

File Reference:  
(if applicable)



Australian Children's  
Education & Care  
Quality Authority

# National Quality Standard

## Assessment and Rating Report

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Service Name

Laura Preschool Centre

Service Approval Number

SE-00010563

Provider Name

Department for Education and Child Development

Provider Approval  
Number

PR-00006069

Assessment & Rating  
Number

ASR-00015724

Report Status

Final

Date Report  
Completed

23 August 2016

# About this report

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## *Purpose*

The purpose of this report is to give the approved provider notice of the outcome of the rating assessment and the rating levels for their education and care service (under section 136 of the Education and Care Services National Law).

The goals of the report are to provide:

- an assessment of the education and care service against the National Quality Standard (NQS) and the National Regulations
- the reasons for rating the service at each level
- support for the ongoing quality improvement of the education and care service

## *The rating system*

The National Regulations prescribe the rating levels within the assessment and rating process (regulation 57). The rating levels are:

- Exceeding National Quality Standard
- Meeting National Quality Standard
- Working Towards National Quality Standard
- Significant Improvement Required

Further information on how ratings are determined is available in the Guide to Assessment and Rating for Services, available on the ACECQA website at [www.cecqa.gov.au](http://www.cecqa.gov.au).

# Assessment and rating visit details

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## Type of service

Long Day Care



Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)



Family Day Care



Preschool/Kindergarten



Nominated Supervisor

June Cowin

Educational Leader

June Cowin

Primary Contact  
(for assessment & rating)

June Cowin

Quality Improvement Plan  
Date Received

16 June 2016

## Visit/s

Date

22 June 2016

## Authorised officers

Name 1

Name 2

## Further information (if applicable)

Laura Preschool is a Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) standalone kindergarten which offers preschool education for children in the year before they start school. The service belongs to the Upper Mid North Partnership which encompasses preschools, primary schools, secondary schools and community schools in Burra, Crystal Brook, Gladstone, Jamestown and Laura.

The preschool education program operates from 8:45 am to 3:15 pm every Monday and Wednesday and on some Fridays of each term. The service is located across the road from the

Laura Primary School. Twelve children are enrolled in the preschool program.

The service also operates a rural care program for children from birth to 12 years of age offering care for school aged children before school and after school and preschool age children between 8:00 am to 6:00 pm for 48 to 50 weeks a year. Twenty families make use of the rural care program. Rural care is fully integrated with the preschool program on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and operates with a single worker while preschool educators are on site; an additional worker is rostered in the afternoon to assist with the school aged care program. On Tuesday and Thursday rural care operates as a two worker program.



## Quality Area 1 – Educational program and practice

| Standard 1.1 | An approved learning framework informs the development of a curriculum that enhances each child's learning and development.                                                                                              |     |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1.1.1        | 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. | Met |
| 1.1.2        | Each child's current knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.                                                                                                               | Met |
| 1.1.3        | The program, including routines, is organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.                                                                                                             | Met |
| 1.1.4        | The documentation about each child's program and progress is available to families.                                                                                                                                      | Met |
| 1.1.5        | Every child is supported to participate in the program.                                                                                                                                                                  | Met |
| 1.1.6        | Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions and influence events and their world.                                                                                                       | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 1.1

The service's philosophy which highlights educators' commitment to a developing a culture that maximises each child's learning and development opportunities is a key driver of curriculum development at the service. The service's philosophy makes it clear that positive relationships between children, families, educators and the wider community are the foundation of learning. Educators aim to ensure each child's well-being by promoting optimism, agency, encouraging curiosity and a positive disposition toward learning. Thus the service's philosophy aligns well with the principles, practices and outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and these were evident in educator practices and documentation sighted on the day of the assessment and rating visit. These key curriculum drivers are complimented by other influences on ongoing curriculum decision making and development including the service's vision, families aspirations for children, building community, DECD priorities (e.g. literacy, numeracy, transitions) and Quality Improvement Priorities (QIP). For example, sustainability is a key QIP priority and curriculum for children has included a range of opportunities to learn about and care for their environment such as using a Wipe Out Waste (WOW) audit tool to sort and monitor rubbish collected after eating for a week.

Educators are thoughtful and intentional in the design and development of curriculum and they are committed to assessing children's leaning and development (refer to standard 1.2) and seeking out their views and in particular their likes and dislikes to inform ongoing curriculum development. Documentation sighted, discussions with educators and observations of educators' interactions with children emphasise the flexible and responsive nature of curriculum. Play experiences were open-ended encouraging child-initiation and direction. Educators skillfully supported children following their interests, scaffolding their learning and empowering them to direct their own learning. For example, during the assessment and rating visit educators supported children who wanted to create a café enabling them to move materials from the sandpit into another area, asking open-ended questions to stimulate children's thinking and creativity and acting as co-players to enrich children's



learning.

Support for every child's active participation is also embedded in the program with educators being responsive to individual children, supporting and scaffolding their learning and breaking down tasks when necessary to enhance achievability and increase children's level of engagement with the program. Educators also create a differentiated learning environment that enables multiple entry points for every child. On the day of the assessment and rating visit there was a wide range of open-ended learning experiences available that catered for engagement of children of varying abilities. For example indoors, socio-dramatic play (i.e. dress ups), blocks, play dough, collage, writing table, library corner and various games and other construction materials were available to children. Outdoors, there were a range of opportunities for socio-dramatic play within the cubby, sand pit and mud kitchen. The outdoor environment offered opportunities for physical activity with swings, a slide, bikes and painting available to children. Educators also provided natural materials (e.g. pine cones, twigs, stones in baskets) and other loose parts for children to explore. Children were observed independently making choices to engage in a wide range of play experiences and also accessing materials available or seeking support to access materials.

Educators have actively worked on establishing routines and programming in ways that support children's independence and maximise their engagement in learning. For example, children go to the refrigerator to get their lunch boxes at snack and lunch times and take them to the snack tables on the verandah and when they are finished they put their lunch boxes back in the refrigerator. The program offers a balance of opportunities for children to engage in self-initiated play (indoors and outdoors simultaneously) and group experiences. Group time experiences provide opportunities for educators to support literacy and numeracy learning, social and emotional wellbeing and musical and movement development. There is a natural flow around routines and it was evident that children were familiar with routines. Transitions between routines flowed smoothly.

Programming processes used by educators at the service are displayed prominently for families along with the service's philosophy and the program for children. This display provides detailed information about individual decision making steps in the planning cycle, goals for children and how children's engagement in learning experiences contribute to each of the five EYLF learning outcomes. To compliment this information a list of play experiences being offered as part of the program for the day are listed on a whiteboard near the entry door to the service along with other important notices for families. The preschool and rural care programs are integrated and thus the rural care program displayed for families focuses on highlighting goals for children. The fortnightly newsletter for families also provides information for families about broader goals for children and their learning and development as a group. The service also has a closed Facebook page where general information about the program for children is also available to families. All children enrolled in the preschool and rural care program have portfolios in which their learning and development is documented. The portfolios include samples of children's drawing and writing with annotations about learning and development with links to the EYLF outcomes (or My Time Our Place Outcomes (MTOP) for school aged children enrolled in the rural care program). Portfolios also include learning stories with photographs of children engaged in play and links to the EYLF outcomes as well as children's responses to interview questions about the things they enjoy doing the most at home and at preschool.

**Standard 1.1 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**



|                     |                                                                                                                                            |     |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Standard 1.2</b> | <b>Educators and co-ordinators are focused, active and reflective in designing and delivering the program for each child.</b>              |     |
| 1.2.1               | Each child's learning and development is assessed as part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documentation and evaluation.                   | Met |
| 1.2.2               | Educators respond to children's ideas and play and use intentional teaching to scaffold and extend each child's learning.                  | Met |
| 1.2.3               | Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, is regularly used to implement the program. | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 1.2

Educators are focused, active and reflective in designing and delivering a program for each child. This is achieved through a commitment to documenting and critically reflecting on children's learning and development as both individuals and groups and questioning how children's learning and development can be scaffolded and extended. This supports educators' intentionality in the implementation, review and revision of the program and more specifically their intentional interactions with groups and individual children.

Educators make a priority of and are deliberate and thoughtful in assessing and recording children's learning continuously as part of their ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation. Documentation sighted during the assessment and rating visit highlights that educators record children's learning and development daily making jottings which are transferred to individual children's documentation and assessed against the EYLF outcomes, learning processes, learning dispositions and literacy and numeracy indicators. The analysis of children's learning and development and information gathered from families during 'parent chats' (refer to standard 6.2) inform the formulation of group goals and individual goals which are the basis of individual learning plans for each child.

Educators also use other tools to support their assessment of children's learning and development, inform curriculum development and program planning and improve practice. For example, the EYLF practice based document 'Developmental milestones and the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Standards' is used by rural care educators to support them in assessing children's development against developmental milestones. Preschool children's communication is assessed by educators using 'Yakka Tracker' an Early Years Communication Audit Tool which identifies proficiency in communication and enables educators to identify strategies to support the development of children's communication. To evaluate how their practice supports children's communication proficiency educators monitored their conversations with children to identify how frequently and with which children they were able to engage a minimum of five exchanges recommended by the 'Strive for Five' program during a conversation. The evaluation provided a baseline from which educators could improve their practice and better support children's communication proficiency.

Educators' daily critical reflections on teaching and learning inform ongoing daily development of curriculum based on children's ideas and interests and abilities. Daily critical reflections also provide detailed ongoing evaluation of the program that informs continuing reflective discussions amongst staff and enables critical review, revision and design of the program for the next fortnight.

Educator's ability to be consistently responsive to children's ideas, play and engage in intentional teaching to extend children's learning is supported by the interactive processes of assessment and cyclic planning that drive development of the program. On the day of the assessment and rating visit educators were seen using a range of intentional teaching strategies including modelling and

reinforcing, describing and breaking down tasks, encouraging and praising children, using open ended questioning to support problem solving and providing provocations to support socio-dramatic play. For example, when an educator heard children call out 'we are making a café' she said, 'What sort of food do you serve?' Children responded 'everything even donuts'. The educator continued to engage the children asking, 'Oh what sort of cake can I get?' ... 'Okay can I get chocolate cake?' and then sitting with them while they served her coffee and cake. Another educator supported children to engage imaginatively saying 'oh I can hear some-one saying that the new zoo is over there' as she pointed in the direction of the sandpit. The educator continued responding to the child initiating the play and encouraging other children to engage 'yes we are coming to see your zoo' ... 'is there a zoo keeper at the zoo' ... 'wonder what animals we are going to see'.

**Standard 1.2 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

## Quality Area 1 summary

QA1 Minor Adjustment Notes

QA1 Quality Improvement Plan Notes

QA1 Compliance Notes

For Quality Area 1, is there an unacceptable risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children? No

Regulation 62(2) prescribes that an Exceeding National Quality Standard rating may only be given for Quality Area 1 for an education and care service that educates and cares for children who are in the year that is 2 years before grade 1 of school if the service either provides a preschool program or has a documented arrangement with an approved provider of another education and care service to provide a preschool program and informs parents of this arrangement.

Does the service educate and care for children who are in the year that is 2 years before grade 1 of school? Yes

Does the service have a preschool program? A preschool program means an early childhood educational program delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher. Yes

Quality Area 1 is rated

**Exceeding NQS**



## Quality Area 2 – Children’s health and safety

|                     |                                                                                                                                            |     |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Standard 2.1</b> | <b>Each child’s health is promoted.</b>                                                                                                    |     |
| 2.1.1               | Each child’s health needs are supported.                                                                                                   | Met |
| 2.1.2               | Each child’s comfort is provided for and there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child’s need for sleep, rest and relaxation.     | Met |
| 2.1.3               | Effective hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.                                                                                  | Met |
| 2.1.4               | Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness, in accordance with recognised guidelines. | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 2.1

Educators work in partnership with families and professionals to ensure the ongoing health needs of children are consistently met. For example, educators have worked in partnership with the family, occupational therapist and physiotherapist of child who lives with cerebral palsy. They have followed the advice of specialists in supporting the child’s gross motor development including facilitating the purchase of specialist equipment to enhance opportunities for the child’s development and participation in the program (refer to standard 6.3). As the child’s gross motor skills have improved strategies have been adjust to support the child’s continuing development with the support of specialists.

Information about children’s health needs including specific dietary requirements and minor allergies (e.g. sunscreen) is collected as part of the enrolment process. Families with children who have a diagnosed health condition, such as asthma or anaphylaxis, are supported to ensure they have an approved health care plan in place prior to their child starting preschool or rural care, which is in line with the DECD policy.

Children’s health care plans and specific dietary requirements, which include their photograph, are displayed prominently in the kitchen where they are easily accessible to educators. Information about children with health care needs and special dietary requirements is also discussed as part of the induction process for educators including relief educators attending the service. Children’s medications are stored securely in the office. Medication authority forms are required for administration of all medication and all medications administered to children are checked and recorded on a medication record.

The service supports children’s health care needs by facilitating Developmental Health Screenings conducted by the Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS). Appointments are arranged through the preschool and conducted by the CaFHS nurse at the local primary school which is located across the road (also refer to standard 6.3). The service also participates in the ‘Lift the Lip’ program.

The service has an ‘Emergency Action Plan’ displayed prominently for educators and families. The plan provides guidance about courses of action for educators in the case of a serious injury to a child or an emergency requiring evacuation.



All injuries are recorded in the services first aid log and a standard DECD Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Report form is completed with details of the injury and first aid administered. The report is placed into the family's communication pocket and families read and sign the form. This process was explained to families in the first newsletter for the year. For more serious injuries, first aid is applied and families are called immediately. In addition, to making an entry in the first aid log and completing an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Report form an entry is made into the DECD Incident Management Reporting System (IRMS) by the director. If necessary the approved provider DECD makes a report to the Regulatory Authority.

The director stated that depending on the nature of the symptoms experienced in the case of illness the child is separated from other children and made comfortable. Families are contacted immediately and the illness is recorded on an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record form. If a case of infectious illness is confirmed families are informed via a notice placed on the whiteboard at the entrance to the service as well as near the sign in/out sheet. All families receive a copy of the relevant fact sheet about the illness available in *Staying healthy in child care* which provides information about symptoms and exclusion periods.

Children are supported to wash their hands before meals, after toileting and messy activities. An educator supervises hand washing in the bathroom before meals prompting children to use the visual hand washing procedures displayed near the hand basins. During the assessment and rating visit educators were observed reinforcing hand washing procedures and reminding children about hand washing procedures as necessary. Children were observed washing their hands independently at other times.

Recommended best practices for changing nappies and cleaning nappy change areas are displayed in the bathroom. Educators were observed using these procedures when changing nappies. The service implements a range of other practices to maintain a hygienic environment. For example tables are wiped regularly and bathrooms are checked and cleaned during the day as necessary. The environment was also arranged in a way to support educators to implement recommended best practices to maintain the highest standards of hygiene when responding to children's needs. For example, gloves and tissues were strategically placed around the service so they were easily accessible to educators should they need to respond to situations such as a child with a runny nose.

Children are provided with a range of opportunities to engage in both active and restful learning experiences of their choosing during free play. Indoors there is an area where children can sit and read books as well as various table activities (e.g. play-dough, collage and writing). In the outdoor area there were many areas of the garden which provided opportunities for children to engage in quiet exploration. A bamboo 'hut' was also set up with cushions and books for children to use. In addition, after lunch each day there is 'quiet time' during which children engage in rest and relaxation. This time includes some soft relaxing music playing in the background with a variety of other relaxing activities being offered. Some of the relaxing activities include reading stories and yoga.

The sleep requirements of children attending rural care are well documented and these are reflected in routines. Infants have their own cots in a sleep room which are monitored by educators.

**Standard 2.1 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**



|                     |                                                                                                                       |     |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Standard 2.2</b> | <b>Healthy eating and physical activity are embedded in the program for children.</b>                                 |     |
| 2.2.1               | Healthy eating is promoted and food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child. | Met |
| 2.2.2               | Physical activity is promoted through planned and spontaneous experiences and is appropriate for each child.          | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 2.2

The foundation of the service's Food and Nutrition Policy is the DECD Right Bite, Easy Guide to Healthy Food and Drink Supply for South Australian Schools and Preschools. The service's policy clearly outlines the benefits of healthy eating patterns, provides an explanation of the Right Bite colour spectrum classification of the nutritional value of foods, and a summary of recommended and non-recommended foods based on Right Bite guidelines.

Snacks and lunches are provided by families for children. Families are well supported to provide snacks and lunches consistent with the service's Food Nutrition Policy. For example, in addition to the information provided in the service's policy the handbook for families describes foods that meet the service's policy and an Obesity Prevention and Lifestyle (OPAL) brochure and lunch box ideas are included in the enrolment pack for families. Families are encouraged to provide fruit, vegetables, yoghurt or cheese for snacks and sandwiches and salads for lunch. Reminders about the service's Food and Nutrition Policy and ideas for lunch boxes are included regularly in newsletters.

The service is committed to promoting children's nutritional knowledge and encouraging healthy eating patterns and this is embedded in the curriculum. For example, children are often engaged in cooking experiences sometimes using produce from the service's garden which provides opportunities for educators to support children to learn about healthy eating. Educators have also implemented the 'Eat a Rainbow' program with the support of the OPAL program run by the local council. The director stated that after initially running the Eat a Rainbow program at preschools in the district the local council had provided a kit for preschools to share to guide them in implementation of the Eat a Rainbow program. Preschools in the local council area share the kit and implement the 'Eat a Rainbow' program each year.

Educators were also observed talking to children about what they were eating, its nutritional value and their enjoyment of the food. For example, educators commented on the cut vegetables a child had in their lunch box noting the colours of the vegetables and how good vegetables are for health. Educators also encouraged children to eat fruit at snack time and savoury foods before eating other foods in their lunch boxes at lunch time.

Families provide water in drink bottles for children and educators refill children's drink bottles from the insulated beverage container on the verandah. Children remove their drink bottles from their bags when they arrive at the service and place them on a table where they are easily accessible. Children pick up their drink bottles and take them with them to where they are sitting for meals. Educators were observed encouraging children to have a drink at both snack and lunch time.

A variety of open-ended learning experiences to engage children of all abilities were available to promote physical activity. Educators were observed supporting all children to engage in a range of physical activities of their choosing indoors and outdoors during the assessment and rating visit.

Indoors there were a range of learning experiences planned to promote and support fine motor development, dexterity and coordination for children to choose from. These included play-dough, puzzles, writing table, construction and dress ups. On the verandah there was also a range of



learning experiences including musical instruments for children to explore.

Children had many opportunities to engage in gross motor activity to support the development of balance and coordination as well as strengthen muscles in the outdoor area. The outdoor area is large and includes a board walk, bridges and slides and a bike track and thus provides lots of space for children to walk, run and cycle (refer to standard 3.1). Play experiences offered included sandpit play, mud kitchen play, swings, a climbing obstacle course with multiple entry and exit points enabling children to select their own challenges, and climbing the 'climbing tree' under supervision of educators. Educators were attuned to children's engagement in physical challenges and were observed supporting and encouraging children in their choice of physical activity.

Documentation sighted highlights the range of opportunities for children to engage in physical activity of their choosing and of interest to them as well as how educators build on children's interests in physical activity. For example, children's interest in camping socio-dramatic play has been facilitated through educators' ongoing provision of resources to support this play. Individual children's interest in activities such as learning to write their names has also been facilitated by educators.

The director stated they make the most of opportunities to engage children in physical activity when they are out and about in the community. For example children regularly visit the local community playground and make use of the oval at the local primary school.

**Standard 2.2 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**



|                     |                                                                                                                                                 |     |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Standard 2.3</b> | <b>Each child is protected.</b>                                                                                                                 |     |
| 2.3.1               | Children are adequately supervised at all times.                                                                                                | Met |
| 2.3.2               | Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.                                       | Met |
| 2.3.3               | Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.       | Met |
| 2.3.4               | Educators, co-ordinators and staff members are aware of their roles and responsibilities to respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect. | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 2.3

Supervision was seamless, with educators locating and relocating themselves throughout the service (indoors and outdoors) with groups and individual children, in a way that ensured all play areas were monitored and children were visible and or within hearing distance. Educators communicated their movements effectively and engaged children in a range of ways to support sustained ongoing play episodes and prevent potential harm to themselves or others. For example, educators supported children to gain entry into play and resolve issues that arose during the course of play as well as setting up and maintaining physical spaces.

Educators conduct daily hazard checks of the outdoor area which are signed off. Educators are alert to ensuring any potential hazards that might arise during the course of day are identified and dealt with. In addition, regularly quarterly DECD hazard checks of the indoor and outdoor are conducted. Risk assessments are conducted on equipment and resources purchased as considered necessary by educators as well as for any outdoor activities, events and incursions and excursions planned for children. The director stated that the service receives DECD hazard alerts which provide services with up to date information about hazards that have arisen with equipment and resources currently in use in DECD sites. This information is discussed at staff meetings.

Educators see children as competent and capable and actively support children and empower them to make safe choices in their play by discussing safety as part of the implementation of the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum (KS:CPC). The service has a climbing tree and children have been engaged in discussion about how to climb the tree safely and the need to ask an educator when they want to climb the tree. On the day of the assessment and rating visit children wanted to climb the tree approached an educator who monitored the activity to ensure children's safety.

In preparation for practicing emergency procedures educators engage children in a discussion about the range of situations that might give rise to an emergency and either an emergency invacuation or evacuation. The director stated that children are aware of their context have an understanding that a snake in the outdoor area might result in an invacuation and a fire indoors may result in an emergency evacuation. The director stated that emergency evacuation plans are kept simple and in either an emergency invacuation or evacuation children know they need to go to the person blowing the whistle.

Emergency evacuation procedures are clearly displayed around the service. These plans identify what educators should do in an emergency, evacuation routes and mustering points. Evacuation emergency procedures are practiced regularly with children and evaluated to ensure their effectiveness. Emergency invacuations are also practised. The director stated that practises of



emergency procedures take place regularly each term. After an initial discussion about emergencies the procedures are practised three times during the day; before lunch, after lunch and after group time.

Educators are aware of their roles and responsibilities to respond to children at risk of abuse and neglect. The director stated that any concerns noted by educators are reported to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL). As noted earlier the service implements the KS:CPC which follows a pattern of introducing more complex concepts to build on the themes of the right to feel safe and the how to keep ourselves safe over the course of the preschool year.

The director stated that the implementation of the KS:CPC is discussed formally at governing council meetings and 'parent chats' (refer to standard 6.2). Educators also discuss the implementation of the KS:CPC with families informally and there is also a brochure available for families about protective practices.

**Standard 2.3 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

## Quality Area 2 summary

QA2 Minor Adjustment Notes

QA2 Quality Improvement Plan Notes

QA2 Compliance Notes

For Quality Area 2, is there an unacceptable risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children?

No

Quality Area 2 is rated

**Exceeding NQS**



## Quality Area 3 – Physical environment

| Standard 3.1 | The design and location of the premises is appropriate for the operation of a service.                                                                                           |     |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 3.1.1        | Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources are suitable for their purpose.                                                             | Met |
| 3.1.2        | Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.                                                                                                           | Met |
| 3.1.3        | Facilities are designed or adapted to ensure access and participation by every child in the service and to allow flexible use, and interaction between indoor and outdoor space. | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 3.1

The service building is located on a large area of land. A fruit orchard has been established at the front of the service and there are several raised garden beds in this area along with the compost bin and worm farm. Children access this area with the supervision of educators to put scraps in the compost bin and tend the garden.

The outdoor play area which can be freely accessed by children is large and includes a large storage shed, sand pit, a fixed swing structure, mud kitchen area, chook shed, play platform, cubby, board walk and slide around the side and back perimeter of the yard. There are many small garden areas amongst the designated play spaces for children to explore and many small and larger trees that provide shade. There is a path that weaves around the yard in a circular fashion. The path leads around the yard to the various play spaces and can be used for bike riding. Within the centre of the path there is a large area of soft fall where a climbing obstacle course was set up during the assessment and rating visit. There is also a large area of turf which has two fixed shade structures covering it. Adjacent to the area of turf an ornamental garden has been established with large rocks around the perimeter.

The service building has a large verandah which is used for table activities and meals. There is a ramp on the other side of the verandah which enables wheelchair access to the building. The service building includes an area with linoleum flooring and a carpeted area which is used for group time gatherings and other non-messy activities (e.g. puzzles). Large glass windows allow natural light into the play space. Children can move freely between the indoor and outdoor area through the main entrance.

The arrangement of furniture and play materials creates designated physical spaces for sustained play (e.g. wooden block construction) within the indoor environment and allows children to move freely from one play experience to another supporting both exploration and engagement in learning. The placement of furniture also supports ease of movement to and from the group time mat and the bathroom. Furniture and equipment is portable and allows flexibility in changing the arrangement of the indoor play space.

The service has a fully equipped kitchen that is open enabling a view into the play space. The kitchen can be entered from the play space via a half door which is latched securely from the inside. There is a door in the kitchen which can be used to enter the bathroom. The bathroom includes appropriately designed nappy change facilities.

The office is shared by all educators. There is also a work area to one side of the kitchen where



families sign children in and out. Rural care educators make use of this space to maintain children's documentation.

The premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained; this is a high priority for the service as highlighted by educators completing daily hazard checks and risk assessments (refer to standard 2.3) and implementing practices to maintain a clean and hygienic environment (refer to standard 2.1).The service is cleaned every evening.

Maintenance of the service is predominantly managed through DECD processes. Given the location of the service DECD engage local contractors to completed ongoing maintenance of the service. For example, a local electrician completes electrical testing and tagging. The grounds person from the local primary school sometimes comes to service to help with minor maintenance and families are regularly involved in working bees to help with tasks such as cleaning the verandah blinds, painting equipment such as the cubby and blackboards, tidying the yard and cleaning gutters.

**Standard 3.1 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**



|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                 |     |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Standard 3.2</b> | <b>The environment is inclusive, promotes competence, independent exploration and learning through play.</b>                                                                    |     |
| 3.2.1               | Outdoor and indoor spaces are designed and organised to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.                                       | Met |
| 3.2.2               | Resources, materials and equipment are sufficient in number, organised in ways that ensure appropriate and effective implementation of the program and allow for multiple uses. | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 3.2

Indoor and outdoor spaces at the service are flexible and enhance responsiveness to children's individual needs and development and encourage self-initiated play and exploration. Indoor and outdoor areas are effectively organised to engage all children in a broad range of learning opportunities in both built and natural environments. Documentation sighted during the assessment and rating visit highlight educators' responsiveness to children's curiosity about their natural environment. For example, children have been engaged in gardening and exploring a range of natural materials such as leaves, twigs and seed pods and their textures and shapes. In addition, as noted in standard 3.1 the layout of the play areas in both the indoor and outdoor environment enables smooth transitions from one play experience to another.

Resources were easily accessible to children and presented in an aesthetically pleasing and organised manner for ease of selection and to promote exploration and engagement. For example, in the outdoor area natural materials for children to explore were presented on a large wooden reel in woven baskets and books were placed in a bamboo 'hut' with a blanket on its base and large cushions. Musical instruments were placed on a table on the verandah and various types of coloured fluids and textured materials had been placed in clear plastic bottles on wooden shelf indoors to stimulate children's curiosity.

Documentation sighted during the assessment and rating visit highlights how educators are strategic in their placement of resources and responsiveness to children's interests to enhance their engagement in both exploration and play in the outdoor environment. For example, documentation shows children's interests in camping being facilitated.

Resources in both the indoor and outdoor area were sufficient in number, open-ended providing for varying levels of challenge and multiple uses, and were supportive of interactive play amongst small groups of children. Children were engaged in sustained play in both the indoor and outdoor environment, using materials in ways that were meaningful to them. Educators were attuned to children's play and offered additional resources and provocations to extend learning and were responsive to any requests for additional resources (refer to standard 1.1. and 1.2).

**Standard 3.2 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**



|                     |                                                                                                                |     |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Standard 3.3</b> | <b>The service takes an active role in caring for its environment and contributes to a sustainable future.</b> |     |
| 3.3.1               | Sustainable practices are embedded in service operations.                                                      | Met |
| 3.3.2               | Children are supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment.             | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 3.3

There is clear evidence that sustainable practices are embedded in service operations and that there is a commitment to caring for the environment and contributing to a sustainable future.

Sustainability is a key priority in the service's Quality Improvement Plan and it is a concept that has been embedded in curriculum for children. Educators have accessed WOW resources to support children's learning about sustainability. For example, children have been actively learning about reducing, reusing and recycling waste. This activity has been extended to understanding which organic food scraps can be placed in the service's worm farm. Children sort waste at meal times using three containers one for food scraps, one for items that can be reused (e.g. small plastic yoghurt containers) and one for other waste (e.g. paper). Each day a small group of children take the organic food waste to the worm farm and or compost area.

The service also has two bins available for waste which children use at other times of the day. One of the bins is a recycling bin and the other a landfill bin. The bins are different colours and the recycling bin also has a recycling symbol on it which children are familiar with.

Educators engaged children in conversations that reinforced sustainable practices when the opportunities arose during the course of the day. Children also demonstrated an understanding and curiosity about sustainable practices and sought out educators to ask questions. For example, a younger rural care child asked about rubbish that could go into the land fill bin.

Other initiatives at the service include using the WOW audit tool to monitor rubbish collected after children had eaten for a week at preschool, walking around the community to collect waste and clean up the local environment, an incursion at the service about recycling ('Professor Planet's and his Revolutionary Recyclatron') and a nude food day. Educators created a display using rubbish collected during the audit and added additional information for families about how to reduce waste. For example, there is information about considering packaging options, making a ball with used foil and placing it in the recycling bin when it is large enough, packing food in reusable containers and packing nude food without wrapping in lunch boxes. The service has plans to repeat the waste audit at the service as well as the nude food day.

Self stopping taps have been installed in the bathrooms and the service has plans to install a rainwater tank to supply water to the sandpit. The director stated that educators are conscious of water conservation and support children to understand that limiting water use in the sandpit supports sustainability.

As noted in standard 3.1 the service has established a fruit orchard, raised garden beds in which edible produce is grown, a compost heap and worm farm at the front of the service. There are also raised garden beds in the outdoor play area where herbs and other produce such as spinach is grown. Strawberries are also being grown in another half barrel planter in the outdoor play area. Children are actively engaged in the processes of preparing, planting and caring for produce grown in raised garden beds at the service and thus have opportunities to learn about and care for their environment and the produce from the garden in cooking experiences (refer to standard 2.2). These experiences provide children with opportunities to learn about sustainable practices and care for the



environment.

Educators also encourage and support children's curiosity about and respect for their environment. For example, educators have created a display which outlines children's exploration of seasonal changes that take place in autumn and entries in portfolios describes how children's interests in a leaf insect they found in the garden was extended to learning about camouflage. The service also has chickens which children help care for. They feed the chickens and also collect eggs.

**Standard 3.3 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

### Quality Area 3 summary

QA3 Minor Adjustment Notes

QA3 Quality Improvement Plan Notes

QA3 Compliance Notes

For Quality Area 3, is there an unacceptable risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children?

No

Quality Area 3 is rated

Exceeding NQS



## Quality Area 4 – Staffing arrangements

|              |                                                                                                          |     |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Standard 4.1 | Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development and ensure their safety and wellbeing. |     |
| 4.1.1        | Educator-to-child ratios and qualification requirements are maintained at all times.                     | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 4.1

Four educators are employed by the service in permanent and long term contract roles and another two educators are employed regularly on a casual basis. Educators are deployed in ways that promote continuity and contribute to a safe, predictable learning environment that enhances children's wellbeing.

The director, who is the educational leader and early childhood teacher (ECT) at the service, has a Masters of Early Childhood Education and is employed on a five year contract. The early childhood worker (ECW) who is employed to support the director with the implementation of the preschool program has a Certificate III qualification and is permanently employed at the service. Two rural care workers (RCW) implement the rural care program. They both hold a Diploma level qualification and one of them is studying for a Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood). There are two additional casual educators who regularly assist with the implementation of the rural care program. They both hold a Diploma level qualification and one of them is also studying for a Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood). One of the two casual educators predominantly provides inclusion support for children attending rural care.

The director and ECW work on rotation spending time with children both indoors and outdoors each day. Thus they have an opportunity to implement the program in the indoor and outdoor area and contribute more effectively to the evaluation of the program.

Rural care is fully integrated with the preschool program on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and operates with a single worker while preschool educators are on site; an additional worker is rostered in the afternoon to assist with the school aged care program. On Tuesday and Thursday rural care operates as a two worker program with additional educators employed to provide inclusion support and assist in the afternoon with the school aged care program. The provision of inclusion support ensures the participation of all children in the educational program and contributes to a high quality learning environment.

The director stated that educators employed at the service cover for staff absences where possible otherwise there is a list of relief staff who have worked at the service she can call upon.

**Standard 4.1 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**



|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                     |     |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Standard 4.2</b> | <b>Educators, co-ordinators and staff members are respectful and ethical.</b>                                                                                                                       |     |
| 4.2.1               | Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.                                                                                                                              | Met |
| 4.2.2               | Educators, co-ordinators and staff members work collaboratively and affirm, challenge, support and learn from each other to further develop their skills and to improve practice and relationships. | Met |
| 4.2.3               | Interactions convey mutual respect, equity and recognition of each other's strengths and skills.                                                                                                    | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 4.2

The director stated that the Early Childhood Australia (ECA) Code of Ethics underpinned educator practices and in particular their relationship with each other, children and families. The core principles and ethical practices outlined in the ECA Code of Ethics are consistent with the underlying values and commitment to children and families outlined in the service's philosophy. For example, educators were observed responding with respect in all their interactions with each other, children and families and making decisions that were responsive to the unique interests and strengths of each child.

Conversations with the director and educators on the day of the assessment and rating visit highlight how the director's leadership has created a respectful professional learning community and a culture of high expectations that foster high quality practices and ongoing continuous improvement (refer to standard 7.1). Educators work effectively using their strengths and skills in complementary ways to enhance practice. Educators openly told the authorised officer that they felt valued and the director stated that she respected and trusted the team of educators at the service.

The director's leadership style enables and encourages all educators at the service to develop their interests and strengths to support ongoing quality improvement at the service and also enrich the program offered for children. Discussions with the director revealed a diverse range of interests amongst educators which had influenced quality improvement and the program in positive ways. For example, the director stated that in addition to all educators relating well to children and families, their strengths included interests in cooking and sustainability as well as the ability to follow children's play.

All educators at the service, including casual educators, meet regularly during the term. Educators are paid to attend staff meetings if they do not coincide with their regular working hours. Time is set aside during staff meetings for educators to share what they have learnt through attending professional development.

Educators' collegiality and respect for each other was evident in their interactions. Educators were observed communicating openly, checking with each other and supporting each other. Educators shared information about children and seamlessly rotated their position in the learning environment in response to the movement of children to ensure that all children, individuals and groups, were supported in a way that enhanced their learning. Their interactions with each other and the children demonstrated a high level of collaboration, co-operation and established understandings of roles and responsibilities, in particular in relation to routines. Routines were seamless and supported effective movement and grouping of children. The quality and level of communication, supportiveness and respect amongst educators across the service promoted a safe and predictable environment.





#### Quality Area 4 summary

QA4 Minor Adjustment Notes

QA4 Quality Improvement Plan Notes

QA4 Compliance Notes

For Quality Area 4, is there an unacceptable risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children?

No

Quality Area 4 is rated

**Exceeding NQS**



## Quality Area 5 – Relationships with children

| Standard 5.1 | Respectful and equitable relationships are developed and maintained with each child.                                                        |     |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 5.1.1        | Interactions with each child are warm, responsive and build trusting relationships.                                                         | Met |
| 5.1.2        | Every child is able to engage with educators in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning. | Met |
| 5.1.3        | Each child is supported to feel secure, confident and included.                                                                             | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 5.1

Building and maintaining respectful relationships that foster a sense of security and belonging amongst children and families is a central tenet of the service's philosophy. The atmosphere at the service was happy and relaxed and families and their children demonstrated an established sense of security and belonging. Children and families were observed entering the service, following routines, greeting educators and their friends, and transitioning smoothly to engage in play. Educators greeted all children and families warmly using their names as they came into the service in the morning and were available to support families and children as they put their belongings away and settled into play.

Educators were responsive to children providing comfort as necessary. For example, younger children in rural care who became upset when their families left were well supported by educators who cuddled them and spoke to them in soft reassuring tones and slowly assisted them to settle into an activity they enjoyed. Children were also observed comfortably approaching educators for help, reassurance and encouragement as well as to celebrate their achievements and just share their thinking about a range of matters. Educators were observed consistently supporting children's independence, choices and being responsive to their needs. For example, children sought out educators to provide support to enter play, share resources, read stories to them and tell them about their play.

Educators were also playful with children. For example, an educator who was providing guidance for a child about how to move her legs on the swing to keep a rhythm going and swing a little higher put her hands out and encouraged the child to try to touch them with her feet. The educator moved back as the swing came toward her and the child started to giggle. The educator smiled and giggled and said 'nearly, nearly ... just a bit higher'. As the child swung toward her the educator moved back again and she and the child shared another giggle. The educator encouraged the child again saying 'just a little higher' allowing the child to touch her hands with her feet on the next swing forward.

Educators' skilfully engaged children in meaningful and open interactions that both contributed to the acquisition of skills for life and learning and enhanced confidence. Educators were overheard having a variety of conversations with children related to their play (e.g. dressing up as fairies, running a café), their home life (e.g. discussing upcoming holidays, whether they were travelling, where they were going to stay) and their preferences including the things they enjoy doing. In addition, educators were aware of children's emerging abilities and continuously supported children to take risks enhancing both skills and confidence.

Inclusiveness and sense of belonging are promoted through educators supporting children's

independence, choices and being responsive to their needs. In addition, educators facilitate inclusiveness and sense of belonging by promoting children's social and emotional development (refer to standard 5.2), providing support for turn taking, and involvement in sharing the responsibility for caring for their environment (e.g. collecting eggs, collecting the mail, packing up). Educators are also sensitive to and respectful of children's individual backgrounds and actively plan to create an inclusive environment for children through catering for their interests and abilities (refer to standard 1.1) and facilitating inclusion support for children with special rights.

**Standard 5.1 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**



|                     |                                                                                                                                                           |     |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Standard 5.2</b> | <b>Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults.</b>                               |     |
| 5.2.1               | Each child is supported to work with, learn from and help others through collaborative learning opportunities.                                            | Met |
| 5.2.2               | Each child is supported to manage their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts. | Met |
| 5.2.3               | The dignity and rights of every child are maintained at all times.                                                                                        | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 5.2

The play environment was organised to facilitate opportunities for children to work with, learn from and help peers. Collaborative learning opportunities were extensive. Resources were plentiful and presented in a way to facilitate use by groups or individuals (refer to standard 3.2). Educators encouraged and supported children to work collaboratively and were responsive to children. For example, educators were observed facilitating children's engagement in socio-dramatic play in the outdoor area (i.e. café, zoo play, dress ups). Educators also supported children to enter play already underway using a variety of strategies including asking children who were already engaged in play to find a role for other children and or share space and resources.

There is a clear commitment to creating a respectful, harmonious and inclusive environment for all in which each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults (refer to standard 1.1). This commitment is consistent with the values underpinning the service's philosophy and 'Site Behaviour Code' and is promoted by supporting children to recognise their own and other's emotions and express their feelings in pro-social ways to facilitate the development of emotional self-regulation and empathy, and enable positive interactions.

In addition to implementation of the KS:CPC and in particular the theme 'We all have the right to feel safe' educators use a range of strategies to support children's understanding of expectations and promote emotional self-regulation. During the assessment and rating visit educators were observed modelling how to negotiate for children, encouraging children to talk to each other, explaining consequences of actions and being available and following up when children sought them out to report inappropriate behaviour. Children's interactions with each other and educators were indicative of the support provided by educators to enable them to develop and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with their peers and adults. Educators also acknowledged pro-social behaviours amongst children.

Educators create an environment, through organisation of materials and routines and their interactions, to support children to engage in sustained play which limits occasions where children need guidance and support to communicate effectively to resolve conflicts (refer to standard 3.2). Routines are organised to promote cooperation and successful transitions. Educators facilitate smooth transitions in a range of ways including alerting children in advance of transitions using a bell.

Educators consistently support and promote the dignity and rights of every child. During the assessment and rating visit educators consistently supported children to make their own decisions and were observed using positive language, gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice in all their interactions with children including using positive and constructive approaches to guiding children in their interactions with each other.

**Standard 5.2 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**



### Quality Area 5 summary

QA5 Minor Adjustment Notes

QA5 Quality Improvement Plan Notes

QA5 Compliance Notes

For Quality Area 5, is there an unacceptable risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children?

No

Quality Area 5 is rated

Exceeding NQS

## Quality Area 6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

| Standard 6.1 | Respectful and supportive relationships with families are developed and maintained.            |     |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 6.1.1        | There is an effective enrolment and orientation process for families.                          | Met |
| 6.1.2        | Families have opportunities to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions. | Met |
| 6.1.3        | Current information about the service is available to families.                                | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 6.1

A letter is sent to families who have completed a preliminary enrolment inviting them to attend a enrolment and orientation meeting at the preschool at the end of Term 3. At that time families are shown around the service and the director explains routines, curriculum and responsibilities. The meeting is informal and families have opportunities to ask lots of questions. Families complete an enrolment form and consent forms and are given a copy of the service's handbook and site specific policies which are explained to them and the director also explains the purpose of the service's Facebook page and how it can be accessed.

To support children's transitions to preschool families are encouraged to attend the playgroup at the service if they are not already doing so. There is also a family questionnaire in the enrolment pack for families to complete so educators can get to know something about children and their families and more importantly their interests. Transition visits take place in Term 4. New enrolments have four transition visits in total attending the service one day a week over four weeks. The service has developed a 'Hello Song' to support children to learn each other's names. The song includes all the children's names and is sung during group gatherings. Educators have put the song including all the children's names into a book format and a copy is sent home with children at the beginning of Term 1 each year.

Families are provided with information about opportunities for them to contribute to the service and service decision making during the enrolment and orientation sessions. Information about joining governing council is included in the service's handbook for families and newsletters frequently include information about how families can contribute. Educators continue to actively encourage families to participate in whatever way they are able to. There are many opportunities for families to become actively involved in the service including:

- contributing to the program by sharing their interests with children (e.g. singing, sewing)
- organising windcheaters with the preschool logo on them for children
- getting involved in fundraising activities (e.g. participating in the fundraising activity at the local Folk Fair)
- catering for DECD Upper Mid-North partnership meeting
- helping with maintenance and gardening at the service and participating in working bees (e.g. assisting with planting the orchard at the front of the service, helping establish the compost heap)



- assisting with excursions.

The director stated that one of the children's grandparents who is a shearer came to the service and spent time with children talking about his work and showing children his equipment. Families have also responded to requests for materials that can be used for loose parts play (e.g. crates).

Families are actively encouraged to join the service's governing council and contribute to operational decision making. Governing council is actively consulted about important matters including curriculum. Families also have many opportunities to provide feedback. For example, families are encouraged to provide feedback informally in person or via the service's Facebook page. A family survey is also distributed each year which seeks information about families' satisfaction with the service around the seven areas of the National Quality Standard (NQS). Families' feedback is used in reviewing the service's QIP and developing the service's site improvement plan and influences changes to service operation.

As well as information provided to families as part of the enrolment process information about the service and service operations is also shared with families in informal conversations, newsletters, extensive displays around the service about children's involvement in curriculum (refer to standard 1.1), via the services' website and Facebook page. There is also a notice board on the verandah near the entrance to the service and a large display board in the indoor area which are used to provide information to families about the service and service operation.

**Standard 6.1 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**



|                     |                                                                                                                                |     |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Standard 6.2</b> | <b>Families are supported in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about childrearing are respected.</b>           |     |
| 6.2.1               | The expertise of families is recognised and they share in decision making about their child's learning and wellbeing.          | Met |
| 6.2.2               | Current information is available to families about community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing. | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 6.2

Families are actively supported to provide information about their child's learning and wellbeing during the enrolment and orientation process through discussions with educators about their child's needs and completion of questionnaire (refer to standard 6.1). For children enrolled in rural care families complete a detailed questionnaire about their routines (e.g. sleep, toileting). This information supports educators to respect families preferences in relation to their child's dietary needs, enables educators to support children's health needs, and influences curriculum decision making and specific planning for individual children.

Educators engage families in informal discussions about their child's learning on a daily basis and the director reported that families are always offering information about their children's learning and development. If educators have any specific concerns about a child's learning and development they make a time to speak with families. Families are actively encouraged to view their child's portfolios and discuss their child's engagement with the program, learning and development and provide feedback on learning stories. In addition educators complete communication books for children attending rural care in which they note important information about children's sleeping, toileting and eating for families.

The director meets with families for 'Parent Chats' in week 8 of each term. During this meeting the director shares the child's portfolio with the family noting the child's progress and seeking feedback from families about what they believe are their child's strengths, interests and their goals for their children. This information is used by educators to formulate individual learning goals for each child for the following term.

The service provides a range of information to support parenting and family wellbeing. This information is displayed near the sign in/out sheet. Brochures and pamphlets in this area include Parenting SA Easy Guides on topics such as toileting and safe technology use, information about playgroup, the local women's clinic, and free parenting sessions being held in Adelaide. Information in the service's newsletter and other displays also support families in their parenting role. For example, newsletters have included information about supporting young children's language development through use of questions, the importance of reading to children and growth mind sets. Displays at the service include information about how to support literacy and numeracy development.

The director stated that educators at the service are responsive to families' needs and they are able to provide information about resources or services available to support families in specific circumstances.

**Standard 6.2 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**



| Standard 6.3 | The service collaborates with other organisations and service providers to enhance children's learning and wellbeing.                    |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6.3.1        | Links with relevant community and support agencies are established and maintained. Met                                                   |
| 6.3.2        | Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing relevant information and clarifying responsibilities. Met |
| 6.3.3        | Access to inclusion and support assistance is facilitated. Met                                                                           |
| 6.3.4        | The service builds relationships and engages with their local community. Met                                                             |

### Evidence for Standard 6.3

The service has a good relationship with community members, services and businesses and engages with them to enrich the curriculum offered to children as well as to support fundraising for the preschool. For example, the local Country Fire Service (CFS), Police and a community member who cares for orphaned animals visit the service to talk to children about their work. The local DECD Aboriginal Consultant has also visited the service to support children's understanding of Aboriginal culture. Educators often take children into the community to visit local businesses as well as to engage in activities like cleaning up the environment by collecting rubbish and engaging in scavenger hunts. Children visit residents at the local hospital and sing songs with patients and the community liaison at the hospital often visits the service with some of the residents. The service is an active participant in the local Folk Fair staffing the beverage stall as a fundraising exercise for the service. Local businesses also donate products to support preschool activities.

The service actively engages with agencies to support children's health and wellbeing. For example, the service facilitates preschool health checks conducted by CaFHS, participates in the Lift the Lip program and has accessed the OPAL program offered by the local council. Preschool health checks were being conducted on the day of the assessment and rating visit. The CaFHS nurse came and introduced herself to the authorised officer and spoke about the professional relationship that had been established with the service. The nurse stated that the service supports families making referring families who make use of rural care to the CaFHS clinic run in town once a month.

The service has a well-established relationship with the local DECD primary school and other preschools in the district which have been facilitated through the DECD local partnership. The director stated that there are strong supportive links between directors of preschools in the area as well as other school leaders and these relationships within the partnership support successful transitions to school for children.

Most children enrolled at the service attend the local DECD primary school which is located across the road from the service. Preschool children visit the primary school frequently making use of the oval and playground as well as visiting the junior primary classroom each term. The junior primary class also visits the preschool regularly. The junior primary teacher from the primary school visits the preschool in week 7 and 9 of each term except in Term 4 when preschool children make four transition visits to the school. Preschool children and rural care children also attend school assemblies and junior primary children, preschool children and rural care children often go on excursions together. These visits and interactions offer children the opportunity to engage with the whole school and have real school experiences. This supports educators plan to develop children's



understanding that school has its own culture. Educators also prepare a statement of learning for each child which is shared with the child's school with families' permission.

Educators also consider the needs of children attending other schools in the district making the most of opportunities for interaction. For example, children from the catholic primary school located in Gladstone visited the service and educators organised for a 'kindy at school' day at the Wirrabara primary school.

The director stated that conversations about transitions for children with special rights start early and meetings are arranged with the family, specialists, preschool educators, school principals and teachers to share information with a view to ensuring roles and responsibilities are clarified, continuity for children, appropriate supports are in place before the child starts school and determining flexible program of transition visits.

Strong relationships with government and non-government agencies contribute to children's learning and well-being as well as enabling educators to plan more effectively for the participation of children with special rights. In addition to being able to access inclusion and support assistance for children through DECD support services when necessary the service also has established relationship Novita who provide inclusion support for rural care children with special rights. As noted in standard 2.1 educators work collaboratively with specialists (e.g. physiotherapists, occupational therapist, speech pathologists) to maximise children's participation in the program.

**Standard 6.3 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**



## Quality Area 6 summary

QA6 Minor Adjustment Notes

QA6 Quality Improvement Plan Notes

QA6 Compliance Notes

For Quality Area 6, is there an unacceptable risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children?

No

Quality Area 6 is rated

Exceeding NQS

## Quality Area 7 – Leadership and service management

| Standard 7.1 | Effective leadership promotes organisational culture and builds a professional learning community.                                                                                                                         |     |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 7.1.1        | Appropriate governance arrangements are in place to manage the service.                                                                                                                                                    | Met |
| 7.1.2        | The induction of educators, co-ordinators and staff members is comprehensive.                                                                                                                                              | Met |
| 7.1.3        | Every effort is made to promote continuity of educators and co-ordinators at the service.                                                                                                                                  | Met |
| 7.1.4        | Provision is made to ensure a suitably qualified and experienced educator or co-ordinator leads the development of the curriculum and ensures the establishment of clear goals and expectations for teaching and learning. | Met |
| 7.1.5        | Adults working with children and those engaged in management of the service or residing on the premises are fit and proper.                                                                                                | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 7.1

The director, who is also the educational leader, values and promotes high standards amongst educators in all aspects of their role at the service consistent with the commitment outlined in the services philosophy. Educators collaborate effectively and there is a positive culture at the service in which educators contributions are valued, reflection is embedded, professional learning is encouraged (refer to standard 4.2). The director's leadership supports common understandings and shared expectations amongst educators in relation to goals for teaching and learning. The quality of the curriculum and outcomes for children as well as the cohesiveness of the team highlight how well the director is supported by other educators in developing curriculum and achieving goals for learning.

The director and educators are well supported in their commitment to excellence by the service's governing council. The service's governing council includes representation for families accessing the preschool program as well as the rural care program and the playgroup. The service's governing council is actively engaged in making decision about a range of matters such as the service's policy review, maintenance, fundraising and purchasing equipment. Governing council meetings are held twice a term and open to all families.

An AGM is held yearly and a new governing council is appointed. New governing council members undertake an induction process to support them to understand their roles and responsibilities. The induction also includes RAN training. The director stated that new governing council members are also encouraged to talk to former governing council members and office bearers.

Induction processes for new educators are comprehensive and support understanding of the organisational culture of the service and establishment of professional relationships that facilitate positive outcomes for children. New educators engage with both DECD processes and site specific processes. The director stated that induction is tailored specifically to meet the individual needs of educators and the specific role they will be undertaking at the service. Information about the health care needs of children, emergency procedures, the service philosophy and site specific policies are



shared with new educators during site specific induction. DECD induction processes and the associated checklist are completed online. The director and other educators are available to support new educators in this process. There is also an induction process for relief educators, volunteers and students.

As a DECD preschool the service is reliant on DECD processes for staffing. Nevertheless the director has been appointed on a five year contract, the ECW who employed within the preschool program is a permanent employee and educators working within the rural care program have been employed at the service since the rural care program was established which has contributed to continuity and establishment and maintenance of secure relationships with children and families. The director stated that the contribution to the service by two educator working in the rural care program are valued by the staff team and families and she has been exploring how the can be made permanent. As noted in standard 4.1, the service has a regular relief ECT who lives in the district who can be called in the absence of the director and educators working part-time at the service are called upon to fill in for each other within the pre-school and rural care program when possible.

All adults working with children and those engaged in management of the service, are fit and proper in accordance with relevant legislative requirements and DECD policy.

**Standard 7.1 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

|                     |                                                                                                                                                              |     |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Standard 7.2</b> | <b>There is a commitment to continuous improvement.</b>                                                                                                      |     |
| 7.2.1               | A statement of philosophy is developed and guides all aspects of the service's operations.                                                                   | Met |
| 7.2.2               | The performance of educators, co-ordinators and staff members is evaluated and individual development plans are in place to support performance improvement. | Met |
| 7.2.3               | An effective self-assessment and quality improvement process is in place.                                                                                    | Met |

### Evidence for Standard 7.2

The service philosophy statement clearly articulates the vision, beliefs, attitudes and aspirations of the preschool community. The underlying values, beliefs and attitudes outlined in the service's philosophy were evident in all aspects of educator's practices during the assessment and rating visit (refer to standard 1.1 and 4.2. For example, educators' implemented play based learning experiences and their interactions with children cultivated a sense of curiosity. The service's current philosophy was developed with educators', children's and families' input in 2013. The philosophy is reviewed annually with opportunities for input from educators and families' utilising the preschool and rural care programs at the service.

There is a commitment to continuous improvement amongst educators at the service and a systematic approach to the self-assessment process. The director stated the QIP is always on the agenda at staff meetings. At each meeting educators engage with the elements of a particular quality area and revisit strengths, progress toward goals and issues that can be addressed through the quality improvement processes. The director stated that she reports to governing council at each meeting using the seven quality areas of the NQS and these reports provide a foundation for the annual report along with the DECD site review processes. The family feedback survey which is structured around the seven quality areas of the NQS and the annual report also provide information that influences service operations and contributes to the ongoing development of the QIP. All these processes combined enable ongoing monitoring of implementation of strategies to achieve goals outlined in the QIP and the formulation of further improvement goals.

The director stated that she has ongoing discussions with educators about their performance providing informal feedback which highlights their strengths and contributions. She also acknowledges educators willingness to take on additional work and the contribution that this makes to the operation of the service. Each of the educators is engaged in a formal performance review based on DECD processes. The director of the service conducts formal performance reviews with all educators providing specific feedback on their goals. Performance development plans are reviewed twice a year. The director stated that performance reviews provide a crucial opportunity to discuss and support ongoing professional development that contributes to service quality improvement plans, supports DECD initiatives and enables educators to develop their professional interests. As noted in standard 4.2 educators at the service have individual strengths and interest that are complimentary and the director is active in supporting and cultivating these complementary skills amongst educators. For example, an educator is interested in sustainability and another is interested in young children's literacy and numeracy development and they are supported to develop expertise in these areas and support achievement of priorities outlined in the service QIP.

The director is supported in the review of her performance and development planning by the local DECD region educational director.



**Standard 7.2 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

| Standard 7.3 | Administrative systems enable the effective management of a quality service.                                                                                                    |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7.3.1        | Records and information are stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality, are available from the service and are maintained in accordance with legislative requirements. Met  |
| 7.3.2        | Administrative systems are established and maintained to ensure the effective operation of the service. Met                                                                     |
| 7.3.3        | The Regulatory Authority is notified of any relevant changes to the operation of the service, of serious incidents and any complaints which allege a breach of legislation. Met |
| 7.3.4        | Processes are in place to ensure that all grievances and complaints are addressed, investigated fairly and documented in a timely manner. Met                                   |
| 7.3.5        | Service practices are based on effectively documented policies and procedures that are available at the service and reviewed regularly. Met                                     |

### Evidence for Standard 7.3

Administrative systems enable the effective management of the service and contribute to continuous service improvement. The service makes use of the DECD Early Years System (EYS) for enrolment administration and referrals for support services for children are also made through EYS. Confidentiality is ensured as the service's computers are password protected and EYS can only be accessed with a username and password. The Safety Task and Action Reporting System (STAR) is used to manage work health and safety requirements. Matters relating to facilities are managed through use of the Facilities Administration Management Information System (FAMIS). Information is retrieved from these systems to inform the preparation of the service's annual report and complete the annual review process and data from both influence the development of the QIP (refer to standard 7.2).

The service has an arrangement with the local primary school enabling their finance officer to manage the services finances and maintain financial records. A centralised process is in place for the maintenance of the rural care finances.

Records of a sensitive nature are stored securely in locked filing cabinets in the office which is also locked when the service is unattended to ensure confidentiality. Records are archived in accordance with legislative requirement in a secure cupboard in the store room and a disposal schedule is in place.

As noted in standard 2.1 educators report serious incidents on IRMS and the approved provider DECD notifies the regulatory authority. Changes to service operations are also reported to the regulatory authority by the approved provider, DECD, on behalf of the service. The director reported that during her time at the service there had not been any complaints alleging breaches of legislation but she was aware that the regulatory authority should be notified and the approved provider processes in place for making such a notification.

Educators are committed to working collaboratively with families and they consult with families and their contributions are valued (refer to standard 6.1). The service's commitment to developing respectful relationship with families ensures minimisation of grievances and complaints and any escalation of these. The service has developed its own site specific process for dealing with concerns



raised by families and managing grievances based on the DECD Parent Complaint Policy. The director stated that families are comfortable approaching educators at the service with any questions or concerns and there has been only been one instance during her time at the service where it was necessary for her to meet with a parent to resolve the grievance.

Families receive copies of site specific policies with the service's enrolment pack. The services information booklet summarises key policies and includes a list of both site specific policies and approved provider policies and how they can be accessed.

The service's policies and procedures are well documented and implemented. For example, the service's Site Behaviour Code clearly outlines strategies to support children to manage their own behaviour and educators were observed implementing these strategies (refer to standard 5.2) during the assessment and rating visit. The service has a systematic process for reviewing policies. Educators review a couple of policies each term at staff meetings. Feedback and recommendations from educators are taken to the services governing council for discussion. Governing council ratify policies once final changes have been made.

**Standard 7.3 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

## Quality Area 7 summary

QA7 Minor Adjustment Notes

QA7 Quality Improvement Plan Notes

QA7 Compliance Notes

For Quality Area 7, is there an unacceptable risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children?

No

Quality Area 7 is rated

**Exceeding NQS**



## Assessment and rating summary

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|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Quality Area 1 is rated | Exceeding NQS |
| Quality Area 2 is rated | Exceeding NQS |
| Quality Area 3 is rated | Exceeding NQS |
| Quality Area 4 is rated | Exceeding NQS |
| Quality Area 5 is rated | Exceeding NQS |
| Quality Area 6 is rated | Exceeding NQS |
| Quality Area 7 is rated | Exceeding NQS |
| Overall rating          | Exceeding NQS |

Summary comments

| Minor adjustment notes summary |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Quality Area 1                 |  |
| Quality Area 2                 |  |
| Quality Area 3                 |  |
| Quality Area 4                 |  |
| Quality Area 5                 |  |
| Quality Area 6                 |  |
| Quality Area 7                 |  |

  

| Quality improvement plan notes summary |  |
|----------------------------------------|--|
| Quality Area 1                         |  |
| Quality Area 2                         |  |
| Quality Area 3                         |  |
| Quality Area 4                         |  |
| Quality Area 5                         |  |
| Quality Area 6                         |  |
| Quality Area 7                         |  |

  

| Compliance notes summary |  |
|--------------------------|--|
|--------------------------|--|



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| Quality Area 1 |
| Quality Area 2 |
| Quality Area 3 |
| Quality Area 4 |
| Quality Area 5 |
| Quality Area 6 |
| Quality Area 7 |

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