



**Date of Decision:** [REDACTED] 2020

**File number:** STR0059

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**Panel Members:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Applicant:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Regulatory Authority:** NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate,  
Department of Education

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### Decision

The Ratings Review Panel (the panel), by consensus, confirmed the following Exceeding themes are assessed as No and the standards are rated Meeting NQS:

- Standard 1.2: themes 2 and 3
- Standard 1.3: themes 2 and 3
- Standard 2.2: theme 3
- Standard 3.1: theme 3
- Standard 4.1: theme 2
- Standard 4.2: theme 2
- Standard 5.1: themes 2 and 3
- Standard 5.2: theme 2.

The panel confirmed the overall rating for the service is Meeting NQS.

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## Issues

1. The approved provider sought a review of the ratings for the above quality areas and 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.
2. After the service's assessment, the service was rated Meeting NQS for Quality Areas 1-5 and Exceeding NQS for Quality Areas 6 and 7. At first tier review, six Exceeding themes were amended from No to Yes, but none of these amendments resulted in a change to the service's ratings.
3. The provider disagrees with the regulatory authority's ratings and notes the service was rated Meeting four and a half years ago and considers that there has been significant improvement and change since that time.

## Evidence before the panel

4. The Panel is able to consider the following types of evidence:
  - documents or other information, plans, photographs, video or other evidence that were available to the regulatory authority in carrying out the assessment and rating, whether or not they were actually considered by the regulatory authority; and/or
  - submissions to the panel by the approved provider and the regulatory authority. Submissions may include explanations of evidence and/or facts existing at the time of the quality rating assessment.
5. The Panel considered all the evidence submitted by the provider and the regulatory authority. This included:

Item	Document
1	Provider's application for second tier review and accompanying attachments
2	Regulatory authority's first tier review decision notice and letter to the approved provider
3	Regulatory authority's feedback for region from the first tier review panel
4	Provider's first tier review application and evidence against ratings under review

5	Assessment and rating evidence summary
6	Draft outcome summary (draft report)
7	Final outcome summary (final report)
8	Ratings certificate
9	Assessment and Rating feedback from provider and regulatory authority's response to feedback
10	██████████ Service Summary

The panel also considered extracts from the Guide to the NQF.

### The Law

6. 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

#### Context

7. ██████████ is a long day care service with █ approved places. Children attending the service are aged ██████████. The service is based in ██████████ NSW.
8. The assessment and rating visit took place on ██████████ 2019. The final report was sent to the provider on ██████████ 2019. The provider applied for first tier review on ██████████ 2019 and received the first tier review decision on ██████████ 2019. The provider applied for second tier review on ██████████ 2019.

### Standard 1.2

*Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development*

### Exceeding theme 2

*Practice is informed by critical reflection*

#### Regulatory authority's view

9. In the outcome summary, the regulatory authority noted:

- that educators can identify how and why experiences have been planned to benefit children's learning. Educators engage in children's play using open ended questions and modelling to extend children's learning. Children's agency is promoted with opportunities to make decisions about their daily routine.
10. The evidence summary also notes:
- Educators refer to current theoretical research resources that provide guidance regarding their decision making practices for each child's individual learning (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
11. At first tier review, the panel found:
- there was evidence of some reflection for this Standard, including through the daily curriculum reflection sheets. The panel noted the officer had confirmed educators are guided by current theoretical research as part of their decision making in regards to children's learning.
  - However, the evidence did not demonstrate that educators engage in regular and ongoing reflection and robust discussion about how they facilitate and extend children's learning and development and that ways to improve and strengthen practice in this area are identified and implemented.

*Approved provider's view*

12. The approved provider submits:
- Educators critically reflect on their teaching strategies, the environment, service philosophy and interactions with families to ensure their practice and interactions with children promote independence and children's autonomy over their learning (see attached meeting minutes; children's interest web; daily recording sheet, [REDACTED] progression book; developmental milestones; child's individual portfolio; documentation of children's learning outline; weekly curriculum sheets and extension on children's learning photo's).
  - Our team of educators regularly reflect, individually and with each other on their approach to facilitating and extending children's learning and development; on the program and their practices ensuring that they consider the circumstances and rights of every child; on opportunities to cultivate respect for and knowledge of the cultural diversity of the wider community including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures (see attached meeting minutes – monthly staff meeting, Ed Leader room meetings, professional conversation books; children's interest web detailing the [REDACTED]; reflection on the weekly program; weekly reflection in room diaries).
  - At [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] our process of reflection involves observing, listening, thinking deeply about the meaning of what we have observed and heard and using that information to inform our practices and continually respond and reflect.

- Educators provide opportunities to cultivate deep respect for culture diversity of the broader community. E.g. educators and Educational Leader reflected on how we can amend our Acknowledgement of Land, by creating a song with the children to allow for a deeper understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.
- We use the following methods of reflection to ensure we facilitate and extend each child's learning and development: answering daily reflection questions about our curriculum and teaching practices; weekly team reflections in the room diaries; monthly at staff meetings; parent feedback via questionnaires, survey monkey, [REDACTED], parent meetings, verbally and email; staff survey's; individually via our bi-monthly professional conversation books; staff appraisals; monthly Educational Leader meetings at a centre level; Nominated Supervisors meetings; [REDACTED] meetings and quarterly Educational Leader meetings held for all Educational Leaders from all [REDACTED] [REDACTED] centres (See attached examples).
- We have a centre based [REDACTED] group as well as an Educational Leader [REDACTED] group and this allows educators to share ideas to extend children's learning and to reflect on practices, not only at a centre level but also sharing the expertise of all of Ed Leaders across our [REDACTED] services.
- Educators have opportunities for self-reflection throughout the day, by referring to our reflective questions and philosophy displayed in our staff room and staff bathroom. Each educator has the opportunity to reflect individually via the reflective journal tab in the [REDACTED]. This process of reflection allows them to document their feelings about their practices and personal pedagogy.
- By having all stakeholders involved in our reflection processes we ensure that we consider the circumstances and rights of every child at our service.
- We have compiled several documents that illustrate that the team of educators at our service are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions. Each child's agency is supported, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world. Educators respond to children's ideas and play and extend on children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback. Educators critically reflect on their teaching strategies, the environment, service philosophy and interactions with families to ensure their practice and interactions with children promote independence and children's autonomy over their learning.
- Educators facilitate children's learning and development by actively seeking out the voices, perspectives, and views of children throughout the day. The team also engage in ACECQA's Quest for Quality NQS Knowledge game and the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] at each monthly NQF meeting. This allows educators to reflect on their practices and gain new insights to further improve and implement positive changes to embed into the program.
- Educators engage in regular and ongoing reflection and discussion about how we facilitate and extend children's learning and development. This is implemented daily, starting from the morning [REDACTED] [REDACTED] where educators observe children engaging in various activities, which is then documented in our daily recording sheet. This allows us to keep track of the children's interest for educators to further extend on when planning the weekly curriculum.

- The educators also have a list of focus children, in order to ensure each child's interest is followed and opportunities for learning and development is tailored on an individual basis. This can also be noted through the educator's use of jotting books, where they document children's interactions or play experiences between peers and/or educators. This is to ensure each child's extension of learning is authentic and interest based.
- Educators utilise the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] to share each child's individual learning progress, by creating and sharing monthly observations. These observations allow educators to plan, reflect and extend on children's interests. Educators participate in ongoing reflection, by completing the what's next section and what's next reflection, once the follow up extension has been implemented. This [REDACTED] allows educators to continuously reflect on ways to improve and strengthen practice.
- Our team of educators regularly reflect, individually and with each other on their approach to facilitating and extending children's learning and development; on the program and their practices ensuring that they consider the circumstances and rights of every child; on opportunities to cultivate respect for and knowledge of the cultural diversity of the wider community including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.
- The voices, perspectives and views of the children are included in our child interest webs, learning stories, jotting books, outdoor program, weekly EYLF curriculum, daily recording sheets, event highlights and moments shared on [REDACTED]

13. The provider submitted the following as evidence of the above:

- Meeting minutes; Children's interest web; Daily recording sheet; [REDACTED] progression book; Developmental milestones; [REDACTED] portfolio sample; Documentation of children's learning outline; Weekly curriculum planning sheets; Extension on children's learning photos; Staff Meeting minutes; Ed Leader room meeting minutes; Professional conversation books; Children's interest web-[REDACTED]; Reflection on the weekly program; weekly reflection in room diaries.

#### *Panel's considerations*

14. The panel noted the provider had submitted a number of documents and the panel was looking for evidence within those submissions that practice is informed by critical reflection.
15. The panel noted some positive practice occurring within the service. For example, meeting notes referred to the service having reflected that more resources were needed for the service's outdoor program. Also, the children's interest web indicated a practice of extending on children's ideas. However, while the panel noted this was positive, it also noted there was no indication that documents had implications for improvements for children's learning; and that extension is required for an exceeding rating.

16. The panel noted the provider had submitted minutes, reflections and other notes on activities and experiences which included statements that critical reflection was occurring, but there was limited evidence within the documents to show critical reflection was in fact occurring.
17. The panel agreed that, for the exceeding theme to be met, it would need to see robust questioning and analysing to support decision making processes. It would need to see examples of past incidents on which the service had critically reflected, engaged in robust debate, and had followed through with actions that improved children's learning. The panel agreed that critical reflection at the exceeding level requires more than describing what was done. It requires true reflection and robust debate, with input from all educators. The panel was looking for evidence of the service re-evaluating practice, examples of questioning that led to changes or continuous improvement, explanations for why the service had chosen to follow certain directions, and/or how changes were implemented.
18. The panel found there was no evidence to find the exceeding theme was met, and confirmed the assessment of this theme is No.

## **Standard 1.2**

*Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development*

### **Exceeding theme 3**

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

#### *Regulatory authority's view*

19. In the outcome summary, the regulatory authority noted:
  - educators can identify how and why experiences have been planned to benefit children's learning. Educators engage in children's play using open ended questions and modelling to extend children's learning. Children's agency is promoted with opportunities to make decisions about their daily routine.
20. The evidence summary also notes:
  - Educators include all children's voices through verbal and non-verbal communication in the daily program and reflection (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
  - The voices, perspectives and views of children are included in learning stories, jotting books, outdoor program, weekly [REDACTED] curriculum, daily recording sheets and moments shared on [REDACTED] (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
  - The children sing about a family of different shapes and the children suggest that the song should include grandma, grandpa, sister, aunty, dog and cat. The educator states that she will think about their suggestion and add to the song and asks what shape they would like.

- On the [REDACTED] 19 children requested the 'Baby shark' song during group time and the educator and children sang and performed the actions of this song. The children then transitioned inside and looked at images of sea animals and identified and discussed them. The following day the children made a headband with a model fin glued on top and painted it grey and then a shark picture at the front.
- A child asks for the 'Teddy Bear Song' the educators are unsure of the lyrics so they ask the child to teach them. The child demonstrates some actions and the group follow these while singing the lyrics of the song and some additional lyrics that an educator recalls to join in this song.

21. At first tier review, the panel found:

- the available evidence highlights some good practice including children's ideas being incorporated into the program and opportunities for families to provide feedback in relation to the program.
- However, the evidence does not adequately demonstrate how practice in relation to extending and facilitating children's learning and development through intentional and responsive teaching reflects input and shared decision-making with families and/or the community at an exceeding level.

*Approved provider's view*

22. The approved provider submits:

- Educators facilitate children's learning and development by actively seeking out the voices, perspectives, and views of children throughout the day (see attached meeting minutes; children's interest web; daily recording sheet, [REDACTED] progression book; developmental milestones; child's individual portfolio; documentation of children's learning outline; weekly curriculum sheets and extension on children's learning photos).
- Our team consistently and meaningfully engages with the children's families and the community in order to facilitate and extend children's learning development and actively seek out the voices, perspectives and views of all stakeholders (see attached SIP; input from families into the program via the web, All About Me Form, Comments/Feedback in [REDACTED] Family feedback survey – QA1; Monthly Catch up; Parent Meeting minutes from [REDACTED] 2019).
- Our educational program and practice welcomes, respects and draws on the voices, priorities and strengths of the children and families that use our service. From the time of enrolment, we engage with the children's families to gain information about their child's knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities, interests and learning and development. This information is gathered in our enrolment forms, All About Me Form, Toddler/Preschool Orientation Info Sheet, during orientation visits and via the orientation feedback survey, individual parent meetings and verbally.
- The voices, perspectives and views of the children are included in our child interest webs, learning stories, jotting books, outdoor program, weekly [REDACTED] curriculum, daily recording sheets, event highlights and moments shared on [REDACTED]

- Our service consistently collaborates with the families and the community by celebrating events; holding incursions from local community companies/organisations; purchasing food from the local shops and restaurants; inviting families and the community to participate in our program.
- Families continuously communicate with educators in their home language to create a welcoming and culturally respectful environment.

23. The provider submitted the following as evidence:

- Strategic Inclusion Plan; Input from families into the program via the web; All About Me Form; Comments/Feedback in [REDACTED] Family feedback survey – QA1; Monthly Catch up; Parent information night meeting minutes; Child orientation info sheet.

*Panel's considerations*

24. The panel noted there was some good practice happening at the service. A particular strength is how the service seeks out the voices of children.
25. However, the panel struggled to find evidence that practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community, which is required under this exceeding theme. The panel found there was no evidence of engagement with the community. It acknowledged that the service had openly stated that parents are not providing input and that it is a challenge with a busy drop off to engage with families.
26. The panel found there was no evidence of shared decision making. Rather, families were being told what was happening at the service (for example through the events calendar), which the panel found to be a one-way relay of information. The panel was looking for evidence of collaboration with families, of drawing on family or community understanding of each child, or of family or community engagement shaping practice, which would be a required next step to achieve the exceeding theme. The panel noted evidence submitted included check lists and charts which are expected practice at the Meeting NQS level.
27. The panel found the evidence did not show practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community and confirmed the assessment of this theme is No.
28. As themes 2 and 3 were assessed No, the panel confirmed the rating for this standard is Meeting NQS.

### Standard 1.3

*Educators and co-ordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.*

### Exceeding theme 2

*Practice is informed by critical reflection*

#### *Regulatory authority's view*

29. In the outcome summary, the regulatory authority noted:
- the ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation is consistently used to assess each child's learning and development and is an interactive process that drives the development of the program. Families are provided a range of information about their child's learning and progress throughout the year. Educators use a variety of methods to assist in reflecting on children's experiences, thinking and learning.
30. The evidence summary also notes:
- Educators reflect on the program by completing a series of reflection questions which is linked to the curriculum programming sheets (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
  - Each room has their own reflection diary that is used to record the educator's reflections on their practices (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
  - Individual learning stories contain links to the EYLF outcomes, theorists and the National Quality Standards (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
  - On a weekly basis the educational leader meets with the room leaders and they reflect on the curriculum, program and routines (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
  - Educators reflect together on the program daily, weekly in room diaries and during monthly meetings (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
  - The service uses feedback from families from questionnaires and Survey Monkey and educational leader, nominated supervisor and [REDACTED] meetings in their reflection process (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
  - The educators during monthly NQF meeting discuss and reflect on their end of the quality area diary reflections as a team as well as family feedback on the same quality area (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
  - Each educator has a professional conversation book where they document individual reflections on the practices, strengths and areas for improvement (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
  - In [REDACTED] educators observed children losing interest in the [REDACTED] areas. As a result the nominated supervisor purchased more water based

experiences as children had shown interest in this. During [REDACTED] 2019 educators reflected that there was increased engagement and now implement two to three new activities for this area each month.

- What's next reflection section in each observation records a brief jotting of the child's participation in the follow up experience. Parents can provide comments in the observations.
- The educators reflected on the parent participation schedule and decided that they would keep this going as this has assisted to increase families' involvement in the program.
- A preschool educator found that parents were not providing input on the interest web and is trialling families [REDACTED] if they believe that this will be an engaging experience for their child.

31. At first tier review, the panel found:

- that the available evidence highlights that educators engage in critical reflection on the educational program and children's learning.
- However, the evidence does not sufficiently demonstrate that the service's practice and approach in relation to the assessment and planning cycle, critical reflection and informing families about the program and their child's progress is informed by critical reflection on a regular and ongoing basis, or that ways to improve and strengthen practice in this area have been identified and implemented.

#### *Approved provider's view*

32. The approved provider submits:

- Our service's approach to assessment and planning includes robust debate discussion and opportunities for input by all educators and is informed by critical reflection and current recognised guidance (Please see attached children's interest web, child portfolios, educational leader checklist & meeting minutes, observation monitoring chart, developmental milestone, cycle of planning).
- The materials provide feedback to the child and teacher as to where the child is at any time on these developmental milestones and in mastery of skills and concepts.
- There is a strong emphasis on individual choice and individualised teaching, based on the understanding that children do not achieve those developmental goals, nor master those skills and concepts, in lockstep, but rather need to work at their own pace, benefiting from the opportunities the three year age range provides to learn from and to teach each other, to be inspired by others, and to value helping others. These materials, and detailed daily observations of each child by the teacher, form the basis of reporting to parents. Such reporting is individualised, highly detailed, and focused on the strengths of the child as well as areas where further development is needed.
- Children provide input for reflecting on the environment, both intentionally and unintentionally. Children are directly able to request activities, suggest creative experiences or spontaneously create a new task (which a



34. The panel agreed that, while the service had showed it reflects on curriculum and routines, the service had not shown that critical reflection informs practice, which is the next step and required for an exceeding level approach to planning.
35. The panel referred to the evidence submitted that showed some reflection had occurred and that questions were raised. The notes had discussed how educators had reflected upon needing to be positive role models and to engage in group games. Notes referred to educators discussing show and tell, stated they provided individual activities and referred to developmental milestones. However, the panel could not see how these documents informed practice, which is the required next step.
36. The panel noted that some of the examples provided were helpful. For example, educator diaries and reflections show what happened and show elements of critical reflection. The panel found there are some systems of critical reflection available to the educators but deep understanding of critical reflection and how it should inform practice at the individual educator level was lacking.
37. The panel was looking for examples of robust discussion and debate that led to specific actions educators had taken.
38. In the absence of this evidence, the panel confirmed the assessment of this theme is No.

### **Standard 1.3**

*Educators and co-ordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.*

### **Exceeding theme 3**

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

#### *Regulatory authority's view*

39. In the outcome summary, the regulatory authority noted:
  - the ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation is consistently used to assess each child's learning and development and is an interactive process that drives the development of the program. Families are provided a range of information about their child's learning and progress throughout the year. Educators use a variety of methods to assist in reflecting on children's experiences, thinking and learning.
40. The evidence summary also notes:

- Each family receives a bi-annual [REDACTED] Report for their child along with a completed developmental milestones checklist (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
- Educators complete individual and group learning stories on a monthly basis which are available to families on [REDACTED] (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
- Posters and a child's interest web are displayed for families (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
- Families are invited to make appointments with their child's educators to discuss their child's progress (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
- The educators' approach to developing the curriculum takes into account parent feedback from the quality area one survey (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
- The service uses feedback from families from questionnaires and Survey Monkey and educational leader, nominated supervisor and [REDACTED] meetings in their reflection process (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
- The educators during monthly NQF meeting discuss and reflect on their end of the quality area diary reflections as a team as well as family feedback on the same quality area (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
- The eat and sleep chart and toddler nappy change information is recorded on the [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. This is helpful when grandparents pick children up and speak English as an additional language.
- During monthly educational leader meetings room groups discuss feedback from families and how the program is going and is there anything that could be improved.
- The educators reflected on the parent participation schedule and decided that they would keep this going as this has assisted to increase families' involvement in the program.
- Educators complete and share with families a developmental milestones checklist twice a year.
- A preschool educator found that parents were not providing input on the interest web and is trialling families drawing a smiley face next to a planned experience if they believe that this will be an engaging experience for their child.
- Feedback was received in July from a parent expressing that they would like to be more involved in the program. As a result the nominated supervisor created a parent participation schedule. This is displayed at the front of both rooms and has led to more families visiting the service to lead experiences during [REDACTED].
- In the [REDACTED] activity focused observations there is a link in each of these which provides information on ways that families can extend this learning and how to present these extension activities. Educators write a sentence explaining that the link below provides further information to ensure families are aware of this link.

- Each [REDACTED] an events of the week document is emailed that contains brief descriptions of spontaneous and planned experiences for each day and photos of these.
41. At first tier review, the panel found:
- the available evidence highlights some good practice in relation to this Standard, including opportunities for families to provide feedback on the program and various ways the service informs families about their child's engagement in the program.
  - However, the evidence is limited to demonstrate that the services approach to assessment and planning and providing information to families is guided by regular and meaningful engagement with families, reflects individual families' needs and includes shared decision making and problem solving.

*Approved provider's view*

42. The approved provider submits:
- All educators consistently seek out the voices, perspectives and views of children as well as support children to participate in assessing and planning their own learning and development.
  - All educators and the educational leader consistently engage with families about their child's progress to ensure that children's learning development outside of the service is incorporated into the assessment and planning cycle. Such learning development can be seen through our [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
  - Children are also provided with the opportunity to participate in our show and tell program daily, encouraging them to bring items of interest from home to share with their peers. The [REDACTED] [REDACTED] allows educators, families and extended families to securely connect from anywhere at anytime to share the child's learning journal. Reports are generated on demand and mapped directly to the EYLF, including the NQF Principles and Practices, NQS, EYLF outcomes and links to theorists.
  - Children's participation, learning and development are accessible and understandable for families via the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Parent input is provided via the app's parent commenting function, which educators can reflect on and amend their curriculum accordingly to meet each child's interests. Families provide their feedback through the Quality Area 1 parent survey, sent out via survey monkey. Their feedback is then reflected upon at our monthly staff meetings and implement any changes to services practice. An email is then sent to all families notifying them of changes made due to the feedback provided in the parent survey. Parents can also provide ongoing feedback via our parent surveys and input into philosophy review questionnaires. These forms are used to inform and reflect on each child's learning progress and overall operation of the service.
  - Families are continually involved in curriculum decisions and are kept informed about the program and their child's current and overall progress via a variety of easily accessible formats including the web; online e-

portfolios – learning stories, developmental milestones, moments shared, event highlights, daily routines and messaging all available in the [REDACTED] app; child interest web, [REDACTED] weekly curriculum, daily recording sheets, progression book, half yearly and yearly report cards, [REDACTED], individual parent meetings, email and verbally.

- [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] hold two parent information evenings per year ([REDACTED] and [REDACTED]). External organisations are invited to attend these sessions to discuss learning and development in children i.e. Speech therapist visits, [REDACTED] Council (healthy lunchbox talk), principal/vice-principal of local [REDACTED] Primary School to discuss school readiness for preschool.
- The materials provide feedback to the child and teacher as to where the child is at any time on these developmental milestones and in mastery of skills and concepts. There is a strong emphasis on individual choice and individualised teaching, based on the understanding that children do not achieve those developmental goals, nor master those skills and concepts, in lockstep, but rather need to work at their own pace, benefiting from the opportunities the three year age range provides to learn from and to teach each other, to be inspired by others, and to value helping others. These materials, and detailed daily observations of each child by the teacher, form the basis of reporting to parents. Such reporting is individualised, highly detailed, and focused on the strengths of the child as well as areas where further development is needed.
- Children provide input for reflecting on the environment, both intentionally and unintentionally. Children are directly able to request activities, suggest creative experiences or spontaneously create a new task (which a [REDACTED] educator will then add to the catalogue of potential future experiences). Children also unintentionally prompt critical reflection simply through the behavioural manifestations that indicate their inner needs.
- All educators and the educational leader consistently engage with families about their child's progress to ensure that children's learning development outside of the service is incorporated into the assessment and planning cycle (See attached photo of the [REDACTED]).
- The [REDACTED] Application allows educators, families and extended families to securely connect from anywhere at any time to share the child's learning journal. Reports are generated on demand and mapped directly to the EYLF, including the NQF Principles and Practices, NQS, EYLF outcomes and links to theorists (see attached Portfolio sample, detailing the above points).
- The educators at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] constantly consult with families and children individually and in small groups and use this information for ongoing planning and assessment.

43. The provider submitted the following as evidence:

- Portfolio Sample; Parent surveys; Review of philosophy questionnaire; Staff reflections in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Staff Meeting Minutes; Photo of parent info. night.

### *Panel's considerations*

44. The panel found that while the provider had submitted statements about engagement with families, it had not provided evidence that genuine engagement was occurring. The panel found the service had a practice of consulting and informing, rather than genuine engagement. For example, noting the service uses parent surveys, the panel was interested in where the service took the information from the survey and how it changed or influenced the service's practice. The panel was of the view that other evidence showed the service was telling families what was happening at the service and reporting back on what they did, rather than showing meaningful family and community engagement.
45. The panel noted the service had discussed that parents were too busy to engage and educators had suggested a book system to overcome this challenge, but there was no evidence that this idea was implemented and where it is in their program.
46. The panel found limited evidence of community engagement, for example a visit from the fire department, and that otherwise evidence of meaningful community engagement was lacking.
47. The panel was unsure how the [REDACTED] supported learning and development and wondered what the intent of the [REDACTED] was and if the service had reflected on whether it was meeting the intent.
48. The panel confirmed the assessment of this theme is No. The panel confirmed the rating for this standard is Meeting NQS.

### **Standard 2.2**

*Each child is protected.*

### **Exceeding theme 3**

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

### *Regulatory authority's view*

49. In the outcome summary, the regulatory authority noted:
  - educators supervise children effectively, adjusting their level of supervision dependent on the age, skills and size of the group and activity involved. Emergency evacuation and lockdown procedures are displayed and rehearsed in line with regulatory requirements. Educators understand their obligations under the child protection legislation. The nominated supervisor and educators reflect together on safety-related incidents, and



- [REDACTED] software sends a one-month reminder to action immunisations that are due as well as medical management plans that need to be reviewed. This is then relayed to parents for actioning to ensure they are always kept up to date.
- We have developed and maintain ongoing relationships with [REDACTED] Inclusion Support, Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists and a Psychologist. This demonstrates our commitment to developing and maintaining meaningful engagement with the community. Parents are also invited to attend these meetings, in order to work collaboratively and implement strategies that can be applied in and out of the service.
- Educators actively engage with families about their concerns and priorities for their children's safety via email, verbally during drop off and pick up; via messages on [REDACTED] informing families of when the service will be practicing emergency evacuation and lockdown procedures. This is also documented on our yearly events calendar, which is shared with families via email, [REDACTED] and during parent meetings.
- [REDACTED] immediately notifies families if there is a threat to the children's health and safety, such as a lockdown, emergency evacuation or health concern.
- The service takes into consideration the changes in geographical and environmental factors and will make necessary changes to the routine to ensure the children's health and safety is maintained. For example; implementing the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] keeping children indoors if there is smoke in the air, etc. These changes are notified to families via email, parent newsletters and signs displayed.
- [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] employs educators from the same cultural backgrounds as the children and families who use our service. This enables families to pass on their concerns and feedback in their home language if necessary.
- We actively encourage families and children to provide feedback in relation to managing risks and supporting child safety. For example; discussing sun safety with the children, road safety, family participation in our events.
- Families are consistently encouraged to provide feedback in relation to their beliefs and approach to managing risks and supporting child safety. This is done verbally, via email, questionnaires, parent meetings, discussions, suggestion box, survey monkey, etc. Parents are also invited to participate in our QA2 Parent Survey, sent via survey monkey. Educators then discuss and reflect on feedback provided from these surveys to make necessary changes to service practice.
- Our emergency evacuation plans have been developed in consultation with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] which is an organisation made up of professional fire fighters. These are reviewed every 5 years or as required.

- The [REDACTED] [REDACTED] particularly the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] allows the children to develop real life skills, such as cutting fruit with a knife, using glass cups, plates made of crockery, etc. This allows the children to learn how to use these materials and to be cautious.
- At every monthly staff meeting we review, discuss and reflect on WH&S; incident and complaints registers; Supervision and our quality area surveys. These discussions/reflections include feedback from all stakeholders.
- [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has a Yearly Training Calendar which includes Child Protection, First Aid, Asthma and Anaphylaxis, CPR, Effective Supervision of Children, Food Handling. These training sessions are free of charge and all educators are encouraged to attend at least 2 sessions per year.

53. The provider submitted the following as evidence:

- Events Calendar; Photo of parent information area.

#### *Panel's considerations*

54. The panel found evidence of a commitment to acting on parent feedback, noting the [REDACTED] program was implemented in response to parent feedback. The panel also found staff minutes showed families had been invited to participate and the panel found evidence of raising awareness of children's health and safety.
55. However, the panel found that connecting with families and making them aware of priorities is not the same as engagement, which is required for an exceeding rating. The panel was of the view that genuine engagement would be reflected in proactive, meaningful and ongoing partnering with families with ongoing input and evaluations.
56. The panel also discussed that the parent information night showed a person presenting to families and encouraged the service to consider how it might move from practices of informing families to engaging with and partnering with them.
57. The panel confirmed the assessment of this theme is No. The panel confirmed the rating for this standard is Meeting NQS.

#### **Standard 3.1**

*The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.*

#### **Exceeding theme 3**

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

### *Regulatory authority's view*

58. In the outcome summary, the regulatory authority noted:
- the service's physical environment is safe and includes spaces for children to play, work and talk together in small and large groups. The service has effective systems to ensure the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and well maintained. The nominated supervisor and educators reflect, individually and together, on the design of the physical environment, and consider opportunities to make changes to strengthen inclusion and participation, and to enhance children's safety, learning and development outcomes.
59. At first tier review, the panel found:
- the authorised officer has not recorded any evidence to support the attainment of this Theme for this Standard. The panel acknowledges that the evidence supplied by the approved provider demonstrates some opportunities for families to provide feedback on the physical environment of the service.
  - However, the evidence is limited to demonstrate regular and meaningful opportunities for collaboration and shared decision making with families and the community in regards to designing and making changes to indoor and outdoor spaces at the service.

### *Approved provider's view*

60. The approved provider submits:
- Opportunities for ongoing collaboration between families and community partners are built into our service's approach to designing and making changes to the physical environment.
  - At our monthly NQF meetings we focus on one quality area at time. When we discuss and reflect on quality area 3, we refer to feedback from children, families and staff which has been gained verbally, via the QIP parent feedback area and via questionnaires and meeting minutes. We have added new climbing equipment, an activity wall, mud kitchen, dramatic play area with new kitchen, dress ups, etc. based on the feedback received.
  - The environment is set up each based on the weather conditions, children's choice and to ensure that all children are included.
  - Our emergency evacuation and lock down procedures are practiced every 3 months and when new staff and children join our service.
  - The [REDACTED] [REDACTED] environment includes a diverse range of materials that reflect the geographical, cultural and community context of our service. We have continent boxes; dress ups; language cards; puzzles; books; dolls; [REDACTED] materials; music; art and craft materials; etc that reflect



newsletter announcement made it clear that while a family's suggestion had instigated change, families were not collaborating and assisting in the decision-making process that followed, and that staff at the service decided on the way forward. The panel encouraged the service to consider how it could reflect and draw on the strengths and priorities of the families and children, and how it could identify opportunities to engage and collaborate with families.

64. The panel confirmed the assessment of this theme is No. The panel confirmed the rating for this standard is Meeting NQS.

#### **Standard 4.1**

*Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development.*

#### **Exceeding theme 2**

*Practice is informed by critical reflection*

#### *Regulatory authority's view*

65. In the outcome summary, the regulatory authority noted:
- the organisation of educators across the service supports children's learning and development through effective supervision and continuity of educators at the service. The small cohesive team provides a consistent experience for children. The nominated supervisor and educators understand and implement effective processes to support organisation and continuity of educators to enable the establishment and maintenance of secure relationships with children. The organisation and continuity of educators reflects the unique geographical, cultural and community context of the service.
66. At first tier review, the panel found:
- the authorised officer has not included any evidence pertaining to critical reflection occurring for this Standard. The panel also considers that the evidence submitted by the approved provider, for the most part, is not relevant to Theme 2 for this Standard.
  - The evidence does not demonstrate that the services practice regarding staffing arrangements is informed by critical reflection, including how opportunities to further enhance children's learning and development through the organisation of educators and staff continuity are identified and implemented.

#### *Approved provider's view*

67. The approved provider submits:
- At our service we have an [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who has completed her ECT. When she visits our service on a weekly basis, she completes an [REDACTED] [REDACTED] checklist which focuses on compliance as well as time spent on the floor mentoring the Nominated Supervisor and educators. This includes reflecting

on and providing guidance to the program, curriculum, interactions with children, communication with families, and so on.

- Our service receives [REDACTED] visits from our [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who spends time on the floor working with and interacting with the children as well as offering ongoing guidance, mentoring and training to the educators in each room. This allows educators to continuously provide the best opportunity for children's learning and development, through ongoing reflection. This is evident in our [REDACTED] area, where activities are changed according to children's interests.
- The [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] visits [REDACTED]. She has a Bachelor of Education that was obtained in [REDACTED] and has been working for [REDACTED] [REDACTED] since [REDACTED]. She spends time mentoring the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Nominated Supervisor and the team of educators.
- The regulatory educator to child ratios is always maintained and tracked via the directly working with children record in each room.
- At the monthly NQF meetings, educators reflect together to work out strategies and implement changes within the service. This includes using parent NQF surveys, educator observations, children's voices etc. This resulted in the amendment of staff rosters to ensure continuity of staff in each room for children and families, with an additional educator placed in each room for majority of the day. All educators were then rostered on the same shifts every week to ensure continuity for children and families. It also resulted in the re-arrangement of our reading area in the classroom, as we reflected on how we could make this more engaging and welcoming for the children. Chairs were added and our large bookshelf was replaced with small book stands at children's level, to make it more inviting.
- Every 2 months each educator meets with the Nominated Supervisor and has a professional conversation, which is documented in their individual books. This conversation focuses on reflecting on professional goals, meeting the requirements of their job description, and discussing and documenting their strengths and areas for improvement. The NS and educator refer to the staff training calendar and external Professional Development sessions to find ways on achieving these goals. We then reflect on these goals at the next professional conversation.
- The educational leader also conducts monthly room meetings to discuss programming and documentation, reflecting on how educators can further enhance children's learning and development.
- All educators have been working at the service for [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] years, with all educators (apart from one) having a Diploma qualification to achieve best practice. The educators participate in ongoing training opportunities, by reflecting on personal goals, to stay up to date on implementing best practices.

- All educators critically reflected on our service and what age groups they are most passionate about- this resulted in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] moving from the preschool room to the toddler room, as she showed more passion and motivation in this age group. This provided improvement in our organisation of educators and ensured staff continuity and performance remaining at a high standard.
- The team also engage in ACECQA's Quest for Quality NQS Knowledge game and the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] at each monthly NQF meeting. This allows educators to reflect on their practices and gain new insights to further improve and implement positive changes to embed into the program.
- Educators work collaboratively with [REDACTED] Inclusion Support agent to ensure inclusiveness of all children and families at our service. This has resulted in the creation of a strategic inclusion plan (SIP), which all educators follow and continuously reflect on and review.
- All educators work the same days and same shifts to ensure continuity within the service for children, families and the team. Part-time staff are very flexible to cover any educators on leave, to reduce the use of casuals when possible. However, we do have the same pool of casuals utilised at the service to also ensure continuity of staff.

68. The provider submitted the following as evidence:

- QA4 meeting minutes; Professional conversation example; ed leader meeting minutes.

*Panel's considerations*

69. The panel noted some of the evidence provided showed practice that is expected for a rating of Meeting NQS, for example, changing rosters to support continuity and maintaining ratios. It also considered some of the evidence submitted was more appropriate to standard 4.2 or 7.2.

70. The panel noted the service had made statements that critical reflection was occurring, but these statements were not supported by evidence.

71. The panel considered some of the examples of reflections submitted by the service were more summaries than critical reflections. The panel did not find evidence of educators reflecting together to make changes that would be meaningful for children. As an example, the panel wondered how the staff training calendar was developed, whether it was implemented and how it was implemented.

72. The panel confirmed the assessment of this theme is No. The panel confirmed the rating for this standard is Meeting NQS.

## **Standard 4.2**

*Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical.*

### **Exceeding theme 2**

*Practice is informed by critical reflection*

#### *Regulatory authority's view*

73. In the outcome summary, the regulatory authority noted:
- educators build relationships with families of the community that include the exchange of ideas and best practice. Educators engage in respectful and collaborative interactions with one another. All interactions between educators and others in the service community are respectful and promote a positive atmosphere within the service. Educators build relationships with families and members of the community that include the exchange of ideas and best practice.
74. The evidence summary also notes:
- Every two months educators meet with the nominated supervisor to have a [REDACTED]. These discussions focus on meeting or achieving their professional goals, the ECA Code of Ethics and the requirements of their job description and documenting their strengths and areas for improvement (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
  - The educator will briefly discuss the ECA code of Ethics which is glued in each educator's professional conversations book during meetings with colleagues.
75. At first tier review, the panel found:
- the available evidence highlights that educators engage in some discussions regarding professional standards during their professional conversations and staff meetings.
  - However, the evidence is not sufficient to show how the services practice and approach to professional collaboration and standards has been informed by critical reflection or any changes that have been implemented as a result of critical reflection for this Standard.

#### *Approved provider's view*

76. The approved provider submits:
- The service has a staff strengths tree, where educators are invited to note down their strengths and interests as an educator. The team then reflect on these areas to see how we can utilise each educators' strengths and

interests. After reflecting on this, roles were created for staff who showed interest in areas for sustainability officer; WH&S officer; [REDACTED] Officer.

- Our monthly NQF Meetings is also used to acknowledge strengths and skills of staff, by staff reflecting and nominating an educator with a staff appreciated award and a gift voucher.
- Educators continually reflect and share information or ask for assistance from others, communicating via our centre and individual room [REDACTED] groups; classroom diaries; consultation with Ed Leader/NS; sharing ideas from ED Leader [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] during weekly visits; management team via email, phone or in person and via the [REDACTED].
- Professionalism and ethical conduct at our service is guided through our Code of Conduct and Professionalism policies, The ECA Code of Ethics, and our philosophy. Educators always interact with one another in a professional and courteous manner, which results in a pleasant and positive atmosphere.
- All the team is involved in critical reflection of their professional standards, practices, and goals every 2 months during their professional conversation with the Nominated Supervisor. These meetings reflect on and note progress towards meeting professional development goals as well as areas for improvement and strengths.
- During weekly room meetings each team member reflects on their practices throughout the week based on their pedagogical knowledge and curriculum development.
- [REDACTED] [REDACTED] offers a fully funded yearly professional development training calendar to support staff to reach their professional development goals. The same training session is held at various [REDACTED] [REDACTED] locations to allow as many staff to participate as possible. These sessions are conducted by internal and external trainers.
- All educators are included and supported to actively contribute to reflection and decision-making in relation to programs, environments and service operations.
- Following the recruitment and induction process staff are requested to complete a staff orientation feedback survey so that our service can reflect on our processes and make necessary changes where required. New educators participate in a new staff training program to receive adequate training about the [REDACTED] program, documentation and routines before commencing at the service. The NS and new staff will complete a thorough induction prior to their first day and is introduced to all staff at this time. The NS, room leader and educators work closely with the new educator to mentor and guide them. The NS and new staff will then have a professional conversation 2 months from their start date and will complete a staff appraisal 6 months from their staff date, to reflect on their professional growth and development and create new goals.
- The team also engage in ACECQA's Quest for Quality NQS Knowledge game and the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] at each monthly NQF meeting. This allows educators to reflect on their practices and gain new insights to further improve and implement positive changes to embed into the program.

77. The provider submitted the following as evidence:
- Professional conversation meeting minutes; Staff training calendar 2019;

#### *Panel's considerations*

78. The panel noted some of the evidence provided was expected for a rating of Meeting NQS, for example new staff training, orientation and mentoring partners.
79. The panel was interested in the service having identified interest areas and created roles for people but found no evidence about how these roles came about. The panel felt the reflections provided demonstrated some reflection but did not demonstrate debate or critical reflection leading to true changes and improved practice. The panel felt there was limited evidence about how much input educators had, and limited evaluation was occurring about whether practices were working.
80. The panel confirmed the assessment of this theme is No. The panel confirmed the rating for this standard is Meeting NQS

#### **Standard 5.1**

*Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.*

#### **Exceeding theme 2**

*Practice is informed by critical reflection*

#### *Regulatory authority's view*

81. In the outcome summary, the regulatory authority noted:
- that educators ensure that children feel they belong and are included in the service, can participate in all learning experiences and that their contributions are recognised and appreciated. Educators view each child as capable and competent, with a right to a voice and able to contribute to decisions that affect them.
82. At first tier review, the panel found:
- the authorised officer has not recorded any evidence to support critical reflection occurring for this Standard. The panel also acknowledges the approved provider's claims that educators engage in critical reflection in regards to relationships with children, although this has not been supported by any documented evidence.
  - The available evidence is limited to demonstrate that critical reflection informs practice for this Standard, including any opportunities to further develop children's sense of security and confidence and further support the dignity and rights of children being identified and implemented.

*Approved provider's view*

83. The approved provider submits:

- The educators re-visit and discuss the following critical documents through staff meetings. The ECA Code of Ethics guides each educators practice and allows them to constantly reflect on themselves personally, this document is also referred to and reflected upon in each individual educators' professional communication book where they are constantly reflecting on themselves and their practices.
- This is discussed and reflected upon throughout the NQS Quality Area 5 Quest for quality game where educators explore and discuss certain scenarios, discussion points, true and false and multiple-choice questions, further engaging all educators in meaningful conversations where critical reflection is occurring and further embedded in practice.
- The ECA Code of Ethics and UN Convention on the Rights of The Child are also displayed in the staff room for educators' reference.
- The Educators include the concept of social justice into their cultural program by using the resource; Building belonging: A toolkit for early childhood educators on cultural diversity and responding to prejudice. This teacher resource is located in the staff room and Preschool room with relevant lesson plans for preschool age children.
- All Educators come from diverse cultures and are arranged in each room accordingly, educators speak the same language as the children, further promoting a sense of belonging and respectful relationships.
- All educators are involved in critical reflection about relationships and interactions with children regarding their pedagogy to ensure social justice and children's inclusion is supported.
- [REDACTED] activities are part of the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and enable educators and children to model and role play social situations and therefore promote and encourage positive interactions and conflict resolution. Educator's support children to stand for their rights and use their words to express their feelings. They discuss with children and plan activities such as role play on topics involving feelings, emotions, fair and unfair behaviour, honesty, responsibility, respect, etc. The educators work with families and inclusion support agencies to consistently support children who have specifically diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties.
- The team also engage in ACECQA's Quest for Quality NQS Knowledge game and the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] at each monthly NQF meeting. This allows educators to reflect on their practices and gain new insights to further improve and implement positive changes to embed into the program.

84. The provider submitted the following as evidence:

- Parent surveys; Review of philosophy questionnaire; Staff reflections in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Staff Meeting Minutes. Toddler/Preschool orientation info sheet; All About Me forms

#### *Panel's considerations*

85. The panel noted some of the evidence provided showed practice that is expected for a rating of Meeting NQS, such as questionnaires about children and surveys. The panel found there was no evidence that the questionnaires and surveys were critically reflected on to inform practice. It also found no evidence of robust debate or self-reflection in conversation notes.
86. The panel discussed that the ECA code of ethics was displayed for reference but there was no indication of how the code supports reflection and relationships. The panel wondered if the code was static, that is, displayed, rather than being used to guide and support reflection.
87. The panel noted that educators are of diverse culture and arranged so that they speak children's languages. However, the panel noted there was no evidence of the service reflecting on this practice or questioning the practice to consider if it is working well and supporting children.
88. The panel noted that in meeting minutes, staff had discussed a parent's comment that they would like to see more engagement outside and noted they were doing as much as they can. The panel agreed a service operating at the Exceeding level would not appear to be defensive about receiving feedback, but would reflect deeply on how to use feedback to support children.
89. The panel confirmed the assessment of this theme is No.

#### **Standard 5.1**

*Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.*

#### **Exceeding theme 3**

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

#### *Regulatory authority's view*

90. In the outcome summary, the regulatory authority noted:
  - educators ensure that children feel they belong and are included in the service, can participate in all learning experiences and that their contributions are recognised and appreciated. Educators view each child

as capable and competent, with a right to a voice and able to contribute to decisions that affect them.

91. The evidence summary also notes:

- Educators assist to develop a sense of belonging and comfort by using their home language or asking them to bring a comfort item from home. The comfort item is particularly for children who are new to the service or if they observed to need this reassurance (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).

92. At first tier review, the panel found:

- that the available evidence demonstrates positive and supportive relationships between educators and children and their families.
- However, the supporting evidence is not adequate in demonstrating that meaningful engagement with families influences the services practice and approach to building and maintaining respectful and equitable relationships with each child.

#### *Approved provider's view*

93. The approved provider submits:

- Families are constantly communicating with educators and the nominated supervisor regarding their children and their specific needs. The staff are constantly striving to work with parents in order to respect their cultural practices and values and to assist in implementing this practice at our service to ensure inclusion amongst all children.
- The service looks at children in the context of their individuality in relation to their family culture and develop strategies such as using some simple words in the child's home language and visual aids to communicate with non-English speaking children to support their inclusion, feelings of confidence and sense of belonging.
- Parents can also provide ongoing feedback via our parent surveys and input into philosophy review questionnaires. These forms are used to inform and reflect on each child's learning progress and overall operation of the service.
- Upon enrolment families are invited to attend with their child, for an orientation visit to the centre. This is held for 1-2 hours, or longer if needed, for the child and family to get acquainted with the class environment, children and educators. In addition to the All About Me forms completed prior to enrolling, the NS and educators sit with the parent during the orientation visit and ask a series of questions about the child. These answers are then used to help the child for their first day of school, by preparing items of interest for the child to access as soon as he enters the room. This ensures a positive relationship forming between the child, educators and the environment from the first day of enrolment.
- Educators are also responsive to children's needs by providing them with choices, and respecting children's needs and wants. This is reflected during daily routines such as lunch times, children may not want to eat their lunch, so

they are provided with choices of food that the centre has. Children may not want to sleep during rest time, so they are then provided with other opportunities to be involved in, such as quiet activities and interest-based experiences or engagement in extended [REDACTED]

- Children are always offered indoor and outdoor activities and have access to all activities and materials. Children are respected and provided with opportunities to voice their opinions which therefore influence educator's decision making and practices on a daily basis, as they take these conversations into consideration and extend upon them. They are very flexible and constantly respect each child's opinion and input.
- Children have been provided with opportunities to be involved in decision making on various occasions, for example the children are constantly involved in the management of the worm farm and vegetable garden. They are constantly asking questions. Children are bringing in leftover food scraps from home to feed our worm farm.
- The service looks at children in the context of their individuality in relation to their family culture and develop strategies such as using some simple words in the child's home language and visual aids to communicate with non-English speaking children to support their inclusion, feelings of confidence and sense of belonging.

94. The provider submitted the following as evidence:

- Parent surveys; Review of philosophy questionnaire; Staff reflections in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Staff Meeting Minutes. Toddler/Preschool orientation info sheet; All About Me forms

#### *Panel's considerations*

95. The panel noted the service had provided evidence it seeks family input, such as through feedback on surveys and family information sheets. However, the panel struggled to find evidence of meaningful engagement with family and/or the community which shapes practice. For example, the panel wondered how the service uses the information it receives from families by way of surveys and information sheets to shape practice.
96. The panel noted staff meeting notes had documented a need for more parent engagement in the program and an admission that it was difficult to engage with parents.
97. The panel discussed there appeared to be an intention to connect with community, but at present no evidence of practice being shaped by meaningful engagement with community.

98. The panel confirmed the assessment of this theme is No. The panel confirmed the rating for this standard is Meeting NQS.

## **Standard 5.2**

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

### **Exceeding theme 2**

*Practice is informed by critical reflection*

#### *Regulatory authority's view*

99. In the outcome summary, the regulatory authority noted:
- all educators tailor their approaches to supporting children to build and maintain sensitive, responsive relationships in response to input from the community. Children engage in enjoyable interactions with their peers, contributing to shared play experiences.
100. The evidence summary also notes:
- Educators refer to the [REDACTED] teacher resource folder' for behaviour guidance strategies and reflect on these (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
  - The service reflects on family feedback gained through their Quality Area Five parent feedback survey (Confirmed as 'yes' in QIP notes section of Evidence Summary).
  - Notes from a course the nominated supervisor attended titled [REDACTED] have been shared with colleagues.
  - As a result of information being shared from training relating to responding to challenging behaviour educators are using specific words from the training including, 'You're safe' and '... will return'. The service is now focusing on consistency with this terminology to support the transition of children who are finding this challenging.
101. At first tier review, the panel found:
- the available evidence demonstrates some reflection by educators on current research and training in relation to managing children's behaviour.
  - However, the evidence is limited to demonstrate that critical reflection on practice for this standard is regular and ongoing and that opportunities for educators to further foster collaborative learning are identified and implemented.

#### *Approved provider's view*

102. The approved provider submits:
- The children are encouraged to assist one another and help each other throughout their learning and day to day experiences. This is also a part of our

- ██████████ key learning area that aids the children in developing knowledge on how to be kind, share and help one another.
- Each educators practice is informed by critical reflection as they are constantly involved in the practice of reflection when working with children daily. Each child is supported to regulate their behaviour and respond appropriately to the behaviour of others by educators engaging in using certain strategies from these documents. The educators reflect on current research and theoretical perspectives that influence their practice. For example, they refer to the ██████████ – teacher resource folder. This supporting research informs them of effective strategies that they can use to teach the children, further enhancing each child’s development, understanding and comprehension of self-regulation and conflict resolution and promoting positive behaviour in the classroom. This is an effective tool which educators use to ensure they adopt the most effective strategies. Educators will critically reflect in this area in their classroom diaries, discussing how they support children to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships. These strategies/ideas are then shared at our monthly NQF Meetings and/or monthly room meetings.
  - The team also engage in ACECQA’s Quest for Quality NQS Knowledge game at each monthly NQF meeting. This allows educators to reflect on their practices and gain new insights to further improve and implement positive changes to embed into the program.
  - Staff members also do their own research and share their experience with each other in terms of what practices they should use. Based on children’s needs, educators will attend professional development workshops to assist in supporting sensitive and responsive relationships. For example, educators attended the ██████████’ and ██████████’ workshop. These workshops further educate educators to constantly improve on their knowledge and practice. The information gained from attending these workshops is shared with all team members during the monthly staff meetings.
  - Educators also liaise with Speech therapists, Psychologists, ██████████ Inclusion Support and OT’s to reflect on feedback and strategies that they can implement to also support children’s learning.
103. The provider submitted the following as evidence:
- ██████████ resource folder, Contemporary Research 1 & 2; ██████████ staff meeting minutes

*Panel’s considerations*

104. The panel noted the contemporary research resource folder was a positive resource. However, there was no indication of how it was used to critically reflect on practice and to make changes as a result. The panel was unsure of how it influences practice.

105. The panel found no indication of how learning from workshops and training supports debate on those topics. The panel encouraged the service to consider how staff could reflect and discuss how the learnings from training can support continuous improvement.
106. The panel noted there was regular and ongoing reflection by some individuals, but this practice was not consistent among all educators. The panel noted the next step is to use critical reflection to inform practice for this standard.
107. The panel confirmed the assessment of this theme is No. The panel confirmed the rating for this standard is Meeting NQS.

### **Other comments**

108. The panel wanted to encourage the service to delve into the exceeding themes and build a greater understanding of them. It noted that recent changes to the system need to be embraced and understood by the sector. In particular, the panel noted that critical reflection is a robust, rigorous process where teams reflect on practice and plan for continuous improvement. The panel encourages all services to commit to ongoing learning and training to build a greater understanding of the rigour required for exceeding level practice.