

2023

Quality Improvement Plan for Minlaton District Early Learning Centre

Site number:

2686



Service name

Minlaton District Early Learning Centre

Service address

1 West Terrace, Minlaton, SA 5575

Service approval number

SE-00010636

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Nharangga people as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters where our centre is located and recognise their continuing connection to country. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal peoples.

Service context

Minlaton District Early Learning Centre operates within South Australian school terms. There are currently 5 educators employed to work across the preschool and occasional care programs. The preschool teacher is now a permanent employee which will give the centre some stability after having changing teachers for the past 3 years. This is also providing the opportunity for the centre to genuinely update the philosophy.

Preschool Sessions are offered full days which include lunch times in the program. Children attend on a fortnightly cycle of every Wednesday and Thursday and alternate Tuesdays. Educators use the alternate Tuesday to complete their reflective programming and planning for the children.

Pre-entry visits coincide with preschool children's transition visits to schools, these are an opportunity for children to attend to become familiar with the environment, educators and routines before they start their eligible year.

Early entry may be negotiated when additional time is likely to significantly improve a child's learning and development.

Preschool support - Children who are identified and assessed with additional needs are supported through the Department for Education specialists based at the Kadina Office, are supported with additional funding and staffing.

Occasional Care sessions are offered on Fridays for children from 11 months until they begin their eligible year of preschool. The centre has 4 places in an under 2 session and 26 places within 3 over 2 sessions.

Playgroup is run by a Playgroup Coordinator on a Monday 9:30am - 11:30am.

Approximately 60 families use the centre for preschool or occasional care. At present 60% of children use the Department for Education bus service for preschool from the towns of Curramulka, Port Vincent, Port Julia, Koolywurtie, Stansbury, Hardwicke Bay and surrounds. Most children go to the Minlaton District School with a few moving onto Curramulka Primary, Stansbury Primary or Maitland Lutheran Schools.

Families support the centre in many ways including volunteering as a Governing Council member, parent helper, working bees, fundraising and assisting during excursions. The centre is locally managed and has an active Governing Council which employs on a contract a finance officer, cleaner and a gardener.

The Minlaton Kindergarten was opened in 1967. The building comprises of 2 activity rooms, office, kitchen and bathroom with 3 children's and 1 adult toilet plus a change table and bath. The north side of the building has a veranda with café blinds that can enclose the area and a pergola which is 50% weather proof. The yard has a large shade covered sandpit, climbing fort, gazebo with seating and cubby house. A water course runs along the cubby ending in the sand pit. The yard is 50% bark chips and 50% lawn. Two sheds accommodate learning resources.

Parking is on West Terrace with restrictions for bus access and 5 minute drop off zone.

The Centre is a member of the Southern Yorke Partnership which consists of 5 Preschools, some of which offer Rural Care or Occasional Care and 7 schools. Minlaton is situated approximately 200km from the Adelaide CBD. It is a rural community with farming and fishing and is supported by small business and professional personnel.

The improvement goal for 2023 has been developed by educators using reflective processes on the 2022 goal. Educators identified need for literacy to become embedding into the outdoor learning environment and had started a project on this through the professional development program they had been attending. Book based learning was part of the project and is starting to gain momentum to become embedded practice. Educators consulted with families through Governing Council and they were keen to continue with the momentum. The book based theme will continue to embed the 2022 phonological awareness goal.

Statement of Philosophy

The Minlaton District Early Learning Centre values the uniqueness of each child and their families.
Our centre fosters relationships and the development of life-long skills through fun, messy, challenging and caring play-based learning.
Reviewed in 2019

Strengths

With reference to the three exceeding themes:

1. Practice is embedded in service operations

2. Practice is informed by critical reflection

3. Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community

Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice

During 2022 educators used critical reflection of our routine and the way that the children were using the indoor and outdoor areas. The routine had the first 15 minutes with children inside only to provide educators the opportunity to interact with families during drop off, bus children to arrive with educator and ensure there was supervision. Educators were noticing that the children were only inside during this time and when given the option the majority spend the rest of the day in the outdoor learning environment. Educators monitored the morning time inside and found that children were just becoming engaged into the inside activities they had chosen to do after completing their morning routine tasks and the bells were being rung ready for group time. The routine has been changed so now children spend the first 40 minutes (approximately depending on how settled the group is) inside so the children have the opportunity to engage with the learning area of their choice before the group time used to prepare children for changes to the routine and reminders about the day. Lunchtime has also become later providing children with the longer uninterrupted time for play-based learning. The shorter afternoon has also assisted the children who are wanting to go home as they know that once lunch has been its not long until they are going home.

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

The centre is water only with children having their own water bottle. After educators' reflection on the process of filling up children's water bottles during the day and families knowing if children have drunk any water during the day. Educators now place a sticker on the bottle if it has been refilled from at least ½ during the day, then families can monitor how much their child is drinking. This procedure was again reviewed during 2022, following feedback from a family whose child starting having toileting accidents on way home as they were drinking too much. The child thought it was a reward to get a sticker and would drink 2 large drink bottles a day. Educators now ensure they discuss with children that the stickers are to tell the families the bottle has been filled and it doesn't matter if you drink all of their bottle or not as long as they were having some water throughout the day. The family involved also sent a smaller water bottle so there was an opportunity for the child to still require their bottle to be filled and drink less water which stopped the toileting accidents.

Educators set up the learning environment to ensure there are opportunities for large gross motor activities, physical activities, fine motor activities as well as loud spaces and a quiet 'chill zone' where children can go to have time alone and relax. Although we have a large outdoor area there is minimal room for children to participate in ball games without interrupting other children's play or the ball going over the fence. Educators has also noticed that some children were reluctant to participate in play that used their gross motor skills and spatial awareness. Educators trialled an session at the local oval for children to participate in using sports equipment including footballs, a cricket set, soccer balls, beanbags and hoops, tennis rackets and balls and Frisbees. The session was supported by the year 9 PAC students who the children were familiar with as part of our Gum Flat visits for nature play. The first session was successful with all children participating so the trial became a 3 week program each term for the rest of the year. Educators were able to document growth in the skill level and participation of each child as they developed or extended their skills with equipment. Family feedback was very positive with children looking forward to the sessions and sharing what they had been doing with their family. This program will continue with some adjustments so there is an opportunity for children to develop the skills in a more scaffolded way and sequence.

Quality Area 3: Physical Environment

The design area was installed on the second veranda at the end of 2021 which included a hand washing sink, adult height storage cupboards and a child sized bench and accessible drawers for the resources. Educators had designed the area so that children were able to access creative resources to use for the designs and building. The bench was to provide access to pots of textas, pencils, crayons, scissors, tape, glue, paints and brushes. These cupboards have a solar powered roller door which can be closed at the end of the day, providing a secure outdoor design area. A purpose built hot glue gun table was also added to the area as well as a hammering table, easel and design table. In 2022 educators introduced the area to the children and has been used daily throughout the year. The area has stayed tidy with children respecting the area and remembering to only take what they need from the drawers and put back what they don't use after. Families have commented that they are getting many constructions coming home, this feedback hadn't been received in the past when there was just a table and a few collage materials available. Educators have reflected that the types of constructions that have been designed and made are becoming more recognisable as the child's intended idea. Children have used the area to create resources to use in their role play scenarios which educators hadn't seen before. There was a time of fishing rods being constructed and used to catch the fish.

Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements

The centre has had 3 new teachers in the past 3 years which hasn't provided continuity for embedding practice. In 2021 the centre was able to advertise a permanent position for the teacher role which has been filled starting in 2022. The centre community is happy with this and feel encouraged that the centre has staffing stability and that some programs and practices can become embedded into the future. The centre ensures that at least 1 of the Occasional Care program educators work within the Preschool program to provide continuity for children as they transition from occasional care into the preschool program.

Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children

Educators ensure that they spend time with children throughout the learning environment and build trusting relationships. The relationships are developed through responsive interactions and unhurried conversations with children. Children feel a sense of belonging through their engagement to the environment and the transition from occasional care or the relationship built with an educator. Educators are positive role models for children to learn how to interact with others, how to join into a group scenario and making safe risk assessments. Daily reflection of educator actions and interactions with children and the learning environment ensures that children's interests can be built upon the following day and continuation of learning can occur. Educators support children in self-regulation by assisting them to develop skills in recognising emotions and strategies for dealing with conflict. Educators have put visuals around the outdoor learning environment as reminders after reflecting that this is where children need the most support when dealing with conflict. There is a quiet area "chill zone" set up inside with a few sensory tools for children to use when regulating themselves. Behaviour management strategies are critically reflected upon throughout the year and tailored to suit the children in the group. Support is given to those children who require a more structured approach. Educators use positive language with children and treat them with respect, especially when guiding their behaviours. Educators empower children to resolve conflict and provide them with strategies such as "Stop I don't like it when..."

Routines have been developed to be minimalised for whole group movement and supported by educators so that wait times are short. The atmosphere is relaxed and happy. Children are settled early on in the year as the routines are consistent especially in the mornings. Children are given warning at the start of the day if there will be planned changes to the routine for that day. Visitors have commented how settled children are and able to follow the routines. Meal times are unhurried as educators take time to sit with children and eat, encouraging conversations.

Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

2022 started with families dropping children at the gate with adults wearing masks. The physical distancing during Covid-19 has reduced the amount of face to face contact educators have had with families this year. Educators have continued to build relationships with families and support them throughout the year. Although there were barriers at the start of the year, relationships have developed and educators have been able to have some difficult discussions with families about their child in a respectful and supportive way. It has been through educators continuing to contact families and building the relationships through a quick conversation through the gate, phonecall or sms that has led to the trusting relationships with families. Educators have been able to support them through times of separation anxiety, address behavioural concerns and continue to let them know how their child's progress at Kindy. The centre promotes family and community involvement throughout the program. The house visit opportunity builds the trust of families and allows families to share some of their culture with the group as children talk about who lives at their house show some favourite things. It also provides the opportunity for children to see where their peers live and that it can be different on a farm to in the town. Each year the visits are reflected upon to ensure that they continue provide time for children to share about themselves and their family. The time at each house was increased using parent feedback that children wanted to share and see more. Families are now reminded to have a couple of special things ready for the visit. The longer time has made the visits more meaningful for each child and this is reflected during the conversations between children when looking at the photos on the map. During 2021 a visiting program was set up for the Kindy children to visit with the older people in the share and care group. Children visited twice each term to participate in activities with the oldies and build relationships. The program became embedded and the year end with everyone cooking together to create a shared Christmas picnic. Feedback from the share and care coordinators was very positive with them saying that the oldies continued to talk about the visits from the children on other occasions. In 2022 Covid-19 minimised the visits but 2023 will see the introduction of more visits again to provide the opportunities of intergenerational interactions.

Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership

Week 0 each year is used to ensure that all educators are familiar with their roles and responsibilities. This is also the time when the team reflects on the philosophy and sets the tone for the year. The site leader ensures that all educators are aware of changes to the routines and when there are upcoming events/meetings.

Governing Council members are supported by the site leader to take ownership of the centre. This has been evident in 2022 with the committee taking on the role of finding ways to gain money to support the installation of the upgraded outdoor learning environment. The Chairperson sourced grants and spend time writing applications as a new avenue for the centre.

Learning Improvement Plan – Goal 1



STEP 1 Analyse and Prioritise

Site name: Minlaton District Early Learning Centre

Goal 1: To extend children's interactions with how books work and that print conveys meaning.



STEP 2 Determine challenge of practice

Challenge of Practice:

If educators develop their understanding of purposeful play and intentional teaching and embed these strategies through a literacy rich environment, then we will improve children's understanding of how books work and that print conveys meaning.

Success Criteria (what children know, do, and understand):

By every child being immersed in text daily and through our analysis of pedagogical documentation we will see children

- Know that pictures carry meaning which can be inferred from a text
- Know 'what to do' with a book – how to hold it, care for it, turn the pages, where to start
- Talked about authors and illustrators – knew texts represented someone's ideas
- Noticed environmental print – finding the letters in their name, reading familiar signage
- Explored mark making and writing to communicate a message
- Develop an understanding of the structure of a text (beginning, middle, end, characters, theme)
- Recognising the pattern of rhyme and syllables
- Know what to do at group time when a story was shared
- Transferred or adapted ideas from a text in play
- Engaged in a range of communication modes to respond to a text



STEP 3 Plan actions for improvement

Actions	NQS Links	Timeline	Roles & Responsibilities	Resources
Educators become familiar and use the DFE curriculum documents, starting with the Purposeful Play and Intentional Teaching papers, educator actions and the Language	1.1.1 Approved learning framework	Read Papers and discuss Week 0. Allow discussion time	Louise to arrange reading folder and timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Meeting Yearly Calendar • Purposeful Play Paper • Intentional Teaching Paper




Domain. Embed the strategies into educator actions and ensure the program is a full cycle. Louise will develop an implementation resource folder for each educator and a process plan.	1.2.2 Responsive teaching and scaffolding 1.3.1 Assessment and planning cycle	fortnightly in staff meetings	All educators come prepared to staff meeting for discussion about readings Brooke to ensure the program meets the cycle requirements All educators embed new learning into practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preschool Curriculum Resources Overview Language Domain Preschool Indicators Educator Guide
Each educator to select a teaching strategy they need to embed into their practice from the Preschool Curriculum Resources overview (pg8-9). Create and implement a plan to embed the strategy into their practice. At the end of 4 weeks educator to reflect on their practice and include a peer observation. Critically reflect on practice and create next implementation steps. Once strategy is embedded select another strategy to work on. Continue to use a 4 week cycle of implementation and reflection.	1.2.1 Intentional teaching 1.2.2 Responsive teaching and scaffolding 5.2.1 Collaborative learning	Start in Week 5 Term 1 and continue cycle until Term 4	Louise develop recording proforma for practice review process Louise source other resources for each strategy Each educator participate with enthusiasm to improve practice into their practice Louise to arrange celebration of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching Strategy implementation/review proforma Preschool Curriculum Resources Overview Other identified readings Success Celebration
Educators to create story tables in the indoor and outdoor learning environment to ensure the success criteria can be achieved. Educators to become involved in the story table area to encourage children to explore. Educators to provide explicit teaching strategies so that the concepts in the success criteria are embedded in children's learning. Include fiction and non-fiction books, drama performances of the text, props, environmental print, writing tools.	5.2.1 Collaborative learning 3.2.2 Resources support play-based learning 1.1.3 Program learning opportunities	Week 0 Story Tables planned for Term 1 & 2	Brooke to develop a story table map which includes books, resources, goals and educator intentions Brooke to ensure the story table is set up with resources ECW to assist with preparing resources on admin days All educators become involved in the play/exploration with children to extend their skills and knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Story Table Map Orbis notes from 2022 outdoor learning project Collection of resources
All educators will use pedagogical documentation to inform children's next curriculum decision. Use Talk, Play, Read document as basis for success criteria	1.3.2 Critical reflection 1.3.3 Information for families	Focus groups created in week 3 Term. Ongoing analysis and	Spend time familiarising with Talk, Play Read document and creating an analysis reference sheet for success criteria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk Play Read Success Criteria breakdown Analysis reference sheet

		sharing with families.	<p>Use data collected through the lens of the PQIP including educator actions.</p> <p>Create groups of focus children which will then have 1 child analysed at the end of each day and the curriculum decision will be written and reflected into the program.</p> <p>Family perspective gathered from documentation shared using classdojo.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus groups created and allocated weeks• Analysis schedule created and used• Information shared with families using dojo
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Goal 1: To extend children's interactions with how books work and that print conveys meaning.



STEP 4 Improve practice and monitor impact - Are we doing what we said we would do? Are we improving children's learning? How effective have our actions been?

Actions	 On track	Evidence Are we doing what we said we would do? Are we improving children's learning? How do we know which actions have been effective?	What are our next steps? Potential adjustments?
	 Needs attention/work in progress		
	 Not on track		
	Date your notes to ensure you track and monitor adjustments and progress of your plan		
<p>Educators become familiar and use the DFE curriculum documents, starting with the Purposeful Play and Intentional Teaching papers, educator actions and the Language Domain. Embed the strategies into educator actions and ensure the program is a full cycle.</p> <p>Louise will develop an implementation resource folder for each educator and a process plan.</p>	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<p>Each educator to select a teaching strategy they need to embed into their practice from the Preschool Curriculum Resources overview (pg8-9). Create and implement a plan to embed the strategy into their practice. At the end of 4 weeks educator to reflect on their practice and include a peer observation. Critically reflect on practice and create next implementation steps. Once strategy is embedded select another strategy to work on. Continue to use a 4</p>	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

week cycle of implementation and reflection.			
Educators to create story tables in the indoor and outdoor learning environment to ensure the success criteria can be achieved. Educators to become involved in the story table area to encourage children to explore. Educators to provide explicit teaching strategies so that the concepts in the success criteria are embedded in children's learning. Include fiction and non-fiction books, drama performances of the text, props, environmental print, writing tools.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
All educators will use pedagogical documentation to inform children's next curriculum decision. Use Talk, Play, Read document as basis for success criteria	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

Goal 1: To extend children's interactions with how books work and that print conveys meaning.



STEP 5 Review and Evaluate - Have we achieved our improvement goal? What have we learned and what are our next steps?

What progress have we made? Have we achieved our goal?

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Enablers: What factors have been critical for success?

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Inhibitors: What factors have impeded progress? How will we work through this?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Recommendations: What are the next steps to take?

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National Quality Standard priorities




Priority	NQS links	Key steps	Timeline	Resources	Roles & Responsibilities
Review Philosophy Statement to ensure the new curriculum focus is included	7.1.1 Service philosophy and purpose	Review current philosophy Brainstorm educator philosophy ideas Draft updated philosophy Share with Governing Council and families for feedback Update document	Start Week 0 discussion Term 1 Week 11 have draft format to present to families Term 2 Week 2 Governing Council meeting present for feedback Week 9 update document	Centre Philosophy Philosophy documents from like sites NQS reviewing philosophy documents	Louise to lead the discussion and have the resources ready to share
Reconciliation Action Plan - Cultural Competence for Staff	7.2.3 development of professionals; 6.2.3 community engagement; 1.1.2 child centred; 6.2.1 parents views are respected	All educators to attend local PD to extend their knowledge Implement learning from the PD sessions into the program and planning	Attend session by Term 3 Implementation within 2 weeks of attending session	ACET Team for PD sessions	All educators attend sessions available Set a site goal for implementation of cultural awareness information with children in the program
Click or tap here to enter text.	7.2.3 development of professionals; 6.2.3 community engagement; 1.1.2 child centred; 6.2.1 parents views are respected	Use the Narragunnawali resources to embed discussions into group times with children Start to embed the discussions into everyday conversations	Start in the lead up to reconciliation week Conversations with educators and children by end of Term 2	Narragunnawali resources Reconciliation resources YCCC educators - how they do this in their centre	Educators utilise resources to develop understanding and implement in program for reconciliation week Educators have conversations with YCCC peers to feel confident to have conversations with children

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Progress notes

National Quality Standard priorities

Improve practice and monitor impact - Are we doing what we said we would do? Are we improving practice? How effective have our actions been?

Priority	Implementation (are we doing what we said we would do?) Enter your overall assessment of progress towards implementing actions for improvement.		Impact for children and families (Are we improving practice and learning outcomes?) Enter the evidence of impact of your actions for children and families	Next steps
		On track		
		Needs attention/work in progress		
		Not on track		
	Date your notes to ensure you track and monitor adjustments and progress of your plan			
Review Philosophy Statement to ensure the new curriculum focus is included	Click or tap here to enter text.		Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Reconciliation Action Plan - Cultural Competence for Staff	Click or tap here to enter text.		Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.		Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
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Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.		Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

Review and Evaluate - Have we achieved our NQS priorities? What have we learned and what are our next steps?**What progress have we made? Have we achieved our priorities?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

Enablers: What factors have been critical for success?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Inhibitors: What factors have impeded progress? How will we work through this?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Recommendations: What are the next steps to take?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Endorsements

Endorsed by director/principal

Name Louise Hanrahan
Date Click or tap to enter a date.

Signature:

Endorsed by governing council chairperson

Name Click or tap here to enter text.
Date Click or tap to enter a date.

Signature:

Endorsed by education director

Name Joann Weckert
Date Click or tap to enter a date.

Signature:

