is disrespectful or unfair
- expressing their feelings and responses constructively.

Examples of what you may **discuss:**

» how teachers work with each child's family and, where applicable, their outside school hours care or long day care service to ensure an inclusive and consistent approach is used to support all children to regulate their behaviour and communicate effectively

» how teachers manage situations in which:
- families have different views and expectations compared to those of the school about guiding children's behaviour
- a child may benefit from more support in managing their behaviour.

» how the school positively influences teachers' views and beliefs around children's behaviour, with a focus on all children being supported, including when distressed

» how children are supported to develop skills to identify and report inappropriate behaviours such as bullying (including cyberbullying) and social exclusion.

Examples of what you may **sight:**

» the school's behaviour guidance procedures

» individual behaviour support plans for children, including evidence of consultation with their families and if appropriate, input and suggestions from other professionals and support agencies.
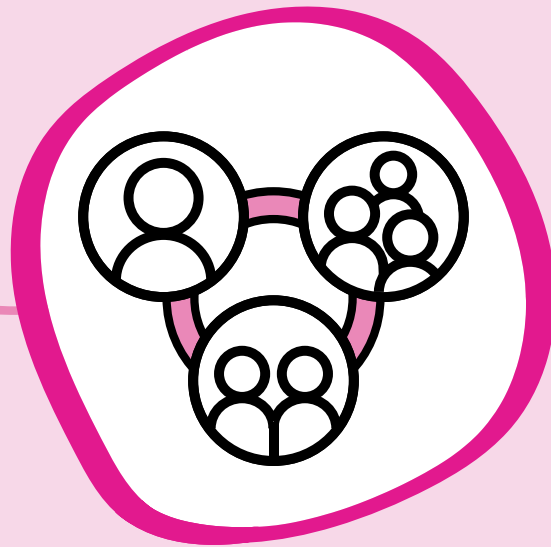
QUALITY AREA 6
COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH
FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Overview

Quality Area 6 focuses on supportive and respectful relationships with families which are fundamental to achieving quality outcomes for all children. Community partnerships that are based on active communication, consultation and collaboration contribute to children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.

Families are the primary influence in their child's life and may have strong beliefs and values regarding their education. When families and schools collaborate and build respectful relationships, children have the opportunity to develop a positive sense of self and experience respectful relationships.

The child, the family and the school do not exist in isolation; they are part of a much wider community. Children benefit from schools engaging with local communities as these partnerships strengthen children's interest and skills in being active contributors to their community. Collaborative partnerships are achieved when the school's philosophy has a strong commitment to valuing diversity, inclusive practice and connecting with the community.

Standards and elements

Quality Area 6 has two standards that support building collaborative partnerships with families and communities to enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing as they transition into and through the early years of school. These standards are crucial to delivering quality outcomes for children because:

» authentic family engagement promotes active participation of children and their families

» inclusive practice helps the school to identify and remove potential barriers and support the wellbeing of all children and families

» community engagement helps the school to build relationships between children, their families and the community in which they reside, and encourages each child to develop their identity within the context of their local community

» collaborative partnerships enrich programs, practices and policies, and provide an opportunity to support children to respect and value diversity.

QA 6 COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES		
STANDARD 6.1	**Supportive relationships with families**	**Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.**
ELEMENT 6.1.1	**Engagement with the school**	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the school and contribute to school decisions.
ELEMENT 6.1.2	**Parent views are respected**	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
ELEMENT 6.1.3	**Families are supported**	Current information is available to families about the school and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
STANDARD 6.2	**Collaborative partnerships**	**Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.**
ELEMENT 6.2.1	**Transitions**	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.
ELEMENT 6.2.2	**Access and participation**	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.
ELEMENT 6.2.3	**Community engagement**	The school builds relationships and engages with its community.

STANDARD 6.1 Supportive relationships with families

Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.

How standard 6.1 contributes to quality teaching and learning

Standard 6.1 acknowledges that the family is the most powerful influence on each child's life and that learning outcomes are most likely achieved when teachers work in partnership with families. This standard also recognises that each family's wellbeing and capacity to nurture and support their child is influenced by the community in which they live and the material resources and social support available to them.

In Australia, there is a diversity of family types, and all families are different (including, for example, blended and extended families, LGBTQI+ parents, and care givers). Children have diverse understandings of 'family' and unique relationships with those who feature prominently in their lives. Schools that reflect on what the concept of family means to each child can nurture the important relationships that exist between children and their families, including the importance of extended families, kinship ties, carers and guardians in children's lives.

Teachers create a welcoming environment when the diversity of families, and the families' practices and aspirations they hold for their children, are respected. Sometimes these aspirations and expectations may be in conflict with the school's philosophy and practice. Open, respectful and non-judgmental communication between all school staff and families builds a shared understanding of children's learning and participation.

Collaborative partnerships with families contribute to building a strong, inclusive school community. Respectful, honest and open two-way communication assists families to feel connected with their child's school experience and helps them develop trust and confidence in the school.

Schools support families in their parenting role by being a source of practical information regarding resources and services within the local community. In addition, they assist families to understand what constitutes quality practice in the early years.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 6.1

Respectful and inclusive relationships with families

» How do we ensure all families feel comfortable, welcome and valued at our school?

» Does our concept of family reflect the diversity of family structures in the school and wider community?

» What role do families play in the school? How do we acknowledge their contributions?

» How do we involve families in decision-making?

» How and where have the views and input of families prompted us to change the way we do things?

» How do we communicate our school philosophy and strategic direction with families?

» What strategies are in place for information-sharing with families during orientation, transitions, settling in and beyond?

» What techniques or strategies do we use to communicate with families who have specific or diverse communication preferences?

» How can we measure if our communication strategies are reaching all families and if they would prefer other methods?

Supporting families in their parenting role

» How do we encourage families to contribute to their child's experiences in ways that are meaningful for them?

» How do we learn about children's families and others who are important in their lives?

» How do we respond when families make requests or express concerns?

» How do we support families to access community services and resources?

» How do we support and reassure families whose children are attending the school for the first time?

» What information do we provide to assist children and families to experience anxiety-free separation from primary caregiver/s?
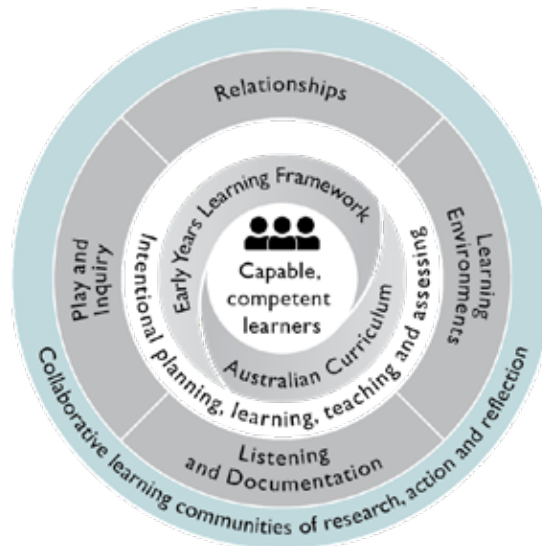
ELEMENT 6.1.1 Engagement with the school

Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the school and contribute to school decisions.

What element 6.1.1 aims to achieve

The enrolment process presents an opportunity for families to share information about their child and for schools to share information about its operations, philosophy and governance. Families may become involved with the school in ways that suit their current commitments, availability and skills. This could include membership of the school association or committees as well as family events and community groups.

**Connections to the EYTP model –
Collaborative Learning Communities of Research, Action and Reflection**

Considerations for meeting element 6.1.1

Enrolment process

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» prospective families being:
  - invited and encouraged to visit the school before their child starts school
  - encouraged to talk with teachers about their child and their values and expectations.
» school leaders and teachers sharing information about the school.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how the school identifies the individual teaching and learning requirements of each child
» the provisions made to support families during the enrolment and orientation process including flexible times to complete enrolment processes
» the use of interpreters or other support services to assist with the enrolment process.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» the school's enrolment and orientation procedures and documentation
» easy-to-read information about the school
» school information translated into languages prevalent in the school's community.

Family involvement and contribution to school decisions

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» a culture of open, respectful communication between families, school leaders, teachers and other staff
» the school:
  - recognising and valuing diversity
  - responding to families' questions, concerns and requests in a timely and respectful way
  - implementing a range of strategies to share information and engage families in decision-making processes.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» opportunities provided for families to talk with school leaders and teachers about their participation in the school, or any issues or concerns
» how families, including extended family members, are able to contribute to school activities and decision making.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» strategies for communicating with families with varying literacy skills, or where English is not a first language
» the school provides resources that are available to families in languages prevalent in their school community
» families have access to the school's policies and procedures.

ELEMENT 6.1.2 Parent views are respected

The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.

What element 6.1.2 aims to achieve

Teachers recognise that families are children's first and most influential teachers, and that the views of parents should be respected. Children are born belonging to a culture, which is not only influenced by traditional practices, heritage and ancestral knowledge, but also by the composition, experiences, values and beliefs of individual families and communities. Genuine partnership relationships that include shared decision-making with families support consistency between children's experiences at home and at school, which positively enhances children's learning, wellbeing and inclusion.

Considerations for meeting element 6.1.2

Respecting families and sharing decision-making

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» teachers and families
  • discussing children's individual requirements sensitively, respectfully and confidentially
  • sharing knowledge, skills, expertise and relevant information related to family life and culture
  • sharing children's educational progress, successes and achievements
» teachers demonstrating a non-judgmental understanding of each child, and each child's family and community context
» families being informed promptly and sensitively of any incidents affecting their child.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» the strategies used by the school to facilitate shared decision-making with families and to respect families' requests
» how the school supports consistency between the home and school, maintaining best practice and upholding the rights of each child
» opportunities provided for families to have private discussions with school leaders and teachers.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» families are given opportunities to provide feedback to the school
» the culture/s of families and the wider community are visible in the school environment.

ELEMENT 6.1.3 Families are supported

Current information is available to families about the school and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.

What element 6.1.3 aims to achieve

Schools use a variety of methods to support families and keep them informed of their child's learning, development and wellbeing, as well as the operational aspects of the school. Teachers support families in their parenting role by being readily available for informal discussions with them at mutually convenient times.

Further support is offered by referring families to current information on parenting and family issues displayed in the school, as well as referring them to recognised parenting websites and programs such as the _Raising Children Network_, _Starting Blocks_, and _Great Start_.

**Connections to the EYTP model –
Collaborative Learning Communities of Research, Action and Reflection**
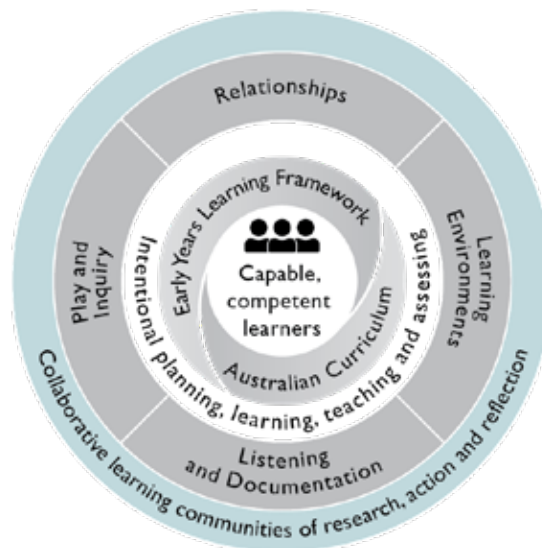
Considerations for meeting element 6.1.3

Providing information about the school and other community services

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» teachers sharing information to families about the school's operations and community services, to support their parenting role

» schools assisting families to identify, locate, contact and/or access local community services (for example, *Child and Family Learning Centres*, *Launching into Learning*, local libraries and playgroups).

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how:

  • information is available to families about the school's operations

  • families are sensitively supported and encouraged to access local community services and resources

  • the school supports and engages families from a variety of racial, ethnic, educational and linguistic backgrounds

  • schools provide culturally relevant opportunities for diverse families.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» newsletters, communication books or other methods of communication with families

» information about the school's philosophy/vision, operation, policies and procedures are available to families

» easy-to-read information about the school in the languages prevalent at the school and in the local community

» evidence that changes to school procedures are explained in detail and communicated to families prior to implementation.

STANDARD 6.2 Collaborative partnerships

Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.

How standard 6.2 contributes to quality teaching and learning

Standard 6.2 recognises the connections between children, families, the school and communities and the importance of collaborative relationships and partnerships in enhancing all children's inclusion, learning, development and wellbeing.

Schools understand the importance of seeing families in the context of their participation in the local community and wider society. Schools can establish and maintain an active presence in the community, seek to strengthen links and use community resources to support families. This supports the inclusion of children in their local community and broadens children's understanding of the world in which they live.

Open communication and collaboration between the school, families and other professionals and services within the community can be mutually beneficial. These partnerships:

» build relationships between children, their families and the school so that each child's capacity to fully participate in the school's learning program is supported

» lead to shared understandings and collaborative problem-solving

» build the capacity of organisations involved in supporting children and families in the local community

» assist children to become aware of the similarities, differences and connections between people within their community

» assist in building an environment that supports inclusion and celebrates diversity.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 6.2

Building collaborative partnerships

» How is information and data (for example, the Australian Early Development Census) used to build an understanding of the local community?

» How are we supporting children to see themselves as active contributors to their community?

» How do we share our knowledge and expertise about children's learning and their inclusion with other professionals who are working with them and their families?

» How do we support children and families in their transitions to and from school and other settings?

» In what ways do we work with other services and community organisations to support children and families? How effective are these strategies and how can they be improved?

» How do we access support for children's specific individual requirements and rights?

» What current resources and networks exist that might connect children and families with the local community?

ELEMENT 6.2.1 Transitions

Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.

What element 6.2.1 aims to achieve

Transitions occur:

» from home and/or care settings to school
» between year levels and groups within the school
» when there are staff changes
» between routines and experiences.

Transitions offer opportunities and challenges for children as different places and settings provide different ways of operating. Working collaboratively with families, staff, and other professional services, teachers support children to actively prepare for transitions between settings and experiences by:

» helping children and families understand the expectations, routines and practices of different settings and people, and building resilience to feel comfortable with the change process
» building on children's prior and current experiences to help them to feel secure, confident and connected in their new setting or group
» sharing information about each child's learning, strengths and interests to support teachers in a new setting or group to build on these foundations.

Considerations for meeting element 6.2.1

Supporting smooth transitions

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» **children:**

- experiencing positive transitions within the school, between home and school and other settings (for example, before and after school hours care)
- being supported and appropriately supervised when being transported to or from the school by bus.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» the strategies in place to ensure:

- children are supported when:
  - moving between settings such as before and after school hours care
  - returning to the school after an absence
  - transitioning between routines and experiences
  - end of year transitions
- excursions are positive and safe learning experiences for children

» the strategies and processes used to support children's positive transition to school and induction of new children who transfer from another school

» how information about children's progress, likes and interests are shared with teachers to assist continuity of learning when transitioning year levels or classes.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» examples of information provided to assist children in making positive transitions from home to school

» written procedures for releasing children from the school and ensuring that they are released only to authorised guardian.
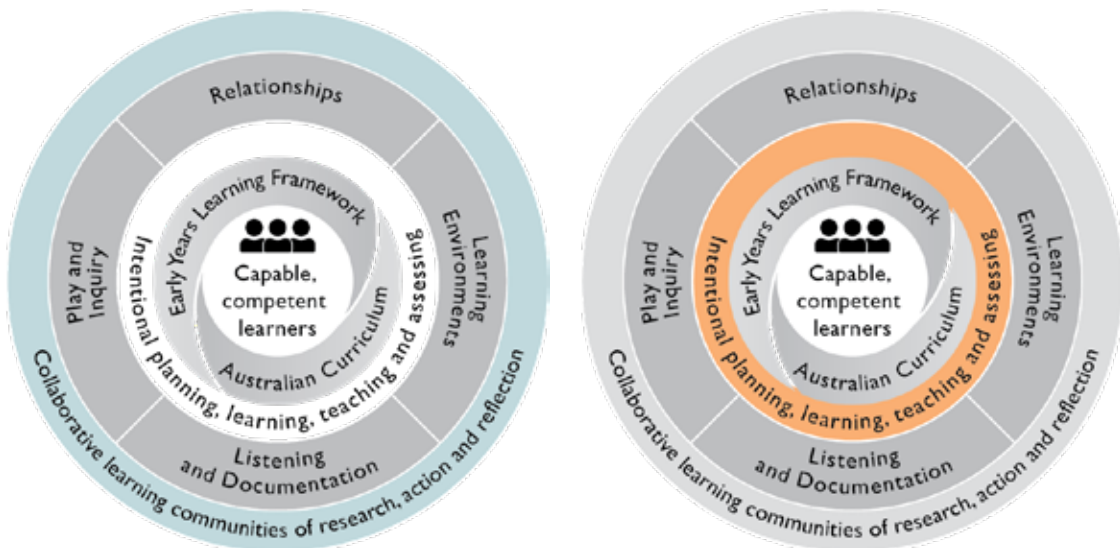
ELEMENT 6.2.2 Access and participation

Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.

What element 6.2.2 aims to achieve

Teachers' attitudes, beliefs and values about inclusion are key factors for successful high quality inclusive practices. Schools can support each child's access, inclusion and participation in the program by learning about their individual context (family circumstances, geographic location, cultural and linguistic experiences) as well as their interests, learning styles, strengths and abilities. School leaders and teachers use this knowledge when making decisions about the physical environment, the curriculum and day-to-day learning experiences, routines and transitions. They are responsive to children's needs and make educational adjustments to support access to quality teaching and learning programs.

**Connections to the ELTP model –
Collaborative Learning Communities of Research, Action and Reflection**

Considerations for meeting element 6.2.2

Supporting children's access, inclusion and participation

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» **teachers:**
  • have adapted aspects of the environment, routines, transitions and staffing arrangements to facilitate the inclusion of all children.
» **children:**
  • demonstrating a sense of belonging and wellbeing
  • demonstrating trust and confidence in school leaders, teachers and staff members
  • participating and engaging in learning experiences.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how the school:
  • collaborates with families to identify educational adjustments or requirements for specific children to support their access, participation and engagement in the program, including children who are gifted and highly able.
  • supports the rights of children to have access to a quality educational program
  • ensures that school leaders and teachers access support and/or participate in professional learning to build the skills and expertise necessary to support the inclusion of children with specific health, cultural or developmental requirements.
» how other professionals are involved in devising programs for individual children, and how shared goals for learning are identified and implemented
» how plans are developed, based on the Department's approach to inclusive practices, to support the inclusion of children who require specific health, cultural or developmental support
» how the school implements strategies to ensure environments are welcoming to all children and families in the community, and enrolment information and procedures are accessible and clear.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» the school's philosophy and procedures demonstrating a commitment to access, inclusion and participation for every child and family
» documented plans and/or communication between the school, families, and other agencies or specialists working with individual children (for example, Individual Education Plans)
» processes for making and accepting referrals from other services or agencies such as:
  • child protection agencies
  • professional support staff
  • allied health professionals
  • health professionals
» images, books and resources that reflect children and adults, from a range of backgrounds, cultures and abilities, as active contributors to and participants in the community.
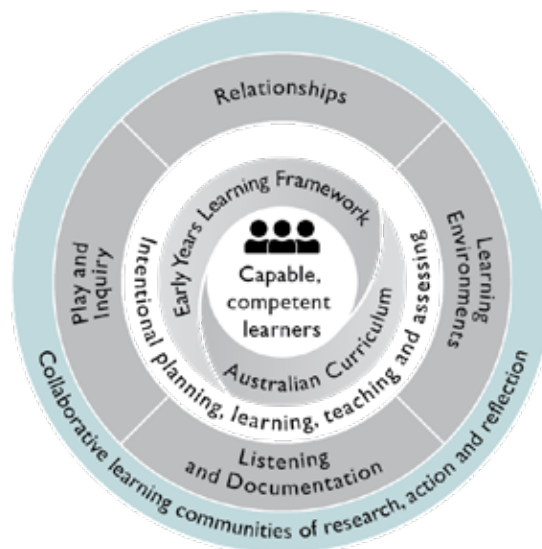
ELEMENT 6.2.3 Community engagement

The school builds relationships and engages with its community.

What element 6.2.3 aims to achieve

Schools can further support children's sense of belonging by helping them to experience connections and be engaged with their local community. When schools develop respectful and responsive connections with their immediate or wider community, they are likely to further enrich the educational program for children. Inviting members of diverse groups within the community to share their interests and expertise helps to extend children's knowledge and assists the school to reflect on the inclusiveness of its practices.

Building connections and relationships with people in the community help children to learn more about various cultures that exist within Australia. This includes knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, identity, histories, cultures and places of significance in their local community.

**Connections to the ELTP model –
Collaborative Learning Communities of Research, Action and Reflection**

Considerations for meeting element 6.2.3

Community engagement

Examples of what you may observe:

» an environment that reflects the lives of the children and families at the school and the cultural diversity of the broader community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

» a culturally responsive pedagogy including images, books and resources that provide a balanced view of contemporary Australia

» school leaders and teachers planning and implementing experiences in the program to support children's understanding of the community in which they live.

Examples of what you may discuss:

» how the school:
  • builds connections between the school and the local community
  • strengthens children's connection with and understanding of their community
  • uses community resources to improve the educational program and provide quality learning experiences for each child
  • shares information about community events relevant to children and families.

» how school leaders and teachers:
  • demonstrate a culturally responsive approach when connecting with families and communities
  • raise awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and/or other local communities, and implement Tasmania's *Aboriginal Educational Framework.*

» how teachers incorporate educational excursions or incursions to develop children's understanding of their local community.

Examples of what you may sight:

» evidence:
  • the school liaises with children's services, local businesses, health and family support services and other organisations
  • members of the local community are invited into the school or to connect online to contribute to the teaching and learning program.

» displays or artefacts that reflect children's experiences and engagement in their local community.

QUALITY AREA 7
GOVERNANCE AND
LEADERSHIP

Overview

Quality Area 7 focuses on effective leadership and governance of the school to establish and maintain conditions required for high quality teaching and learning in the early years. Effective leaders establish shared values for the school that reflect its context and professional standing in the community and set clear directions for continuous improvement. Governance refers to the systems in place to support effective management and operation of the school consistent with Department policies, core values, approach to school improvement and the school's statement of philosophy (or similar).

To achieve the best outcomes for children, schools require a skilled and engaged workforce, sound administrative and risk management systems, well-documented procedures, a school improvement plan and a safe and healthy working and learning environment. Government schools may access key administrative and policy information relevant to the early years through the Department's intranet.

Authentic evaluation and self-review enable the school to continuously improve their practices, and procedures. An ongoing cycle of self-assessment, planning and review, together with engagement with all stakeholders including families, creates a culture of continuous improvement.

Standards and elements

Quality Area 7 has two standards that focus on governance and leadership at the school. These standards are crucial to delivering quality outcomes for children because:

» effective governance requires an articulation of core values (such as a statement of philosophy or similar), efficient management systems and clearly delineated roles and responsibilities to support the effective operation of a quality school

» effective leadership establishes a culture of reflective practice to promote continuous improvement across all aspects of the school.

QA7 – GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
STANDARD 7.1	**Governance**	**Governance supports the operation of a quality school.**
ELEMENT 7.1.1	**School philosophy and purpose**	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the school's operations.
ELEMENT 7.1.2	**Management systems**	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality school.
ELEMENT 7.1.3	**Roles and responsibilities**	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the school.
STANDARD 7.2	**Leadership**	**Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.**
ELEMENT 7.2.1	**Continuous improvement**	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.
ELEMENT 7.2.2	**Educational leadership**	The program leader is supported and leads the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle.
ELEMENT 7.2.3	**Development of professionals**	Teachers and staff members' performance is regularly evaluated and individual plans are in place to support learning and development.

STANDARD 7.1 Governance

Governance supports the operation of a quality school.

How standard 7.1 contributes to quality teaching and learning

Governance provides leadership and direction to the school community. Well-coordinated systems and procedures ensure schools operate effectively, equitably and ethically. This promotes the confidence of families and the local community in the school.

An effective governance framework includes:

» a statement of philosophy (or similar) based on the school's beliefs, values and educational aims
» an effective and efficient management system to:
   • enable the operation of a quality school
   • ensure that all aspects of the school's operations including policies and procedures are consistent with the Department's strategic plan, school improvement approach, policies and applicable legislation.
» mechanisms to manage foreseeable risks to the school's operations and to children and staff
» ethical codes and practices that guide decision-making
» clearly defined roles and responsibilities
» an effective complaints management process
» a culture of continuous improvement incorporating a systematic approach that benefits all aspects of the school and the educational programs.

By having effective administrative and records management systems in place, including access to policies and procedures, teachers can focus on delivering quality teaching and learning for children.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 7.1

» What is the process for making decisions within the school, who has a say and is this process fair and equitable?

» Does the management of confidential information meet Department requirements?

» To what extent does our statement of philosophy (or similar) reflect our unique context, purpose and values, guide our practice and show a commitment to continuous improvement?

» To what extent is our philosophy statement (or similar) shared and understood by all stakeholders: our staff, children, families, community and school association committees?

» Is there an established procedure for effective and regular review of school procedures and related documents?

» Is the process for addressing complaints known by all stakeholders?

» Is the complaints management process used to identify strategies for quality improvement?

» What systems are in place to regularly check the currency and validity of *Working with Vulnerable People Registration* of staff, including volunteers and visitors to the school.

» What systems are in place to ensure first aid qualifications, and anaphylaxis and asthma management training are up-to-date and maintained?

ELEMENT 7.1.1 School philosophy and purpose

A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the school's operations.

What element 7.1.1 aims to achieve

A written statement of philosophy (or similar) articulates the core values and guiding principles underpinning the school's operations and reflects contemporary research about the factors that support optimal learning and outcomes for young children. This statement:

» informs the decisions, procedures and daily practices of the school

» reflects a shared understanding of the unique context of the school and its community

» guides teachers' use of age-appropriate pedagogies, planning and practice in delivering the educational program.

Considerations for meeting element 7.1.1

School philosophy

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» the daily practices of school staff consistently reflect the school's philosophy and Department's values.

» the values stated in the school philosophy are evident in the school's environment, policies and procedures.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how the statement of philosophy is used to set directions, build commitment and align actions with the school's goals and desired outcomes

» the school's approach to reviewing their statement of philosophy to ensure it reflects the current status of the school and its community.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» the school's:
  • statement of philosophy (or similar)
  • Business Plan and/or Operational Plan and School Improvement Plan that includes reference to the early years

» evidence that the school's statement of philosophy (or similar) is included in the induction process for all staff and in the enrolment and orientation process for families.

ELEMENT 7.1.2 Management systems

Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality school.

What element 7.1.2 aims to achieve

When effective management systems are in place, school leaders and teachers are able to focus on delivering high quality and holistic learning programs for children.

Administrative systems

The school administrative systems and operations comply with Department policies and relevant legislation.

Records management systems

Schools are required to safely store and maintain the confidentiality and currency of information provided by families, school staff and other stakeholders in line with the Department's records management policy and procedures.

Documented policies and procedures

The school ensures policies and procedures are well-documented, maintained and easily accessible to staff and families.

Risk management and employing fit and proper staff

Efficient and effective risk management systems enable the school to identify and manage risks in a timely manner. This includes compliance with the Department's Human Resources management policies, including recruitment and selection and deployment of staff.

Complaints and misconduct

An effective and equitable complaints and grievance management system confirms to staff, families and the community that disputes are taken seriously and investigated promptly, fairly and thoroughly in accordance with the Department's complaints and grievance resolution policies or procedures.

Considerations for meeting element 7.1.2

Administrative systems

Examples of what you may observe:

» systematic and aligned processes throughout the school, including in the front office, administration area, classrooms and school grounds
» calm and coordinated environments.

Examples of what you may discuss:

» procedures for teachers when requesting specific resources to support program delivery
» opportunities in place for all staff to comment on and improve the effectiveness of systems within the school.

Examples of what you may sight:

» examples of internal communications such as meeting minutes, distribution of notices and staff bulletins.

Records management systems

Examples of what you may observe:

» well-maintained and secure facilities for storage of confidential records
» safe and systematic storage of access keys.

Examples of what you may discuss:

» processes in place for reviewing and updating records and information on a regular basis
» who has access to records and arrangements to ensure information is appropriately shared or withheld.

Examples of what you may sight:

» records available and kept for the required length of time (for example, school plans, student assessments, incident reports, enrolment records, record of volunteers and visitors to the school)
» health and safety information is sensitively displayed including:
  • if a child is at risk of anaphylaxis, or other medical condition requiring specific attention
  • procedures for management of an occurrence of an infectious disease at the school.

Documented policies and procedures

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» the school displays information regarding its philosophy, operations, achievements, procedures and upcoming events in various ways.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how staff and families are:
  • encouraged to contribute to the development and review of school-specific priorities and procedures
  • informed about changes to policies and procedures.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» documented policies and procedures in relation to:
  • enrolment and orientation
  • health and safety
  • safeguarding children and young people from harm and abuse
  • staffing
» relationships with children, including whole school approaches to guiding behaviour.

Risk management and employing fit and proper staff

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» appropriate supervision and prompt attention to potential risk.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» staff knowledge and responsibilities of duty of care for children, including any applicable Departmental policies
» how staff are provided with professional learning and kept updated in relation to their responsibilities under child protection legislation and other risk management policies
» staff's understanding of their legal obligations under mandatory reporting legislation
» responsibilities, practice and effectiveness of evacuation and lockdown procedures
» human resource management procedures including recruitment, selection and deployment of staff, access to training and development and leave management arrangements.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» the Department's security and emergency management procedures and any relevant site-specific plans, for example, the school's Fire and Emergency Evacuation Plan.
» evidence that accurate records are maintained, for example, Working with Vulnerable People registration and first aid qualifications.

Complaints and misconduct

Examples of what you may discuss:

» how stakeholders (staff, families and community members) are informed of the full range of options available to them if they wish to raise a concern.

Examples of what you may sight:

» a documented grievance and complaints management procedure, including evidence that disputes and complaints are investigated and documented in a timely manner
» information for families on how complaints and grievances are made and how they are managed by the school.

ELEMENT 7.1.3 Roles and responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the school.

What element 7.1.3 aims to achieve

Individuals working in schools should have a clear understanding of their role, responsibilities and the expectations for their performance. A comprehensive induction process plays a critical role in creating and maintaining a positive, cohesive and professional school culture.

Considerations for meeting element 7.1.3

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» all staff:
  • are confident in their role and make a positive contribution to the school community
  • applying the Department's values in their day-to-day work and interactions
  • offer support and assistance to colleagues, children and families.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how responsibilities and expectations are communicated to all staff at induction and throughout the year, including relief teachers
» school leaders and teachers' understandings of:
  • the Early Years Learning Framework, AC and the ELTP model and evidence-based early years' pedagogy.
  • the school's statement of philosophy and associated Business Plan, Operational Plan and School Improvement Plan and their role in implementing these
  • the Tasmanian Quality Standards
» how the school's code of conduct or the Department's conduct and behaviour standards are used to inform performance management practices
» with new staff members: their level of understanding of the philosophy and vision of the school and the context in which it operates.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» the school's documented induction process
» information provided to all staff (including relief teachers) about the school and their role and responsibilities.

STANDARD 7.2 Leadership

Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.

How standard 7.2 contributes to quality teaching and learning

Effective leadership builds and maintains a professional workplace in which all staff contribute to each other's ongoing professional learning; communicate and raise issues openly and participate in respectful debate.

School and early years' leaders require knowledge and understanding of early years' pedagogy and curriculum. This ensures cohesion and continuity of learning appropriate to the age and development of each child. Research demonstrates a strong link between leadership and improved learning outcomes for children. Effective leaders are clear about the school's core values, vision and unique context and have the skills to effectively communicate shared goals and Department expectations for high performance and high-quality care.

They ensure all children access and participate in quality learning, and demonstrate an ongoing commitment to inclusion, equity and respect for diversity in all aspects of the school.

Questions to guide reflection on practice for standard 7.2

» How does the leadership within our school contribute to the development of a positive organisational culture?

» To what extent does our school's leadership contribute to children's learning and wellbeing?

» How do we raise awareness of inclusion and a culturally responsive pedagogy among school staff, and support teachers to promote and reduce the barriers to inclusion for all children and families?

» How are aspirant leaders supported in the school?

» How are we creating opportunities for professional conversations?

» How do our performance management processes promote continuous improvement?

» How are resources allocated and targeted to support our quality improvement plan?

ELEMENT 7.2.1 Continuous improvement

There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.

What element 7.2.1 aims to achieve

Quality schools have an ongoing commitment to high performance and high-quality care for all children and staff. They use a range of information, observations, reflections and data to monitor and review their performance to guide planning and improve school performance. Schools balance their consideration of test scores and other quantitative measures alongside less tangible but equally important capabilities relating to perseverance, creativity, agency, critical thinking empathy and intercultural understandings. A culture of ongoing reflection and review offers challenge, inspires motivation, and promotes staff satisfaction. This provides opportunities for all staff to improve their practice, which contributes directly to improved learning outcomes for children.

Connections to the ELTP model –
Collaborative Learning Communities of Research, Action and Reflection
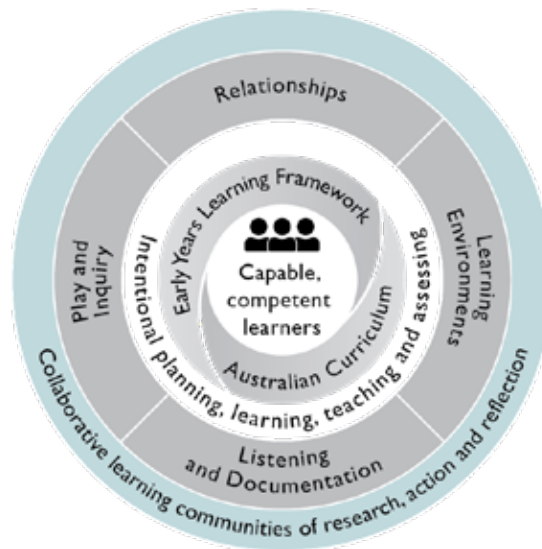
Considerations for meeting element 7.2.1

Regular self-assessment

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» timetabled opportunities for early years teams to meet and jointly reflect on practices and plan for improvement

» all early years teachers (including relevant specialist teachers) jointly contributing to discussions about children's learning and opportunities for improvement

» evidence that improvement plans are working documents that are subject to constant review and modification according to evolving needs and achievements.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how the school:
  - aligns program delivery with quality improvement planning
  - collects and uses information from a range of sources (for example, Australian Early Development Census, Kindergarten Development Check, Parent and Student Satisfaction Surveys, TQS determinations, and classroom observations) as part of the process of self-assessment and planning for quality improvement
  - gathers evidence/data to inform self-assessment and quality improvement processes. Are additional or different forms of data required?

» the approach taken to ensure all teachers and other relevant staff have jointly engaged in the analysis of school practices and performance, including the TQS review process

» the processes in place for review and planning for improvement using the Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach, in particular, the TQS.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» evidence that the philosophy/vision statement are reviewed in consultation with staff and families

» information collected from families, children and staff about their perceptions of the school

» documentation relating to the TQS staff reflections and an associated plan for continuous improvement, and the maintenance of element and standard achievements.

ELEMENT 7.2.2 Educational leadership

The program leader is supported and leads the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle.

What element 7.2.2 aims to achieve

An ongoing cycle of assessment and planning is critical to the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning programs. The early years program leader guides and develops teachers' and families' understandings about age-appropriate pedagogies and research endorsed approaches in the early years of schooling. They lead critical reflection discussions and processes to examine program practice and curriculum quality, explore research, and identify and plan for continuous improvements to ensure the learning, wellbeing, equity and inclusion of each child.

Considerations for meeting element 7.2.2

Educational leadership

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» school leaders and program leaders:
  • working with teachers to build capacity and understanding of their early years pedagogy and practice, including ways (and what) they assess, reflect on and plan for children's learning
  • supporting teachers to implement strategies that provide differentiation within all programs
» program cohesion, order and evidence of planned progression in the teaching and learning program provided across the early years of schooling.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how program leaders guide reflective practice by creating opportunities for mentoring and professional dialogue with teachers
» opportunities to examine, plan for and implement inquiry and intentional play-based teaching and learning
» how the school engages families in conversations about high quality practices in the early years and intentional play-based teaching and learning
» how shared understandings are developed and considered to ensure curriculum development and delivery across the school is based on children's current skills, knowledge and understandings and do not imply a 'one size fits all' approach
» how program leaders support and build teachers' understandings of how to assess, plan, and deliver content across all aspects of the curriculum
» opportunities exist for teachers to assume leadership roles that reflect their interests and strengths, and support their growth
» how school leaders and program leaders support teachers through change management.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» documentation of school and program leaders providing feedback and guidance to teachers about assessment and planning cycles and curriculum content.

ELEMENT 7.2.3 Development of professionals

Teachers and staff members' performance is regularly evaluated and individual plans are in place to support learning and development.

What element 7.2.3 aims to achieve

A system of regular performance review alongside individual learning and development plans are essential to the development of skills and professional knowledge of teachers. Performance planning and review ensures that the knowledge, skills and practices of teachers and other staff members are current, and that areas requiring further development are addressed through professional learning plans that:

» develop teachers' professional knowledge, skills and practice for the early years

» support creativity, imagination, innovation and continuous quality improvement

» build an understanding of current research about how children develop and learn; and the practices that optimise their learning

» support teachers to keep up to date with current policies, practice and thinking.

Considerations for meeting element 7.2.3

Supporting staff learning and development

Examples of what you may **observe**:

» Program leaders and teachers using the professional standards of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership to identify their:

  • current and developing capabilities

  • professional aspirations

  • achievements and areas for improvement

» contemporary resources being shared and reviewed by program leaders and teachers.

Examples of what you may **discuss**:

» how

  • the effort, contribution and achievement of staff, teachers and program leaders are acknowledged and celebrated

  • performance processes identify strengths and priorities for improvement, and how these are addressed and monitored

  • teachers set performance and learning goals

  • school leaders, program leaders and teachers build on and strengthen their understanding of the TQS

  • school resources are strategically directed towards improvements in areas of identified priority.

Examples of what you may **sight**:

» evidence that performance reviews for all staff are conducted regularly and include plans for professional development based on strengths, needs, interests and goals

» evidence of participation by school leaders, program leaders and teachers in professional learning to update their knowledge and skills relating to early childhood education.

APPENDIX 1
THE KINDERGARTEN TO YEAR 2 IMPROVEMENT APPROACH GUIDE GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

This glossary explains key terms used in the Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach Guide

Additional needs:

The term used for children who require or will benefit from specific considerations or adaptations and who:

» are Aboriginals or Torres Strait Islanders

» are recent arrivals in Australia

» have a culturally and linguistically diverse background

» live in isolated geographic locations

» are experiencing difficult family circumstances or stress

» are at risk of abuse or neglect

» are experiencing language and communication difficulties

» have a diagnosed disability—physical, sensory, intellectual or autism spectrum disorder

» have a medical or health condition

» demonstrate challenging behaviours and behavioural or psychological disorders

» have developmental delays

» have learning difficulties

» are gifted or have special talents

» have other extra support needs.

It is important to note that:

» additional needs arise from different causes, and that causes require different responses

» any child may have additional needs from time to time.

Agency: Being able to make choices and decisions, to influence events and to have an impact on one's world. EYLF, 2009, p.45

Analysing learning: Observing, evaluating and examining children's learning in relation to the learning outcomes of the approved learning frameworks.

Approved learning frameworks: Learning frameworks approved by the Council of Australian Government's Education Council (*Education Acts 4(2)*).

Assessment and planning cycle: The assessment and planning cycle process includes: observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection. This ongoing process is used by teachers, with support from the program leader and in partnership with families and other professionals, to design programs that enhance and extend each child's learning and development.

Assessment, rating and validation: The process by which teachers' practices in the early years are assessed, rated by schools against the TQS, with the ratings independently validated.

Australian Curriculum: The Australian Curriculum is a national curriculum for all primary and secondary schools in Australia that provides schools, teachers, parents and children a clear understanding of what children should learn.

Authorised guardian: In relation to a child, means a person who has been given permission by a parent or family member of the child to collect the child from the school.

Belonging, Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF): The EYLF is Australia's first national framework for early childhood teachers. The EYLF is linked to and embedded in the NQS. It guides teachers to develop quality programs for young children. It also describes the early childhood pedagogy (principles and practice) and the outcomes that provide goals for young children's learning.

Child and Family Learning Centres: Child and Family Learning Centres support families with children from birth to 5 to access education, health and care.

Child-centred: Consideration of each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests as the foundation for the development of the educational program in a school or educational setting.

Child directed: Child directed play and learning occurs in an educational program when children lead their learning through exploring, experimenting, investigating and being creative in ways that they initiate and control. Child directed learning promotes children's agency by enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.

Children: Refers to children who attend Kindergarten, Prep, Year 1 and Year 2.

Collaboration: Working together cooperatively towards common goals. Collaboration is achieved through the sharing of information, joint planning and the development of common understandings and objectives.

Collaborative learning: Children engaging with other children and teachers to collaboratively work with, learn from and help.

Collaborative partnership: A partnership between the teachers, families, children and community/ies and school that is based on active communication, consultation and collaboration and aims to build respectful relationships, support families and promote children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.

Community: The local or wider social, cultural or geographical context shared with the school.

Community engagement: Developing respectful and responsive connections with the immediate or wider community to build connections and relationships.

Continuity of staff: Staffing arrangements that promote continuity of staff to enhance children's wellbeing, learning and development. Continuity refers to achieving as much consistency as possible with the allocation of dedicated staff to early learning class/(es). Wherever possible, children have regular interactions with core staff continually throughout the school year.

Continuous improvement: Ongoing improvement in the provision of quality education. The Kindergarten to Year 2 Improvement Approach aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvement through the assessment, rating and independent validation process.

Assessment and rating encourages continuous improvement by engaging the principal and teachers in a process of self-assessment, as well as providing a mutually agreed record of their performance against the TQS. Quality schools regularly monitor and review their performance to guide planning and improve quality and outcomes for children. This creates a shared understanding of the principles that guide continuous improvement in practice, policies and procedures. Schools regularly review and update the areas identified for improvement through the reflection and assessment process.

Critical reflection: describes reflective practice that involves a deeper level of thinking and evaluation. EYLF p.18

Curriculum: In the early childhood setting, curriculum means 'all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children's learning and development' (Adapted from *Te Whariki*, NZ Ministry of Education 2017).

Curriculum decision-making: Refers to program decision-making that includes input from children and families to develop a meaningful program. Curriculum decision-making involves teachers using their pedagogical knowledge and applying the AC and the EYLF principles, practices and outcomes to plan for each child's learning and development.

Documentation: Intentionally collected artefacts which make learning or the outcomes of learning visible. These can include artefacts such as, video, audio recording, written notes and samples of work.

Education Act 2016 (the Act): The Act is a legislative framework that supports high quality teaching and learning in Tasmanian schools.

Each child: Referred to when an individualised approach is warranted, and teachers are required to modify their response to meet the needs of an individual child. An example is 'each child's current knowledge, ideas, culture and interests provide the foundation for the program'.

Early childhood teacher: A registered teacher who holds an ACECQA approved early childhood teaching qualification.

Education and care service: Any service providing or intended to provide education and care on a regular basis to children under 13 years of age (*National Law*). Note: Schools are not subject to the *Education and Care Services National Law (Application) Act 2011*. Instead, they continue to operate under the Act.

Educational program: A program that:

» is based on an approved learning framework; and

» is delivered in a manner that accords with the EYLF and AC

» is based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child; and

» is designed to take into account the individual differences of each child.

Educator: An individual who promotes children's learning and development and provides a caring and safe learning environment.

Elements: Describe the outcomes that contribute to the TQS being achieved.

Every child: Used in the TQS when it is intended to suggest an inclusive approach. It implies that all children have the same opportunity regardless of their age, gender, background or abilities. An example is 'every child is supported to participate in the program'.

Evaluation: Refers to scanning, monitoring, gathering and analysing information about children's progress towards the EYLF learning outcomes and the AC standards.

Inclusion: Involves taking into account all children's social, cultural and linguistic diversity (including learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographic location) in curriculum decision-making processes. The intent is to ensure that all children's experiences are recognised and valued. The intent is also to ensure that all children have equitable access to resources and participation, and opportunities to demonstrate their learning and to value difference. EYLF 2023, p.66

Inclusive environment: An indoor or outdoor school environment that supports every child's inclusion.

Intentional teaching: In the setting this involves teachers being deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions. EYLF 2009, p.45

Intentionality: Refers to teachers being deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.

Interactions: Social engagement between children, teachers, families and communities and play engagement between children, teachers, families and communities and their environment. Interactions are an important part of the educational curriculum/program.

Learning: A natural process of exploration that children engage in from birth as they expand their intellectual, physical, social, emotional and creative capacities. Early learning is closely linked to early development. EYLF 2023, p.67 Life-long learning is acknowledged as self-motivated process that extends intellectual, vocational and personal horizons which begins in pre- school times, and is continued throughout life.

Learning frameworks: Include the EYLF and the AC.

Learning outcome: A skill, knowledge or disposition that teachers can actively promote in collaboration with children and families. EYLF p.67

Literacy and language: In the early years context, a range of modes of communication including music, movement, dance, storytelling, visual arts, media and drama, as well as talking, reading and writing. EYLF p.66

"Meeting": Schools meet the TQS. Schools provide quality education and care in all seven quality areas.

Tasmanian Quality Standards (TQS): Sets a benchmark for quality practices and includes seven quality areas that are important to outcomes for children.

Outcome: See *Learning outcome*.

Parent: In relation to a child, includes:

» a guardian of the child
» a person who has parental responsibility for the child under a decision or order of a court.

Parenting plan: A parenting plan within the meaning of section 63C (1) of the Family Law Act 1975 (*Commonwealth*) and includes a registered parenting plan within the meaning of section 63C (6) of that Act.

Pedagogy: Teachers' professional practice, especially those aspects that involve building and nurturing relationships, curriculum/program decision-making, teaching and learning. EYLF 2023, p.67

Philosophy: See *Statement of philosophy*.

Planning cycle: See *Assessment and planning cycle*.

Play based learning: A context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, as they engage actively with people, objects and representations. EYLF p.46

Quality Areas: There are seven quality areas that are important to outcomes for children. In each Quality Area, there are two or three Standards and under each standard there are two to three elements.

Partnerships: Relationships developed and sustained between young children, their families, communities, teachers and health providers to support teaching and learning.

Program: See *Educational program*.

Program leader: The person who oversees and supports those delivering the educational program. The leader collaborates with teachers to ensure children's learning and development are guided by the learning outcomes of the EYLF and the standards of the AC.

Reflective practice: A form of ongoing learning that involves engaging with questions of philosophy, ethics and practice. Its intention is to gather information and gain insights that support, inform and enrich decision-making about children's learning. As professionals, early childhood teachers examine what happens in their settings and reflect on what they might change. EYLF 2009, p.13

Responsive teaching: The educational practice of attending and responding to children's strengths, abilities, interests, ideas and play.

Rights of the child: Human rights belonging to all children, as specified in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC).

Routines: Regular, everyday events in school settings, such as groups times, hygiene, arriving and departing. Routines are a key component of the curriculum/program. Effective routines provide children with a sense of predictability and consistency that help children to feel safe, secure and supported.

Scaffold: The teachers' decisions and actions that build on children's existing knowledge and skills to enhance their learning. EYLF p.68

School Leader: Refers to the Principal or a staff member on the leadership team.

Standards: Each standard has a high-level outcomes statement.

Statement of philosophy: See *Philosophy or vision statement.*

Philosophy or vision statement: A statement that outlines the purpose and principles under which the school operates. The philosophy or vision statement guide teachers' pedagogy, planning and practice. This may be drawn from the Department's strategic plan (2022-2024) or a school-based vision statement.

Wellbeing: Wellbeing means that children feel loved and safe, they are healthy, they have access to material basics, they are learning and participating, and they have a positive sense of culture and identity. This holistic approach acknowledges the many factors that contribute to the wellbeing of our children. (*Wellbeing for Learning – Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy,* p.5).

"Working Towards": Schools provide a safe education and care program, but there are one or more areas identified for improvement in order to meet the Standard.

Working with Vulnerable People registration (RWVP): The Department requires all employees, volunteers, contractors and external providers, or persons otherwise engaged in or associated with a child regulated activity, to maintain current Tasmanian RWVP (*DECYP – RWVP Policy,* p.3).

APPENDIX 2
KINDERGARTEN TO YEAR 2 IMPROVEMENT APPROACH GUIDE ICONS LEGEND

Observe:

What children, families, and other staff members are doing (for example, engaging in caring, friendly and respectful interactions).

Discuss:

Why and how particular practices occur at the school with other teachers and staff members.

Sight:

Documentation that supports particular practices at the school (for example, meeting minutes, and collections of children's work and documentation of children's assessments or evaluations).

Tasmanian
Government