



**Date of Decision:** [REDACTED] 2019  
**File number:** STR0048

---

**PANEL MEMBERS:** [REDACTED]

**APPLICANT:** [REDACTED]

**REGULATORY AUTHORITY:** NSW Early Childhood Education and Care  
Directorate, NSW Department of Education

---

### **Decision**

The Ratings Review Panel (the Panel) by consensus decided to amend the rating level of Standard 1.1 from Meeting NQS to Exceeding NQS, resulting in rating level of Quality Area 1 being amended from Meeting NQS to Exceeding NQS. The Panel by consensus also decided to confirm the rating levels of Standard 3.1, Standard 4.1, Standard 6.2 and Standard 7.1 as Meeting NQS. The overall rating is confirmed as Meeting NQS.

---

### **Issues under review**

1. The approved provider (the provider) sought a review of:
  - Quality Area 1, Standard 1.1
  - Quality Area 3, Standard 3.1
  - Quality Area 4, Standard 4.1
  - Quality Area 6, Standard 6.2
  - Quality Area 7, Standard 7.1



2. The approved provider (provider) sought a review of the ratings for the above Standards on the grounds that the regulatory authority failed to take into account or give sufficient weight to special circumstances or facts existing at the time of the rating assessment.
3. After the initial assessment, the provider's service was rated as:
  - Quality Area 1: Meeting NQS
    - Standard 1.1: Meeting NQS.
    - Standard 1.2: Exceeding NQS
    - Standard 1.3: Exceeding NQS
  - Quality Area 2: Meeting NQS
    - Standard 2.1: Meeting NQS.
    - Standard 2.2: Meeting NQS.
  - Quality Area 3: Meeting NQS
    - Standard 3.1: Meeting NQS.
    - Standard 3.2: Exceeding NQS.
  - Quality Area 4: Meeting NQS
    - Standard 4.1: Meeting NQS.
    - Standard 4.2: Exceeding NQS.
  - Quality Area 5: Exceeding NQS
    - Standard 5.1: Exceeding NQS.
    - Standard 5.2: Exceeding NQS.
  - Quality Area 6: Meeting NQS
    - Standard 6.1: Exceeding NQS
    - Standard 6.2: Meeting NQS.
  - Quality Area 7: Meeting NQS
    - Standard 7.1: Meeting NQS.
    - Standard 7.2: Meeting NQS.
4. The provider applied for first tier review on the basis that it believed the regulatory authority should have found the following Exceeding themes in the following Standards:
  - Standard 1.1, Theme 1.



- Standard 3.1, Theme 2 and 3.
  - Standard 4.1, Theme 3.
  - Standard 6.2, Theme 2.
  - Standard 7.1, Themes 1, 2 and 3.
5. At first tier review, the regulatory authority amended the ratings given at assessment and rating for Standard 4.1, Theme 1, and Standard 7.2, Theme 1 from Meeting to Exceeding. Standard 7.2 was subsequently amended to Exceeding NQS.
  6. The provider now submits at second tier review that it should be rated as Exceeding in Theme 1 in Standard 1.1, Themes 2 and 3 in Standard 3.1, Theme 3 in Standard 4.1, Theme 2 in Standard 6.2, and Themes 1, 2 and 3 in Standard 7.1.

### **Evidence before the panel**

7. The Panel considered all the evidence submitted by the provider and the regulatory authority. This included:
  - the application for second tier review and its attachments;
  - the Assessment and Rating Instruments and the final Assessment and Rating Report;
  - the service's feedback to the draft report;
  - the application for first tier review and its attachments;
  - the regulatory authority's findings at first tier review;
  - the regulatory authority's submission to second tier review; and
  - the provider's response to the regulatory authority's submissions.
8. The Panel was also provided with advice from ACECQA on the Quality Areas under review.

### **The Law**

9. Section 151 states 'Following a review, the Ratings Review Panel may:
  - (a) confirm the rating levels determined by the Regulatory Authority; or
  - (b) amend the rating levels.'

### **The Facts**

10. [REDACTED] is a Long Day Care with [REDACTED] approved places. The service is based in [REDACTED] NSW.



11. The assessment and rating visit took place on [REDACTED] 2019.
12. The provider received the draft report on [REDACTED] 2019 and provided feedback to the draft report on [REDACTED] 2019. The final report was sent to the provider on [REDACTED] 2019.
13. The provider applied for first tier review on [REDACTED] 2019. The regulatory authority made a decision on the review on [REDACTED] 2019. The provider received the decision on [REDACTED] 2019. The provider applied for second tier review on [REDACTED] 2019.

### Standard 1.1

14. Standard 1.1 is that:  
*The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.*
15. Theme 1 is:  
*Practice is embedded in service operations.*

### Regulatory Authority's view

#### *Assessment and rating report*

16. In the final Ratings Outcome Summary the regulatory authority states:  
*The educational leader effectively supports educators to implement and utilise the Early Years Learning Framework to develop a curriculum that maximises children's engagement in learning. Educators develop and implement the program created from their sound knowledge of each child and that experiences and interactions are relevant to them and builds on the child's current interests and abilities. It is evident that the Early Years Learning Framework, in collaboration with families and community brings together ideas, philosophies and methodologies to guide everyday practice. This enables children to make a range of decisions to influence their learning and their world.*
17. In the evidence summary under Law and Regulations the regulatory authority states:  
*S.5 Is the preschool program (R62(2)) delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher? **No***



*First tier review*

18. The provider sought an Exceeding rating in Theme 1. The regulatory authority upheld their decision that the Theme was not present.
19. In the First Tier Review Decision Notice the regulatory authority states:

***Evidence from the assessment and rating***

*The officer noted the preschool program is supported and informed by the nominated supervisor who is a qualified Early Childhood Teacher. The preschool program is supported and informed by the nominated supervisor who is a qualified Early Childhood Teacher. Educators have identified a child's need in fine motor development. Activities are planned and will be monitored over the year. Skills such as sharing resources, role modelling, resilience, collaborating in small group experiences and sharing space are encompassed in the program for preschool children. The educational leader effectively supports educators to implement and utilise the Early Years Learning Framework to develop a curriculum that maximises children's engagement in learning.*

***Evidence submitted by the approved provider***

*The approved provider claims the Early Childhood Teacher and Educational Leader of the centre drives the program and programming for individual children on all levels. The ECT runs group times with two other educators – one an accomplished Diploma educator and secondly an educator currently completing her bachelor's degree in early childhood. The ECT/educational leader/nominated supervisor is involved in working with small groups of mixed age children as this is the heart of the way the centre operates. The ECT/educational leader/nominated supervisor oversees all children's portfolios; writes documentation for particular children; provides feedback, guidance and direction to all educators for projects and portfolio entries; provides resources and the provision of text books and current research, articles, journals and relevant readings. The ECT/educational leader/nominated supervisor works with all educators to ensure there are opportunities for all children to be afforded with occasions to maximise learning and ensure positive lifelong learning outcomes for every child.*

***The panel's view***

*The panel considered evidence recorded by the officer and that submitted by the service to determine that although the ECT/educational leader/nominated supervisor is closely involved in planning and evaluating programs and children's learning, and mentoring and guiding educators in program delivery, she is also in the management roles therefore is not consistently responsible*



*for or 'working directly with children' to deliver the preschool program as dictated by the National Law, S5 Definitions—preschool program means an early childhood educational program delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher to children in the year that is 2 years before Grade 1 of school.*

*The panel has concluded that there was sufficient evidence to determine that Theme 1 should not be amended to Yes to support an overall higher rating for Standard 1.1.*

### **Approved Provider's view**

#### *Assessment and rating feedback*

20. In the Assessment and Rating Feedback Form, the provider states:

*This rating should be Exceeding.*

*As the Early Childhood Teacher and Educational Leader of the centre drives the program and programming for individual children on all levels. Through direct teaching, through support and mentoring, through providing feedback regarding project focus and content, conversation and discussion around mind mapping, observations and 'where to next' ideas.*

*This practice is embedded within our philosophy of utilising Reggio principles and practices to inform our collaborative teaching practices and guides our conversations and discussions around how, why, where and when for the children's thinking and at times our own learning opportunities and engagement.*

*The ECT runs group times with two other educators – one an accomplished Diploma educator and secondly an educator currently completing her bachelor's degree in early childhood. In 2018 the second educator working with the Educational Leader and the preschool aged children was also working towards her ECT degree with over 50% of this completed.*

*Small groups with a project-based focus through our emergent curriculum are also run by the ECT in collaboration with other educators working with this age group.*

*The ECT is also involved in working with small groups of mixed age children as this is the heart of the way the centre operates.*

21. For Theme 1, 1.1 the provider states:

*The ECT and Educational Leader works with all educators to ensure there are opportunities for all children to be afforded with occasions to maximise learning and ensure positive lifelong learning outcomes for every child.*



*This should be 'Yes'*

*Everything is informed by the Educational Leader and ECT in relation to the educational program offered.*

*The ECT oversees all children's portfolios; writes documentation for particular children; provides feedback, guidance and direction to all educators for projects and portfolio entries; provides resources and the provision of text books and current research, articles, journals and relevant readings*

*The 'preschool program' is not a traditional format as such within our environments as we believe in the capacity of the children to learn through an embedded approach, through the many projects they are involved in. This includes their work in the art studio and through their play opportunities with various peers and the ECT being present to afford suggestions in their play, offer props or provide challenges to the children's thinking.*

22. In the Assessment and rating Feedback form the provider adds information on the evidence:

██████████ –STD 1.1 ██████████ Group Program Mind Maps – written with the ECT guiding the discussion ██████████ – STD 1.1 ██████████

██████████ – how intentional teaching is used throughout the day at ██████████ Centre and 'group' time is not considered the only opportunity to provide a 'preschool program' and/or Intentional teaching.

██████████ – STD 1.1 ██████████  
██████████ sharing with primary caregiver children/families and talking about how learning will be achieved across the year and shared in the portfolio.

██████████ –STD 1.1 ██████████' letter. Provided to the families with children in the ██████████ group to provide another avenue for parents to offer feedback and input into the program.

██████████ – STD 1.1 Midyear review letter for families re: portfolios and individual children's learning, and 'where to now'. This letter provides parents with a brief overview from the primary caregiver of the child's growth and development at that point in the year, where we are moving forward to and finally provides parents

██████████ reflects how the ECT works with and informs the concept of 'preschool program' in relation to early literacy and numeracy development, fine motor skills for later school success with writing and drawing, understanding of the natural world and environments, sustainability, inclusive behaviours, cultural competency and building resilience and capacity of each



*child through our provisions, project work and art studio. This evening was also presented by the Educational leader to the parents of [REDACTED] with collaborative efforts of the educators here.*

*First tier review*

23. In the First Tier Review Feedback Form the provider states:

*This rating should be Exceeding because practice is embedded.*

*Our service operates with mixed age groupings and allows for all children to interact with all educators and receive the same quality program.*

*The evidence summary incorrectly states that the preschool program is not delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher. Our preschool program is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher.*

*As the Early Childhood Teacher and Educational Leader of the centre drives the program and programming for individual children on all levels. Through direct teaching, through support and mentoring, through providing feedback regarding project focus and content, conversation and discussion around mind mapping, observations and 'where to next' ideas.*

*This practice is embedded within our philosophy of utilising Reggio principles and practices to inform our collaborative teaching practices and guides our conversations and discussions around how, why, where and when for the children's thinking and at times our own learning opportunities and engagement. The ECT runs group times with two other educators – one an accomplished Diploma educator and secondly an educator currently completing her bachelor's degree in early childhood. In 2018 the second educator working with the Educational Leader and the preschool aged children was also working towards her ECT degree with over 50% of this completed. Small groups with a project-based focus through our emergent curriculum are also run by the ECT in collaboration with other educators working with this age group. The ECT is also involved in working with small groups of mixed age children as this is the heart of the way the centre operates. This should be 'Yes' everything is informed by the Educational Leader and ECT in relation to the educational program offered. The ECT oversees all children's portfolios; writes documentation for children; provides feedback, guidance and direction to all educators for projects and portfolio entries; provides resources and the provision of text books and current research, articles, journals and relevant readings*



*The 'preschool program' is not a traditional format as such within our environments as we believe in the capacity of the children to learn through an embedded approach, through the many projects they are involved in. This includes their work in the art studio and through their play opportunities with various peers and the ECT being present to afford suggestions in their play, offer props or provide challenges to the children's thinking.*

*The ECT and Educational Leader works with all educators to ensure there are opportunities for all children to be afforded with occasions to maximise learning and ensure positive lifelong learning outcomes for every child.*

*All educators are aware of the centre philosophy and our beliefs around the seven themes or ideas contained within this document. It informs everything we do and therefore is embedded in our daily service operations and practices.*

24. In the First Tier Review Feedback Form the provider adds information on the evidence:

██████████ – STD 1.1 ██████████ *Group Program Mind Maps – written with the ECT guiding the discussion, mentoring and providing feedback*

██████████ – STD 1.1 ██████████ – *how intentional teaching is used throughout the day at ██████████ Centre and 'group' time is not considered the only opportunity to provide a 'preschool program' and/or Intentional teaching.*

██████████ – STD 1.1 *Portfolio entry from the Educational Leader/Primary Caregiver sharing with primary caregiver children/families and talking about how learning will be achieved across the year and shared in the portfolio.*

██████████ STD 1.1 ██████████. *All educators utilise this in individual children's portfolios as the EYLF frames educators thinking, the program and philosophy of the service.*

██████████ – STD 1.1 ██████████ – *this page is also used by educators as the Primary Caregiver for individual children and the information provided by parents allows educators to be inclusive of all voices, understand what parents/families are seeking for their child within this learning environment and therefore tailor the program to these individual*



*interests, strengths and needs. This information is then combined with the educators' or Primary Caregivers knowledge of the child within the service to complete an individual [REDACTED]*

*[REDACTED] – STD 1.1 – [REDACTED]*

*[REDACTED] – STD 1.1 – [REDACTED] – introduction letter regarding group time learning.*

*[REDACTED] – STD 1.1 [REDACTED] ' letter. Provided to the families with children in the [REDACTED] group to provide another avenue for parents to offer feedback and input into the program.*

*[REDACTED] – STD 1.1 All educators at our service use the Midyear review letter for families re: portfolio's and individual children's learning, and 'where to now'. This letter is used to provide parents with a brief overview from the primary caregiver of the child's growth and development at that point in the year, where we are moving forward to and finally provides parents With the opportunity to share what they would like the educator to focus upon for learning and development now and to year end.*

*[REDACTED] – STD 1.1 Examples of Group time documentation overviews - All educators are involved in preparing a review of group time learning for the group and individual children as they understand the importance of looking carefully at short term goals and assessing where to next in recognition of the cyclic nature of planning for children and groups. These group time overview documentation pieces show how practice is embedded in service operations.*

*[REDACTED] – STD 1.1 [REDACTED] – this time each morning is for all children to be welcomed to the centre each day, to say the Acknowledgement of Country and to offer children the opportunity to tell the educators and their peers of their interests, sometimes a follow on from work gone before and this time also allows educators the opportunity to remind them of their responsibilities and how we work and play, how we respect our environments, resources and one another. It is also a time to ask questions around their knowledge of certain topics and subjects made up of child driven questions and educator's questions.*

*[REDACTED] – STD 1.1 [REDACTED]*

*[REDACTED] – STD 1.1 [REDACTED]*



██████████ – STD 1.1 ██████████ – these 'ponderings' are often from questions children are asking at home, or at the centre or sometimes discovered at ██████████.

██████████ – STD 1.1 ██████████ documentation – utilising the educators knowledge, networking with other services who instigated this project, being part of the local community and helping to further extend upon our children's growing consciousness for the importance of our world and caring for it.

██████████ reflects how the ECT works with and informs the concept of 'preschool program' in relation to early literacy and numeracy development, fine motor skills for later school success with writing and drawing, understanding of the natural world and environments, sustainability, inclusive behaviours, cultural competency and building resilience and capacity of each child through our provisions, project work and art studio. This evening was also presented by the Educational leader to the parents of ██████████ with collaborative efforts of the educators here.

#### Second tier review

25. The provider contends that they demonstrate Theme 1, and are therefore Exceeding in Standard 1.1. In the Second Tier Review Application Form the provider states:

*As the National Regulations state that the preschool program must be 'delivered' by an early childhood teacher to be considered Exceeding, the centre provides for this. The term 'delivered' is not defined in the National Law and Regulations and therefore we would argue that the dictionary definition of 'deliver' should apply. That is – provide, implement and achieve. Therefore, we submit that our early childhood teacher is 'delivering' the preschool program as our early childhood teacher provides, implements and achieves the program. As Educational Leader for the service, she personally implements the program through face to face teaching: She develops the program; she is responsible for the production of individual and group learning documentation in children's portfolios and she mentors, oversees and supports an accomplished diploma level educator as well as an educator studying to be an early childhood teacher to implement the preschool program with her.*

*We believe it is not only appropriate for the early childhood teacher to deliver the preschool program in this way in our unique mixed age group setting. But it is also a highly successful approach. The authorised officer collected*



*observations that show our program is at an exceeding level as it “maximizes children’s engagement in learning” is “based on sound knowledge of each child” and where “experiences in interactions build on the child’s interests and abilities.” Educators are “intentional and responsive , consistently stimulating children’s thinking and enriching their learning, consistently drawing on the voices, priorities and strengths of the families and local community to enhance the learning outcomes for each child and finally the authorised officer observed that the educators, “ clearly demonstrating through the day the courage and implementation of change to strengthen practice over time” Evidence points collected by the Authorised officer shows that quality proactive is embedded, with examples from all parts of the learning environments, all educators, the art studio space and outdoor environments.*

*As high-quality is embedded in our service and our preschool program is delivered by an early childhood teacher, we request the theme 1 for standard 1.1 be assessed as Exceeding.*

26. In the Second Tier Review Application Form the provider adds information on the evidence:

*Submitted evidence from draft review and Tier 1 review indicates how the ECT drives and delivers the ‘preschool program’ and that this practice is embedded within the service operations.*

### **Panel considerations**

27. The panel considered that, although the family grouping model utilised by the service does not conform to the traditional model, there is research to suggest that children being educated under these models may record positive outcomes.
28. In determining whether the service satisfied regulation 62(2) as a prerequisite to being rated Exceeding NQS, the panel considered evidence about the delivery of the preschool program by the Early Childhood Teacher (ECT). They considered the extent of ECT involvement required to be satisfied that the ECT is delivering the program. The panel considered that, on balance, the evidence submitted by the provider showed the preschool program was delivered, informed and influenced by the ECT.
29. In considering whether, in satisfaction of Theme 1, practice with respect to Standard 1.1 was embedded in the service, the panel considered evidence regarding the organisation of the program, the involvement of the early childhood teacher at the service, and the content of the program. The panel,



in particular, considered the evidence was indicative of *Educators and the educational leader demonstrating a deep understanding of the requirements of the standard and being able to explain how their approach to curriculum decision-making connects to the approved learning framework and enhances learning development for each child.*

### **Panel decision**

30. The panel considered that the service was demonstrating Exceeding Theme 1, amending the finding of the regulatory authority that the service was not demonstrating this Theme. As the service was already demonstrating Exceeding Themes 2 and 3, the panel decided by consensus to amend the rating level of Standard 1.1 from Meeting NQS to Exceeding NQS.

### **Standard 3.1**

31. Standard 3.1 is that:  
*The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.*
32. Exceeding Theme 2 is that:  
*Practice is informed by critical reflection.*
33. Exceeding Theme 3 is that:  
*Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community.*

### **Regulatory Authority's view**

#### *Assessment and rating report*

34. In the final Rating Outcome Summary the regulatory authority states:

*There is a calmness and flow within the building which extends to the outdoor environments that provides opportunities for children to be involved in self-chosen experiences. The 'family grouping' concept is easily supported and enhanced with the [REDACTED] premises. Areas are well-maintained, clean and safe with educators setting up learning spaces that are flexible and stimulating and consistently enhances every child's learning and development.*



### *First Tier Review*

35. The provider sought an Exceeding rating in Themes 2 and 3. The regulatory authority did not amend the ratings at first tier review.
36. In the First Tier Review Decision Notice the regulatory authority states:

#### ***Exceeding theme 2 Practice is informed by critical reflection***

*The officer noted, QIP note: The centre is set in a [REDACTED] with lovely surrounds making it a very homely, relaxed and inviting setting for children and families. The service outdoor area surrounds the premises and is enjoyed by the group of children throughout the day. The cot rooms are situated either side of a large and well-resourced nappy change room. Both cot rooms have the service 'Sleep and Rest' policy displayed and information on 'Safe Sleeping' by Sids and Kids. Well established trees and built shade structures surround the yards with sufficient shade. As the weather has been extremely hot, simultaneous indoor and outdoor play has been limited. Will restart as the weather cools down. An art studio is set up for the children to access independently through free play and is normally busy as children arrive. Included on the daily safety checklist is provision for monthly checks and maintenance repairs. A maintenance folder of tasks to be completed is stored in the office. The tasks are informed from the daily safety checklists and are referred to the nominated supervisor to follow up with the management committee. A cleaner is employed to clean the inside of the service 5 days and commences after the children have left.*

#### ***Evidence submitted by the approved provider.***

*The approved provider claims parents and community members can engage with the environments through; the open-door policy, being part of working bees and other events onsite –welcoming morning teas, [REDACTED], special visitor mornings. All these times throughout our days, add to opportunities to make the spaces speak of 'home' for children and their families. As a team any changes made to environments and provisions are discussed through weekly planning meetings. All educators critically reflected upon practice and decided in recognition of the importance of maintaining connections and communication so all know what's happening, changes would not be made until discussion and reflection was first made. Therefore, educators reflect together and individually, as well as with children upon the design of the physical environment, considering ways to make changes to strengthen inclusion and participation. These changes are then made in the*



*continued effort to ensure learning for all is a combination of challenge, intrigue and success. Throughout the learning spaces, there are conscious decisions made through reflection, for instance the art studio space with backless chairs for children to work at. This is to encourage good posture when working and balance, control and coordination as children work on their art pieces and designs. The service has submitted written feedback and mentioned [REDACTED] –Weekly planning meeting notes –conversation, reflection and consideration given to necessary change, engagement and challenge considered within learning environments and through the collaborative teams' thinking processes' as supporting physical evidence.*

### **The panel's view**

*The panel considered that as mentioned by the service as supporting evidence for Theme 2 of Standard 3, [REDACTED] is a copy of the service 'Off site [REDACTED]' contained in the service's submitted evidence for Quality Area 2. The panel considered that the officer has recorded evidence to support meeting practice, and written examples of evidence provided by the service are consistent with meeting practices for Theme 2 regarding practice is informed by critical reflection in relation to the design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.*

*The panel has concluded that there was insufficient evidence to determine that Theme 2 should be amended to Yes to support an overall higher rating for Standard 3.1.*

### **Exceeding theme 3 Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or community**

#### **Evidence from the assessment and rating**

*The officer noted a cleaning checklist is provided for the cleaner, with time line of tasks to be completed. For example, weekly, monthly, six monthly and annually. Communication notes are shared between educators and the cleaner if extra work needs to be completed.*

*The maintenance folder of tasks to be completed is informed from the daily safety checklists and are referred to the nominated supervisor to follow up with the management committee. A regular audit of the kitchen is conducted by the local Council. A checklist report is completed, and the cook advises*



*there has been no action required. The audit focus changes year to year, with this year focus on service fridges and freezers.*

***Evidence submitted by the approved provider***

*The approved provider claims the sand pit with water pump 'river' was created through feedback from families and educators and a successful grant application. This was also in recognition of the importance of teaching children about conservation of water. The service have mentioned [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] Kitchen Audit –the visit for 2019 was performed at the start of the year. The attached report was from 2018 which was again a 5-star rating with no concerns addressed' and [REDACTED] - Outline of [REDACTED] application 2018 and [REDACTED] Council letter of support for grant application to redevelop section of the outdoor environment This grant application was put together through collaborative efforts with the committee and educators which represent many voices within the service. As we also consulted with local contacts regarding the Aboriginal Art work installation [REDACTED] ).*

***The panel's view***

*The panel considered the examples of written feedback from the service documented as "Evidence points collected by the authorised officer that demonstrate that practice is informed by critical reflection and by meaningful engagement with families and community" have been taken from the officer's evidence for Standard 1.3 which is relative to that Element and not 3.1 as suggested by the service. Not all examples and evidence provided by the service is relevant to this Standard, and does not demonstrate how the service draws on the voices, priorities and strengths of children and families, or how ongoing, meaningful engagement with families and community contributes to the arrangement and planning of indoor and outdoor environments, and changes made in relation to this, to meet the exceeding criteria for Theme 3 regarding the design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of the service.*

*The panel has concluded that there was insufficient evidence to determine that Theme 3 should be amended to Yes to support an overall higher rating for Standard 3.1*



## Approved Provider's view

### Assessment and rating feedback

37. In the Assessment and Rating Feedback Form the provider states:

*The standard should be Exceeding with the two themes of informed by critical reflection and shaped by meaningful engagement with families and community as 'Yes'*

38. In the Assessment and Rating Feedback Form the provider adds information on the evidence:

██████████ Documentation – though educator weekly meeting discussions it was discovered there was a strong following of the ██████████ TV program, and more specifically, the ██████████. All the children wanted to be a ██████████ and the educator used this opportunity to extend their gross motor skills, collaboration and cooperative team work skills and problem solving skills as they worked out new and novel ways of moving their bodies and creating ██████████ courses using resources in different ways.

██████████ - ██████████ – some of the children in attendance have older siblings attending ██████████ with this teacher. They asked her if she would come to the service and teach the children some important lessons and moves and she happily attended.

██████████ - ██████████ – discussion and information regarding successful ██████████ day for our ██████████ audit

██████████ - Outline of ██████████ application 2018 and ██████████ Council letter of support for grant application to re-develop section of the outdoor environment

██████████ - ██████████ – flooring issues and ██████████ meeting minutes

██████████ - ██████████ Kitchen Audit – the visit for 2019 was performed at the start of the year, but the centre is yet to receive this report. The attached report was from 2018 which was again a 5-star rating with no concerns addressed.

### First Tier Review

39. In the First Tier Review Feedback Form the provider states:



*The standard should be Exceeding with the two themes of informed by critical reflection and shaped by meaningful engagement with families and community as 'Yes'.*

*A very important component of our teaching practice in recognition of our philosophical values of the Reggio Emilia approach to education and learning is the Art Studio. This specialised space is utilised daily to support this work and thinking. Children are afforded opportunities to work here following theories and ideas alone and with peers, being mentored, supported and encouraged by the dedicated art teacher. It is through these quality interactions, calm and reflective conversations and the opportunities provided to re-visit thinking and work, with real art materials that children's learning is further enhanced by the physical environment that is the art studio.*

*The physical environment – a [REDACTED] is also used to support meaningful family engagement. The spaces speak of 'home' and of course the mixed age grouping is supported and enhanced through the many opportunities to work on all spaces throughout the house. Parents and community members can engage with the environments through; our open-door policy, being part of working bees and other events onsite – welcoming morning teas, [REDACTED], special visitor mornings. All these times throughout our days, add to opportunities to make the spaces speak of 'home' for children and their families.*

*Educators are constantly observing and reflecting upon the suitability of the environments and provisions within it in direct correlation with our philosophy as we ensure it is "relevant and connected to the understandings and interests of the children and educators"*

*As a team any changes made to environments and provisions are discussed through weekly planning meetings. All educators critically reflected upon our practice and decided in recognition of the importance of maintaining connections and communication so all know what's happening, changes would not be made until discussion and reflection was first made. Therefore, educators reflect together and individually, as well as with children upon the design of the physical environment, considering ways to make changes to strengthen inclusion and participation. These changes are then made in the continued effort to ensure learning for all is a combination of challenge, intrigue and success.*

*Throughout the learning spaces, there are conscious decisions made through reflection, for instance the art studio space with backless chairs for children to work at. This is to encourage good posture when working and balance, control and coordination as children work on their art pieces and designs.*



*The sand pit with water pump 'river' was created through feedback from families and educators and a successful grant application. This was also in recognition of the importance of teaching children about conservation of water.*

40. In the First Tier Review Feedback form the provider adds information on the evidence:

██████████ - ██████████ – *through educator weekly meeting discussions it was discovered there was a strong following of the ██████████ TV program, and more specifically, the ██████████. All the children wanted to be a ██████████ and the educator used this opportunity to extend their gross motor skills, collaboration and cooperative team work skills and problem-solving skills as they worked out new and novel ways of moving their bodies and creating ██████████ courses using resources in different ways. The environment was used effectively through critical reflection by the educators and children and much conversation ensured with families around this interest and possible ways of working in the environment here.*

██████████ - ██████████ – *some of the children in attendance have older siblings attending ██████████ with this teacher. They asked her if she would come to the service and teach the children some important lessons and moves and she happily attended. The main playroom was re-configured to accommodate this karate lesson.*

██████████ - *Outline of ██████████ application 2018 and ██████████ Council letter of support for grant application to re-develop section of the outdoor environment This grant application was put together through collaborative efforts with the committee and educators which represent many voices within the service. As we also consulted with local contacts regarding the Aboriginal Art work installation (██████████), we feel we were informed by families and community.*

██████████ - ██████████ – *flooring issues and ██████████ meeting minutes.*

██████████ - ██████████ – *Kitchen Audit – the visit for 2019 was performed at the start of the year, but the centre is yet to receive this report. The attached report was from 2018 which was again a 5-star rating with no concerns addressed.*

██████████ – *Weekly planning meeting notes – conversation, reflection and consideration given to necessary change, engagement and challenge considered within learning environments and through the collaborative teams' thinking processes.*



██████████ – Art studio documentation – art exhibition 2018 and learning to see, painting Monet. Learning about colour, foreground, background, and proportion, also learning to paint like an Impressionist painter. The authorised officer incorrectly states in ██████████ that the “nominated supervisor stated that the outdoor resources and vice versa are not a key way of introducing nature or other resources to the children” when in fact they are. The educators ensure there are elements and natural resources indoors and out at all times. Further, the authorised officer noted many times through evidence collection points that the environments are homelike through the addition of soft furnishings, indoor plants and natural environment elements.

██████████ - Morning Meeting Notes and ██████████ documentation

#### Second tier review

41. The provider contends that they demonstrate Themes 2 and 3, and are therefore Exceeding in Standard 3.1. In the Second Tier Review Application Form, the provider states:

*The evidence submitted for the Tier 1 review appears to have been incorrectly entered/attached as the approved provider discussed ██████████ as being weekly programming meeting notes attachment and the panel mentions as evacuation fire drill procedure?*

*We believe that our robust discussions and review of the environments on an ongoing basis shows that we critically reflecting upon these and changes made are as reflective of all voices within this process.*

*In relation to theme 3 – monthly committee meeting ensure there is consistent representation from the parent / family body of the centre in relation to WH and S policies, Staffing and Physical Environments. The process allows for grant opportunities to be discussed, programming ideas shared and robust discussion to inform practice and ensure reflection and change process happen in light of these discussions and observations of children/educators/family input and input from the wider community. Examples also utilised in Quality Area 1, Standard 1 and 3,, Quality Area 3, Standard 2 and Quality Area 5, Standard 2 also show how educators work to ensure the two exceeding themes around environments are fit for purpose and inclusive as well as maintained appropriately*

42. In the Second Tier Review Application Form the provider adds information on the evidence:



[REDACTED] :  
[REDACTED] – in support of Theme 2 has been re-attached as this was incorrectly attached / entered during the Tier 1 review process.

*Submitted evidence from draft review and Tier 1 review show the level of involvement, the critical reflection and engagement with families and community that the centre prides itself upon.*

[REDACTED] *Maintenance List 2017 – produced by management committee and works prioritised through discussion with educators and committee members to ensure these were carried out effectively at Working Bees across the year where all families can be involved and part of the process.*

### **Panel considerations**

43. When considering whether, in relation to Theme 2, the service undertakes critical reflection with respect to Standard 3.1, the panel was unable to find evidence of critical reflection that *reflected robust debate, discussion and opportunities for input by all educators.*
44. While the panel considered the service to be engaging in some level of reflection on and/or evaluation of their practice with respect to Standard 3.1, the panel did not consider the evidence to show comprehensive reflective practice at the service. For example, consistent reflection targeted at *creating an inclusive, safe physical environment that strengthens children's learning and development outcomes and enhances participation in the program* was not evident from the evidence provided.
45. The panel considered that the reflective practice undertaken by the service did not, therefore, amount to critical reflection in accordance with Exceeding Theme 2 for Standard 3.1.
46. In considering how, in relation to Theme 3, the service engages with families and/or communities, the panel was able to refer to examples of engagement with families but could not find evidence demonstrating how such engagement shaped the service's practice with respect to Standard 3.1.
47. The panel acknowledged there was evidence of engagement with families, for example the 'sandpit water pump river' being created with feedback from families. However, for engagement to be meaningful, the panel considered



that it should see clear, consistent evidence of *opportunities for collaboration with family and community partners being built into the service's approach to designing and making changes to the physical environment*. The panel considered that evidence of the receipt of feedback from families does not by itself constitute meaningful engagement that shapes practice. The panel expressed its expectation to have seen evidence of projects with collaboration throughout, including in the initiating stages, rather than evidence of the collection of feedback at one point in the process only.

48. The panel acknowledged the high expectations inherent within this Exceeding Theme to demonstrate that the design and changes to the service's physical environment are shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community.

#### **Panel decision**

49. The panel by consensus decided to confirm the rating level for Standard 3.1 as Meeting NQS.

#### **Standard 4.1**

50. Standard 4.1 is that:  
*Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development.*
51. Exceeding Theme 3 is that:  
*Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community.*

#### **Regulatory Authority's view**

##### *Assessment and rating report*

52. In the final Rating Outcome Summary the regulatory authority states:  
*The approved provider in collaboration with the nominated supervisor promotes and assists educators to develop a sense of belonging to the service, building confidence and pro-actively supporting continuity of staff. This process is evident in the manner educators communicate throughout the day to day operations and the warm relationships families and children display to all educators and staff. The service's approach to the organisation of educators and staff is informed by the qualifications, strengths, priorities and professional developmental goals of educators, which in turn supports positive experiences for all children at all times. However, effective and efficient record keeping systems are developing.*



*The feedback provided by the service to support change for 4.1.1 to Met has been acknowledged. In particular, the feedback highlighting the circumstances the nominated supervisor and administrative assistant were undertaking the day of the assessment and rating visit. Response to the requested documents was implemented. Change to 4.1.1 to Met.*

*The feedback provided by the service to support changes for 4.1 to Yes for Theme 1, Yes for Theme 2 and Yes for Theme 3 has been considered. Theme 2 for 4.1 has been acknowledged to change. The feedback has been considered and the rating changed.*

53. In the Evidence Summary the regulatory authority records a 'No' in confirming compliance with the following regulation:

*the R.145-154 [incl amended R.153]*

*Ensure that all records relating to staff at the service are maintained and include all of the required information? including - Records for the nominated supervisors, each educator, educator assistant, co-ordinator and staff member, volunteer and student. The name of the educational leader and responsible person. A record of educators working directly with children. A record of access to an early childhood teacher (if required by R.152). A register of family day care educators (where applicable).*

#### *First Tier Review*

54. The provider sought an Exceeding rating in Theme 3. The regulatory authority upheld their decision that the Theme was not present.
55. In the First Tier Review Decision Notice the RA states:

#### ***Exceeding theme 3***

***Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or community***

#### ***Evidence from the assessment and rating.***

*The officer noted the roster for each day is pasted into the daily diary. The times the educator is working directly with the children is detailed and specific breaks. The responsible person is also noted and the time frame they are in the role recorded. The service boasts a team of highly qualified educators, educators working towards higher qualifications and an educator who has worked with children with additional needs and who shares knowledge and*



*strategies. Educators share how great it is to work at the service, a very collaborative team that functions well. Most of the educators are long standing and been with the service for a number of years. The quality of educators, the experience and knowledge they have of families and the collaborative relationships the team of educators have established over the years is reflected in the warm and welcoming partnerships demonstrated to each other, families and the children.*

### ***Evidence submitted by the approved provider***

*The approved provider claims as the service operates as a community-based, not for profit space, there is always a management committee made up of parents with children in attendance. Committee meetings are to discuss aspects around staffing, ensuring quality and appropriate qualifications, looking at continuity and consistency in the roster for stability for each child and family and of course high-quality learning opportunities. At all times purposeful consideration is made to the organisation and continuity of educators and the educator team within the centre which is currently well established with many years' service here. The educators reflect upon the staff roster and at the start of the year days off are organised in advance for those on the long-shift roster to ensure families are aware of when educators are onsite. Discussion with the families and has been developed as the most dependable approach for operation of the roster leading to consistent opportunities for relationship building between educators, families, and children.*

### ***The panel's view***

*The panel considered that the written examples and attachments provided by the service such as a staff roster and a job description do not support service claims, or demonstrate how the service draws on the voices, priorities and strengths of children and families, or how ongoing, meaningful engagement with families and/or community contributes to and shapes staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development, and changes made in relation to this, to meet the exceeding criteria for Theme 3.*

*The panel has concluded that there was insufficient evidence to determine that Theme 3 should be amended to Yes to support an overall higher rating for Standard 4.1*



## Approved Provider's view

### Assessment and rating feedback

56. In the Assessment and Rating Feedback Form the provider states:

*The Standard should be rated as Exceeding.*

57. In the Assessment and Rating Feedback Form the provider adds information on the evidence:

*At the time of the Assessment and Rating visit, the service had at the end of the previous week signed up to an online platform, [REDACTED] where all employment and record keeping of qualifications and information for employees was to be set up. As the centre had completed one webinar at the end of 2018 and was about to begin the 'on boarding process' information was not ready at that point in time. Each educator has their own log in, can view their contract, upload qualifications, certifications, and PD certificates, maintain up to date knowledge regarding all employment policies and procedures and know their responsibilities and entitlements. The management committee in [REDACTED] 2018 decided that using this system would be beneficial in maintaining records and ensuring responsibilities as the employer were met and therefore effective governance procedures and systems in place.*

*[REDACTED] – [REDACTED] information on set up for an employee Prior to this, and at the time of the Assessment and Rating visit, current policies, procedures and contracts were in place, as were qualifications and necessary documentation required under regs 145 – 154. The service had a copy of the transcript of subjects completed by the Art Educator to be recognised as a Diploma on file. The authorised officer did not feel this was enough/suitable evidence. The Art Educator was able to ask the Tafe to supply her with written confirmation of the fact that she be considered Diploma qualified due to the completion of her Year 1 subjects towards the early childhood bachelor's degree. This was completed and sent to the centre on [REDACTED] February and supplied to the authorised officer on [REDACTED] February accordingly*

*Human error on the part of the First Aid provider [REDACTED] meant that one Responsible Person appeared to not have the correct qualification. This was also rectified during the Assessment and Rating visit with a copy of the correct qualification presented to the authorised officer accordingly*



### *First Tier Review*

58. In the First Tier Review Feedback Form the provider states:

*The Standard should be rated as Exceeding because practice is embedded across service operations and is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and community.*

59. In the First Tier Review Feedback Form the provider adds the following evidence:

*At the time of the Assessment and Rating visit, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], the service had at the end of the previous week signed up to an online platform, [REDACTED] where all employment and record keeping of qualifications and information for employees was to be set up.*

*As the centre had completed one webinar at the end of 2018 and was about to begin the 'on boarding process' all information was not ready at that point in time. In recognition of the importance of good governance around employment, the 2018 management committee, after discussion and reflection decided that this [REDACTED] subscription was a positive way forward with employment practices. Using this system would be beneficial in maintaining records and ensuring responsibilities as the employer were always met and therefore effective governance procedures and systems in place. The committee also recognised that the use of this system then allowed for updates through the various organisations, government departments and anything to do with employment would be correct and not out of date information. Each educator has their own log in, can view their contract, upload qualifications, certifications, and PD certificates, maintain up to date knowledge regarding all employment policies and procedures and know their responsibilities and entitlements.*

*[REDACTED] [REDACTED] information on set up for an employee Prior to this, and at the time of the Assessment and Rating visit, current policies, procedures and contracts were in place, as were qualifications and necessary documentation required. As a family grouped environment, the management committee recognises the need for not only highly qualified and experienced educators in attendance on a consistent basis, but also always employs over ratio numbers of educators in recognition of the importance of relationships and positive interactions for each child and family. The centre is unique not only with its family grouped environment, but also the offering of a dedicated art studio space which is operated by an educator dedicated to this space who*



*is not counted in ratio numbers when onsite. This educator provides meaningful engagement and opportunities with a variety of art and craft materials and this information feeds into the program out onto the main floor. All educators are aware of the committee and know who the members are. The [REDACTED] has close connections and communicates regularly with all throughout the year and there is always collaboration and communication informing practice and all voices heard. As the service operates as a community-based, not for profit space, there is always a management committee made up of parents with children in attendance. Committee meetings are to discuss aspects around staffing, ensuring quality and appropriate qualifications, looking at continuity and consistency in the roster for stability for each child and family and of course high-quality learning opportunities. At all times purposeful consideration is made to the organisation and continuity of educators and the educator team within the centre which is currently well established with many years' service here.*

*[REDACTED] – Educator and Staff Roster examples - The educators reflect upon the staff roster and at the start of the year days off are organised in advance for those on the long-shift roster to ensure families are aware of when educators are onsite. The educators also work across two weeks on early shifts and two weeks on late shifts so families know who their child will see in the mornings and afternoons. This is also done through critical reflection upon our practices, discussion with the families and has been developed as the most dependable approach for operation of the roster leading to consistent opportunities for relationship building between educators, families, and children. To maintain a consistent approach to staffing the Director replaces educators on the floor on their shifts wherever possible and uses a small known pool of casual educators.*

*[REDACTED] – 2IC job description – the Educational Leader/Director has established a system whereby two Diploma educators are able to increase their leadership abilities within the staff team and take on extra roles and responsibilities. This ensures consistency, clear communication and allows for the embedding of policies, procedures and programming knowledge and practice clearly by all educators. This system also provides opportunities for the Educational Leader to offer assistance, guidance, and mentor educators as part of the educational leader role. When adding to the casual pool, educators are employed for a paid 3-hour trial prior to commencing work at the service to ensure they are the 'right fit' for the children, families, environment, and staff team.*



### Second Tier Review

60. The provider contends that they demonstrate Theme 3, and are therefore Exceeding in Standard 4.1. In the Second Tier Review Application Form the provider states:

*The Guide to the National Quality Framework states that “minor adjustments are only given for matters that do not seriously impact on quality”. The regulatory authority states that a minor adjustment under a standard demonstrates that practice is not embedded. However, there were special circumstances around the time of the visit that should also be considered. Not only was the centre [REDACTED] but had also experienced an unusually large intake of new children and families. As well as this difficult time frame the centre had just replaced the Office Manager with a new person who had not worked in the industry before and introduced a new online system [REDACTED] with which we were in the early stages of onboarding. We were in the process of gathering all required details, but with one new educator who began working at the centre at the start of the year, the authorised officer felt that the information we had on file was not enough to be considered as evidence of her qualification. The issue was minor - a copy of the qualifications was temporarily unavailable and immediately rectified – a copy was provided within the specified timeframe requested of the authorised officer and the regulatory authority accepted the issue was addressed through applying the minor adjustment policy. Therefore, we submit that the service could rectify a small issue and be assessed as exceeding.*

*We note that the first-tier review panel otherwise considered evidence documented by the officer ‘demonstrates embedded practices regarding staffing arrangements as they enhance children’s learning and development’. In this line of thinking, the educators and committee reflected in 2017 on ways to ensure availability of educators to families throughout the day, especially at drop off and pick up times and this was a strong argument for moving to the long shift roster. This practice also aligns with our philosophical beliefs around relationships and continuity and consistency of educators. We also organise days off around when children are in attendance to ensure primary caregivers are present on most days and the child/family has access to this person. We request that our rating reflect the level of quality seen throughout our service.*

61. In the Second Tier Review Application Form the provider adds information on the evidence:



*Submitted evidence from draft review and Tier 1 Review indicates how theme 3 of the standard is reflected within our processes through engagement with all stakeholders*

██████████ *2017 Educator Meeting minutes –addressing days off for the coming year, group time educators and information regarding ‘setting up’ for the coming year.*

*Group time educators’ sheet, programming times sheet*

### **Panel considerations**

62. In considering whether the service was demonstrating Theme 3 with respect to Standard 4.1, the panel noted evidence about the service’s community-based management committee.
63. The panel noted how a community-based management committee could be a meaningful vehicle for families and community members to influence decisions about staffing at the service, *building opportunities for collaboration into the service’s approach to organisation and continuity of educators.*
64. However, the panel expressed the view that broader evidence is required to demonstrate the meaningful engagement required for Theme 3, and that this evidence was not available to it. For example, the panel did not see evidence of how the committee’s collection of community input had shaped practice with respect to staffing arrangements in *supporting all children to participate fully in the service program at all times.*

### **Panel decision**

65. The panel by consensus decided to confirm the rating level of Standard 4.1 as Meeting NQS.

### **Standard 6.2**

66. Standard 6.2 is that:  
*Collaborative partnerships enhance children’s inclusion, learning and wellbeing.*
67. Exceeding Theme 2 is that:  
*Practice is informed by critical reflection.*



## Regulatory Authority's View

### Assessment and rating report

68. In the final Rating Outcome Summary the regulatory authority states:  
*Lead by the nominated supervisor, educators and staff members actively work with families and local community services to support children's wellbeing and learning and, to maintain continuity between home and the service. The educators are mindful of individual family's backgrounds and values, working collaboratively with them to share insights and perspectives about the child and develop programs that will continue to build on their strengths and abilities. The nominated supervisor acknowledges the location of the service within the community and the responsibilities of building and sustaining reciprocal relationships with community groups and giving back to the community.*

### First tier review

69. The provider sought an Exceeding rating in Theme 2. The regulatory authority upheld their decision that the Theme was not present.
70. In the First Tier Review Decision Notice the regulatory authority states:

#### **Evidence from the assessment and rating**

*The officer noted the nominated supervisor advises that the service is still in conversations and workings to start the process of developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) this year. The nominated supervisor is active in establishing links with local National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) providers to support families when needed. Children with additional needs are supported by visits to the service by professionals and who offer to develop plans to assist in transition to school environments and expectations. The officer has not documented evidence to indicate whether critical reflection is or is not occurring for this Standard 6.2.*

#### **Evidence submitted by the approved provider**

*The approved provider claims the service embeds into all aspects of practice responsive relationships, and ensures collaborative learning is the basis of many experiences for children and educators, all of which are informed by critical reflection and meaningful engagement with families and community. The service has submitted as evidence notes that provide educators with updates on individual children, a sample Transition to School Statement, and communications with support professionals regarding individual children*



*and the development of the RAP. The evidence demonstrates meeting practices for Standard 6.2 and not ongoing, 'robust debate, discussion, and opportunities for input by all educators', or critical reflections of individual educators.*

### **The panel's view**

*The panel considered feedback and evidence from the service, and that documented by the officer to determine that service practice for Standard 6.2 is that consistent with meeting practices. The service has cross-referenced evidence recorded by the officer under other Standards to support their claim for Standard 6.2. The service has submitted evidence not relevant to, or to meet the exceeding criteria for Theme 2 practice is informed by critical reflection for Standard 6.2.*

*The panel has concluded that there was insufficient evidence to determine that Theme 2 should be amended to Yes to support an overall higher rating for Standard 6.2*

### **Approved Provider's view**

#### *Assessment and rating feedback*

71. In the Assessment and Rating Feedback Form the provider states:  
*The service embeds into all aspects of practice responsive relationships, and ensures collaborative learning is the basis of many experiences for children and educators, all of which are informed by critical reflection and meaningful engagement with families and community, therefore the service believes exceeding theme 2 should be 'Yes'*
  
72. In the Assessment and Rating Feedback Form the provider adds information on the evidence:  
  

**[REDACTED]** - Educator Meeting Email notes – individual children notes reflective discussions

  

**[REDACTED]** - Email note from parent regarding newsletter information on **[REDACTED]** Auslan learning's from group times

  

**[REDACTED]** – Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP)– notes and course attendance information from **[REDACTED]** Inclusions Support. The service has a detailed SIP which informs our practice in relation to devising and implementing strategies to ensure environments are inclusive and we can identify possible barriers to inclusion.



██████████ –Example of a 'Transition to School' document. Since its introduction, each year the centre puts together detailed 'Transition to School' Statements as recommended by the department and with parental permission is available to discuss the information provided with the school. In 2018 twenty-three reports were produced for this information sharing purpose and forwarded to over ten local schools.

██████████ - Email notes from visiting professionals working with children at the service to embed practice into everyday moments and routines for all children. The establishment of links also provides information for educators to utilise within the program for all children and guides the practices we follow in ensuring skill development for individual children is being met through embedding practices for all children.

In relation to ██████████ - these conversations for the RAP. A parent has reflected upon the services' request to find an authentic manner to begin this process and offered her link and knowledge of a local Elder. The head of the Local Aboriginal Lands Council is aware of the service and its desire to start this process. A meeting with this person has been scheduled for ██████████ this year. It was felt that honest discussion and actual input from someone with Aboriginal heritage would be a more appropriate and authentic way to produce this document. This is also in an effort to help the service establish further links and relationships with members of the local Aboriginal community to ensure our practice is embedded, respectful, and authentic.

We are members of Reconciliation Australia, Narragunnawali and started this learning in ██████████ 2018 and aware of the RAP process and resources available through this excellent website. The centre has also accessed information and resources from Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care – SNAICC and is ready to utilise these resources and documents, webinars and our developing knowledge once discussions begin in April. We are being critically reflective and arranging these meetings to ensure a positive and user friendly document is produced.

In relation to ██████████, the service has already actually joined the ██████████ Chamber of Commerce in ██████████ 2018. The service has been discussing through Educator Meetings and Committee Meetings the challenges of maintaining a waitlist and ensuring the service has full capacity in light of the high volume of new services being built and available to families of the ██████████ community. This was also in direct response to the possibility of a new child care service opening in the grounds of ██████████ area. It was felt that being proactive and more seen through joining this



*local group –also using the link of one of our new families who is also a member, we would be able to actively and positively display information regarding our service and show a positive solution. Being part of this local community group also allows the service opportunities to be actively involved and offer to assist/ be part of appropriate and relevant community events (such as [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] each year) where we could raise our profile and remind families with young children of our presence and the wonderful program and learning environments we offer.*

### *First tier review*

73. In the First Tier Review Feedback Form the provider states:

*The standard should be rated as Exceeding. The service embeds into all aspects of practice responsive relationships, and ensures collaborative learning is the basis of many experiences for children and educators, all of which are informed by critical reflection and meaningful engagement with families and community, therefore the service believes exceeding theme 2 should be 'Yes'*

74. In the First Tier Review Feedback Form the provider adds the following evidence:

[REDACTED] - Educator Meeting Email notes – individual children notes reflective discussions

[REDACTED] - Email note from parent regarding newsletter information on [REDACTED] Auslan learning's from group times

[REDACTED] – Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP)– notes and course attendance information from [REDACTED] Inclusions Support. The service has a detailed SIP which informs our practice in relation to devising and implementing strategies to ensure environments are inclusive and we can identify possible barriers to inclusion.

[REDACTED] – Example of a 'Transition to School' document. Since its introduction, each year the centre puts together detailed 'Transition to School' Statements as recommended by the department and with parental permission is available to discuss the information provided with the school. In 2018



*twenty-three reports were produced for this information sharing purpose and forwarded to over ten local schools.*

*██████████ - Email notes from visiting professionals working with children at the service to embed practice into everyday moments and routines for all children. The establishment of links also provides information for educators to utilise within the program for all children and guides the practices we follow in ensuring skill development for individual children is being met through embedding practices for all children.*

*In relation to ██████████ - the 'conversations for developing the RAP'. A parent has reflected upon the services' request to find an authentic manner to begin this process and offered her link and knowledge of a local Elder. The head of the Local Aboriginal Lands Council is aware of the service and its desire to start this process. A meeting with this person has been scheduled for ██████████ this year. It was felt that honest discussion and actual input from someone with Aboriginal heritage would be a more appropriate and authentic way to produce this document. This is also in an effort to help the service establish further links and relationships with members of the local Aboriginal community to ensure our practice is embedded, respectful, and authentic.*

*We are members of Reconciliation Australia, Narragunnawali and started this learning in ██████████ 2018 and aware of the RAP process and resources available through this excellent website. The centre has also accessed information and resources from Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care – SNAICC and is ready to utilise these resources and documents, webinars and our developing knowledge once discussions begin in ██████████. We are being critically reflective and arranging these meetings to ensure a positive and user friendly document is produced.*

*In relation to ██████████, the service has already actually joined the ██████████ Chamber of Commerce in ██████████ 2018. The service has been discussing through Educator Meetings and Committee Meetings the challenges of maintaining a waitlist and ensuring the service has full capacity in light of the high volume of new services being built and available to families of the ██████████ community. This was also in direct response to the possibility of a new child care service opening in the grounds of ██████████ ██████████ area. It was felt that being proactive and more seen through joining this local group –also using the link of one of our new families who is also a member, we would be able to actively and positively display information regarding our service and show a positive solution. Being part of this local*



*community group also allows the service opportunities to be actively involved and offer to assist/ be part of appropriate and relevant community events (such as [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] each year) where we could raise our profile and remind families with young children of our presence and the wonderful program and learning environments we offer.*

### *Second tier review*

75. The provider contends that they demonstrate Theme 2, and are therefore Exceeding in Standard 6.2. In the Second Tier Review Application Form the provider states:

*The service believes theme 2 to be met as the educators work closely with each family to ensure there is a collaborative space here. This is maintained through informal discussions, meetings, sharing information through enrolment interviews, enrolment forms and information in individual portfolios. All this information is critically reflected upon to ensure there is a shared voice and vision for all within this space. In relation to the authorised officers' Quality Improvement Plan notes regarding the production of the RAP, the service was already gathering data and materials to assist with this process. We had joined Narragunnawali and also SNAICC, downloaded the governments 'The Workbook and guide for school educators', attended an in-service with [REDACTED] entitled "Aboriginal perspectives [REDACTED] with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as well as holding an incursion for learning from [REDACTED] during the second half of 2017. This lead to connections within the community which allowed the centre the opportunity to critically reflect with these voices about how to move forward with this document. A parent also provided the centre with information through her networks and a meeting was scheduled at the end of 2018 for the beginning of the year with the [REDACTED] Local Lands Council. The process has been deliberately plotted with critical reflection throughout to ensure the RAP becomes embedded successfully in practice and is not a document for show. At this point in time, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] the centre was ready for a scheduled meeting in April, had conversations with families who identify as Aboriginal and invited them to be part of the conversation and the development of the RAP. All willingly agreed to provided their time, knowledge and expertise within this area. These processes have happened deliberately over time to ensure critical reflection and engagement is happening and therefore we believe we are meeting this theme.*



76. In the Second Tier Review Application Form the provider adds information on the evidence:

*Submitted evidence from the draft review and Tier 1 Review suggest the theme of critical reflection is met*

██████████ - In-service notes from ██████████ course

### **Panel considerations**

77. In considering whether the service was demonstrating Theme 2 in relation to Standard 6.2, the panel noted how some evidence referred to 'reflection'. However, the panel was unable to find clear examples of *robust debate, discussion and opportunities for input by all educators*.
78. The panel noted evidence of the service's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), but did not consider future meetings scheduled by the service to consider the RAP to be evidence of Exceeding level critical reflection at the service. The panel suggested critical reflections showing the identification of the need for a RAP, service gaps that could be assisted by a RAP, and how a service would support reconciliation in practice as possible examples of practice being informed by critical reflection at the Standard required for the Theme.
79. The panel considered there was evidence of discussions, particularly with respect to the RAP, about practices the service was seeking to adopt, rather than evidence of the collaborative, critically reflective process that explained why the service had decided to adopt particular practices.

### **Panel decision**

80. The panel by consensus decided to confirm the rating level of Standard 6.2 as Meeting NQS.

### **Standard 7.1**

81. Standard 7.1 is that:  
*Governance supports the operation of a quality service*
82. Exceeding Theme 1 is that:  
*Practice is embedded in service operations.*



83. Exceeding Theme 2 is that:  
*Practice is informed by critical reflection.*
84. Exceeding Theme 3 is that:  
*Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

### **Regulatory Authority's view**

#### *Assessment and rating report*

85. In the final Rating Outcome Summary the regulatory authority states:  
*The nominated supervisor works collaboratively with the approved provider, all educators and staff members to implement an effective governance approach. The embedding concepts of the service philosophy, defining clear roles and responsibilities that support effective decision making, and a continuous improvement approach to all aspects of the educational program. The service actively engages the local community and external professionals to develop a positive organisational culture of trust and openness that has developed and maintains strong and respectful relationship with educators, staff members, families and the local community. However, effective and efficient management systems are not in place to ensure consistent and reliable operation of the service. Feedback provided by service to support change to 7.1.2 to Met has been acknowledged. The feedback has been considered and the rating changed.*

86. In the Evidence Summary the regulatory authority states under Law/regulation:

The AO was not able to confirm that :  
*R.173: Ensure that all of the information included in Regulation 173 is displayed so that it is clearly visible form the main entrance of your service?*

The AO was not able to confirm that:  
*R.168-169 R.170- 171: Ensure that all policies required by Regulation 168, and where applicable R.169 are in place, implemented and available at the service?*



### *First Tier Review*

87. The provider sought an Exceeding rating in Themes 1, 2 and 3. The regulatory authority did not amend the ratings at first tier review.
88. In the First Tier Review Decision notice the regulatory authority states:

#### ***Exceeding theme 1***

#### ***Practice is embedded in service operations***

#### ***Evidence from the assessment and rating***

*The officer noted a notice stating that a child who has been diagnosed as at risk of anaphylaxis is enrolled at the service was not displayed as required for Regulation 173(2)(f). A minor adjustment was offered to have information displayed. A photo of the notice displayed was provided by service [REDACTED] [REDACTED] 2019. An Induction checklist is completed and stored with the service policy. The checklist ensures that all required documents and procedures have been completed with new staff and enhances the introduction of new staff members into the team. While the service had individual policies for Asthma, Anaphylaxis and Diabetes, a Medical Conditions policy was not available as detailed in Regulation 90. Authorised officer requested a copy of the service Medical Conditions Policy is provided in accordance to Regulation 90 by close of business [REDACTED] 2019. A draft Medical Conditions Policy was provided on [REDACTED] 2019. Discussions were held with the nominated supervisor regarding the service Sleep and Rest policy sourced and informed by Sid's and Kids. The branding of the organisation is now, Red Nose. Authorised officer recommended the policy is reviewed and current naming is used. Discussions held with the nominated supervisor regarding sourcing for Child Protection policy is referenced to Keep Them Safe organisation. The branding and website has changed to Child Story. The officer recommends the policy is reviewed to align with the new organisation, Child Story.*

#### ***Evidence submitted by the approved provider.***

*The approved provider uses the officer's documented evidence and analysis notes such as: "The nominated supervisor works collaboratively with the approved provider, all educators, and staff members to implement an effective governance approach. The embedding concepts of the service philosophy, defining clear roles and responsibilities that support effective decision making, and a continuous improvement approach to all aspects of the educational*



*program. The service actively engages the local community and external professionals to develop a positive organisational culture of trust and openness that has developed and maintains strong and respectful relationship with educators, staff members, families, and the local community” to demonstrate practice regarding service governance and management is embedded. However, a minor adjustment provided for a breach of Regulation 173(2)(f) and Regulation 90 lifted the service rating from Not Met to Meeting Standard 7.1, and demonstrates that effective administration is not consistently embedded in service practice regarding governance supports the operation of a quality service.*

### ***The panel's view***

*The panel considered that the provision of two minor adjustments and/or follow up compliance, which lifted the service rating for Standard 7.1 from Not Met to Met, under any Standard demonstrates that practice is not embedded, or meets the exceeding criteria for Theme 1 for Standard 7.1.*

*The panel has concluded that there was sufficient evidence to determine that Theme 1 should not be amended to Yes to support an overall higher rating for Standard 7.1.*

### ***Exceeding theme 2***

#### ***Practice is informed by critical reflection***

#### ***Evidence from the assessment and rating***

*The officer noted on reflection of the service philosophy and review with committee members and staff, a mind map of key areas that guide and embed educator practices were developed. The areas within the philosophy included, Family and Community, Environment, Educators, Reggio Principles and Practices, Children and Childhood, Play base curriculum and Family Grouping -Mixed Age Group planning. In the Policy Review folder, a new procedure, 'Notification of Change to Policy and Procedure' is provided for educators to consider. The policy details the processes used to keep all stakeholders informed of changes and ensure a consistent and effective communication system is maintained. Monthly team meetings are held with an agenda and minutes taken. The agenda guides discussions with regular topics discussed and action plans created, such as QIP, Work Health and Safety (WHS), programming, routines and professional development. Critical reflection of photos to link with the messages of the philosophy is an ongoing project.*



***Evidence submitted by the approved provider.***

*The approved provider claims the officer's analysis notes show practice is informed by critical reflection. The service does refer the current Guide to the National Quality Framework when reflecting upon practice and asking questions in relation to practice and procedures and where they should focus their attentions when thinking about every day practice, improvements, and developments to understandings, knowledge, and practice to be made. Monthly team meetings are held with an agenda and minutes taken. The agenda guides decisions with regular topics discussed and action plans created, such as QIP, Work, Health, and Safety (WHS), programming, routines, and professional development.*

***The panel's view***

*The panel considered that the service believes that evidence recorded by the officer demonstrates exceeding practice for critical reflection for Standard 7.1, however have not provided any supporting evidence such as team meeting minutes that includes input from all educators, or the 'action plans' mentioned. Evidence provided by the service and that documented by the officer demonstrate meeting practice, and does not meet the exceeding criteria regarding critical reflection in relation to Standard 7.1 governance supports the operation of a quality service. The panel considers that critical reflection allows educators to document personal reflections with ongoing opportunities for all educators to provide input of personal reflection to share with the team to discuss, debate and challenge each other's thoughts, ideas, beliefs and biases, and ongoing opportunities to contribute to team reflections and 'robust debate' to make and implement changes where required to strengthen alignment with the service's current purposes and priorities, and drive continuous improvement.*

*The panel has concluded that there was insufficient evidence to determine that Theme 2 should be amended to Yes to support an overall higher rating for Standard 7.1.*

***Exceeding theme 3***

***Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or community***

***Evidence from the assessment and rating***

*The officer noted the nominated supervisor clarifies how the service philosophy in its present form as a 'mind map' is developing towards a*



*pictorial appearance. The concept anticipates to support and engage families and community in understanding the service key areas. The approved provider President states there is open and respectable communication pathways established with the nominated supervisor. Points of view and ideas from families and the committee team were gathered and shared with educators to guide the decision making process of including photo images into the philosophy. The service philosophy is reviewed annually. Family input is regularly sought through informal discussions, surveys and on enrolment. For example, 'Why the family chose the service?' Educators engage children in conversations about what they like doing when at the service. Their responses informs the review processes of the service philosophy.*

***Evidence submitted by the approved provider.***

*The approved provider has relied solely on the evidence recorded by the officer in Standard 7.1 to support their claim. Evidence recorded by the officer is consistent with the service demonstrating meeting practices for Standard 7.1.*

***The panel's view***

*The panel considered written feedback from the service and that recorded by the officer to determine that the service implements meeting practices regarding practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or community in relation to governance supports the operation of a quality service. Service feedback does not demonstrate how the service meets the exceeding criteria for Theme 3 through regular and ongoing consultation with and drawing on the voices, priorities and strengths of children and families, or how ongoing, meaningful engagement with families and community contributes to the governance and operation of a quality service.*

*The panel has concluded that there was insufficient evidence to determine that Theme 3 should be amended to Yes to support an overall higher rating for Standard 7.1.*

**Approved Provider's view**

*Assessment and rating feedback*

89. In the Assessment and Rating Feedback Form the provider states:  
*The service requests as per the evidence point [REDACTED] that the minor adjustment which was offered be implemented. However, this seems to not have been taken into account in marking the element and this is why it was*



*not met.' The service requests that this be considered resolved as a minor adjustment and therefore this element be 'Met'*

*As [REDACTED] was already taken into account under Quality Area 2, the service believes this should not be taken into account again in Quality Area 7 as it has already been addressed.*

*Although evidence is not to be provided of implementation or correction post the visit, the service would like it noted that the Child Protection Policy does now reference [REDACTED] for mandatory reporting purposes, has joined the system online and also has updated the information in relation to Red Nose Org in the 'Safe Sleep, Relaxation and Rest' Policy*

*All information in relation to both policies for procedure and practice are still the same as the information contained within each was correct and current. The policies were reviewed once the 'In Safe Hands' online training modules were completed in [REDACTED] 2018 and [REDACTED] 2019 for practice and implementation purposes. The wording was missed at that point but the actual content of implementation was correct. These policies will also be reviewed again as the year progresses in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] respectively according to the centre's 'Continuous Improvement Plan' for review of policy and procedure*

#### *First Tier Review*

90. In the First Tier Review Feedback Form the provider states:  
*This standard should be Exceeding as practice is embedded, informed by critical reflection, and shaped by meaningful engagement with families and community.*
91. In the First Tier Review Feedback Form the provider adds the following evidence:

*The service does refer the current Guide to the National Quality Framework when reflecting upon practice and asking questions in relation to our practice and procedures and where we should focus our attentions when thinking about every day practice, improvements, and developments to understandings, knowledge, and practice to be made.*

*As for Quality Area 4, the implementation of [REDACTED] After reflection and feedback from management committee and the Educational Leader, the service established a subscription with [REDACTED] to ensure good governance procedures are in place and embedded in service operations in relation to all employment requirements.*



*This system also ensure roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood helping to ensure effective decision making practices are in place to run the centre correctly.*

*From the QIP, Parent Satisfaction Survey, Programming Practices, Philosophy and review of all these aspects and practices of the service operation, it is clear that our practice is embedded in service operations.*

#### *Second tier review*

92. The provider contends that they demonstrate Themes 1, 2 and 3, and are therefore Exceeding in Standard 7.1. In the Second Tier Review Application Form the provider states:

*The Centre did not ask for consideration of change to meeting rating for Quality area 2 as we believed the application of the minor adjustment policy in relation to the Medical Conditions Policy and poster for a child with Anaphylaxis onsite being applied was fair. Both concerns were addressed and immediately rectified for the authorised officer under this quality area, therefore we request that they not be applied again in Quality Area 7. The service has operated successfully for over thirty years and good governance structures are in place to maintain this.*

*The Safe Sleep Policy with incorrect naming of Sids and Kids was rectified during the visit. The educators had recently completed Child protection training and the Child Protection Policy had not at this point been updated to reflect the name change to Child Story. The centre does have a review process for Continuing Improvement of policies and procedures – the outdated wording would have been picked up during the scheduled [REDACTED] review of this policy. All aspects of governance involve the management committee, feedback from families and educators and the broader community we believe the service is meeting these three themes. In relation to the philosophy and purpose of the centre, everything we do is reflected through this document. Management systems were noted by the authorised officer and again, the special circumstances as noted in Quality Area 4 are also relevant within this quality area as we recognise the strong links evident between the two.*

*Management systems , such as [REDACTED] which were new and being learnt as well as a new Office Manager and educators in the environment learning roles and responsibilities were of course at a very early stage within these peoples' [REDACTED] at the centre.*



*Many evidence points collected by the authorised officer indicated that the centre was and does embed practice, is informed by critical reflection and ensures practice is shaped by meaningful engagement.*

93. In the Second Tier Review Application Form the provider adds information on the evidence:
- Submitted evidence from draft report and tier 1 review show how the philosophy and purpose, management systems and roles and responsibilities are addressed through the three exceeding themes.
  - Continuing improvement plan 2019.

### **Panel considerations**

94. In considering whether the service was demonstrating Theme 1 with respect to Standard 7.1, the panel considered that references to outdated terminology were not, in and of itself, an indication that embedded practice was not occurring.
95. The panel, however, did not consider the evidence of governance systems implemented by the service, such as the management committee, to demonstrate embedded practice. For example, from the evidence submitted, the panel was unable to see how *well-established governance arrangements and administrative systems consistently support the operation of a high quality service and drive continuous quality improvement.*
96. The panel noted that, while policies and other documentation are important, robust processes are a central element of governance at the standard of Exceeding Theme 1. For example, processes to ensure that the required policies (such as a medical conditions policy) are in place, policies are regularly reviewed and any outdated terminology is removed. Lack of evidence of these kinds of processes indicates a lack of embedded practice of the Standard.
97. In considering whether the service was demonstrating Theme 2 with respect to Standard 7.1, the panel noted the evidence of the service reviewing policies and procedures and personal reflections, but the panel was unable to refer to any clear evidence of critical reflection, such as a *critical reflection individually and together on the statement of philosophy to ensure it aligns with the service's current purpose, priorities and approach to practice.* Critical reflection requires reflection to impact on decision-making processes, and this was not clearly evident.



98. In considering whether the service was demonstrating Theme 3 with respect to Standard 7.1, the panel noted evidence regarding a parent satisfaction survey. However, the panel saw this as consistent with Meeting NQS practice and did not regard this to be evidence of engagement that is meaningful in shaping practice. For engagement to be meaningful, the panel considered that practices need to be in place that *actively support families and the community to meaningfully engage with the service philosophy, policies and procedures*.
99. The panel suggested evidence on the introduction of the [REDACTED] system and why this change was made, aside from the influence of the management committee in making this decision, as a possible example of practice changing based on meaningful engagement with families and the community that the service could have submitted.

#### **Panel decision**

100. The panel by consensus decided to confirm the rating level of Standard 7.1 as Meeting NQS.