

Information sheet

MY TIME, OUR PLACE

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives

Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives is a shared responsibility of approved providers, educators, and other professionals working in school age education care settings, regardless of whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, and families are enrolled in that setting.

There is not a 'one size fits all' approach as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are diverse. This information sheet summarises the inclusion of the *My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia V2.0, 2022* (MTOF V2.0) Principle, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives as well as providing a starting point for reflection on what this Principle might look like in practice.



Links to the [National Quality Standard \(NQS\)](#)

The NQS recognises the potential of the educational program and practices to enhance each child's learning and development. The MTOF V2.0 Principle, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives is reflected in several quality areas of the NQS, with a particular focus in:

QA1: Educational program and practice

Element 1.1.1: Approved learning framework – Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.

Element 1.1.2: Child-centred – Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.

Element 1.2.3: Child directed learning – Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.

QA3: Physical environment

Element 3.2.3: Environmentally responsible – The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.

QA5: Relationships with children – all standards and elements

Standard 5.1: Relationships between educators and children – Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.

QA6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Element 6.1.2: Parent views are respected – The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.

Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives within the service philosophy, and practices of all educators and service teams is a key tool to advance Reconciliation. This also contributes to ‘Closing the Gap’ commitments and fulfilling every Australian child’s right to know about Australia’s First Nations’ histories, knowledge systems, cultures and languages.

Element 6.2.3: Community engagement – The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

QA7: Governance and Leadership

Element 7.1.1: Service philosophy and purpose – A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service’s operations.

Element 7.2.3: Development of professionals – Educators, co-ordinators and staff members’ performances are regularly evaluated and individual plans are in place to support learning and development.

What is the change?

The MTOP V2.0 includes three new principles, including Collaborative leadership and teamwork. diversity brings to know more about the world. What is the change?

The approved learning framework principles have been expanded to include three new principles. There is a new principle focusing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.

Rationale for the change

- Strengthening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, cultures, and perspectives throughout the EYLF is a priority, supported by the Terms of Reference, reflects the [Alice Springs \(Mparntwe\) Education Declaration](#) and aligns with the [Australian Curriculum V9.0](#).
- The Alice Springs Agreement (Mparntwe) Education Declaration:
 - » describes the importance of learning that builds on and ‘includes local, regional and national cultural knowledge and experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and work in partnership with local communities’ (p.5).
 - » recognises children and young people become active and informed members of the community who ‘come to understand, acknowledge and celebrate the diversity and richness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures’ (p.8).

This understanding is supported by a guiding principle of the National Quality Framework.

What will this change look like in practice?

Educators:

- are responsive to children and young people in ways that are affirming of their cultural identity, contributing to building their pride and strength.

- regularly assess themselves, their attitudes, their interactions and the learning environment for cultural competence, as defined by Elders, community and family members and in line with guidance provided by key and national bodies such as the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC).
- think deeply and seek assistance where possible, through engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, about how to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the philosophy of the setting, their planning and implementation of curriculum.
- create [culturally safe places](#), working in intercultural ways through pedagogy and practice. They seek out ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and western knowledge systems work side by side respectfully.
- grow their knowledge of [kinship](#) systems and cultural connections in their local communities so they can build engaging reciprocal relationships between services and community.
- acknowledge the strengths and capabilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and local community while supporting wellbeing to assist in reinforcing and affirming a positive sense of identity for their children and young people.

Practice is evident for school age children when:

Educators:

- proactively collaborate and explore, maintain and nurture respectful relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and individuals to build knowledge and understanding
- acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s ownership and stewardship of Country and their unique relationships to the land, sea, and waterways and explore these histories, cultures and relationships with children and young people
- acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people ownership and stewardship of Country and explore this with children and young people
- implement [place-based pedagogy](#), in particular connection with Country, to inform interactions and experiences with children and young people on a daily basis
- encourage children and young people to explore their [kinship](#) networks and connections to Country
- actively participate and collaborate with children and young people in the development and implementation of the service’s Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Reflective questions and provocations

- Tens and thousands of years of thinking, being, and knowing, what does this mean for service practice? How does your service philosophy guide and reflect quality practices of the MTOP V2.0 Principle: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives? Who is involved in the review of your philosophy so that it reflects this principle?
 - » NITV – [The Land We're on by Penelope Towney](#)
- Identify in what ways you nurture strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family and community partnerships, How is this reflected in your philosophy and reconciliation?
 - » Reconciliation Australia – [Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education](#)
- How is information shared with families, children, young people, and educators about the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander history, knowledge and Country?
 - » Deadly Story – [Tips for Engaging with Children](#)
- When and how do you acknowledge the oral traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in the curriculum?
 - » Dreamy Sleep – [Sleep stories from First Nations storytellers](#)

ACECQA references and resources

- Australian Government Department of Education – [My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia V2.0, 2022](#)
- ACECQA – [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
- ACECQA – [We hear you blog – Developing Narragunnawali Reconciliation Action Plans and Exceeding the National Quality Standard](#)

Other references and resources

- 50 words – [50 words project](#)
- AIATSIS – [Welcome to Country](#)
- Australian Government Department of Education – [The Alice Springs \(Mparntwe\) Education Declaration](#)
- Cool Australia – [Early Learning Hub – Caring for Country Education Resources](#)
- Dreamy Sleep – [Sleep stories from First Nations storytellers](#)
- Deadly Story – [Tips for Engaging with Children](#)
- Emerging Minds – [Working with First Nations families and children: A framework for understanding](#)
- Emerging Minds – [In focus: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wellbeing](#)
- Narragunnawali – [A matter of perspective \(Early learning\)](#)
- NITV – [The Land We're on by Penelope Towney](#)
- SNAICC – [Keeping our kids safe](#)
- Watarrka Foundation – [The Role of Family & Kinship in Aboriginal Culture](#)