

Quality Improvement Plan for Moonta Kindergarten

2020

Service name

Moonta Kindergarten

Service approval number

RSE-00016241

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Narungga 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.



Government
of South Australia
Department for Education

Context

Service Context

From the moment families and children begin their journey at Moonta Kindergarten, they are viewed as knowledgeable and capable learners. We look to progress the children further throughout the year to also be powerful learners. We aim to do this by encouraging the children to be deep thinkers and risk takers, to use imagination, be curious, to question and to work with others. We believe our role is to encourage and model teamwork. Together, our role is to support and extend children's learning and development in a way that they are able to succeed. We look at the child in a holistic way which encourages educators to recognise the connections between children, families and communities and the importance of shared relationships and partnerships for learning. We believe that here and now is the most important time for our children and their learning, as it paves the way for the future.

Families, community and educators acknowledge that childhood is a time for play, when the life of a young person should be easygoing. Each kindy day should bring numerous opportunities to imagine and explore so many yet to be discovered chances to learn. In such a busy world we are committed to provide the children at Moonta kindy with experiences that will take them on to be future citizens who are able to contribute and make a positive difference to our community. Educators work closely with the Junior Primary educators and the leadership group at Moonta Area School. We are able to access some resources including the library and oval. We liaise with Department for Education services, Healthy families, CAFHS and Families SA in regards to children who may need assistance during their time a kindy. We are part of the Northern Yorke Partnership group. This group meets twice a term with the children and young people from our area being our core business. The group consists of Moonta kindergarten and Area School, Bute School based preschool and Primary School, Wallaroo mines Primary School, Kadina Kindergarten and Memorial School and Wallaroo Kindergarten and Primary School.

We have recently had an outdoor area upgrade which presents many learning opportunities for the children. Our inside area is also complimented by a verandah area that is also used for various purposes each day. In terms 2 and 3 we also access a bushland area behind the kindergarten. This area has many learning purposes that include our keeping safe curriculum, numeracy and literacy opportunities and opportunities for the children to engage in respectful and sustainable practices while visiting the area. A community garden across the road is also a favourite place for the children to visit. Children have the opportunity to engage with community members, watch the seasonal changes and bring growing and care advice back to use in our own garden.

We work with 2 groups of children, attending different days. The children attend on Mondays and Wednesdays or Tuesday and Thursday. Each term in weeks 4, 5 and 6, families are offered an extra day (3 days for those weeks.) This averages out per year to the required 15 hour per week over 40 weeks. Our centre has a capacity of 30 children per day. In 2020 we are funded for Director, teacher, half time EC

We all believe that the key to a collaborative, empathetic and respectful environment is relationships. As is evident in our philosophy; we place relationships as a very high priority at our centre. We also ensure that the involvement and wellbeing of each child in relation to interactions and learning environment is also regularly observed and discussed. All staff act in the best interests of all children and develop positive relationships with them and their families based on mutual trust and open communication.

Context

Statement of Philosophy

Collaboration from children, families, staff.

Participation and inclusion for all- All families are welcome and can access and participate in all aspects of the kindy program. We all belong.... understanding where we fit in the world. Becoming a valued citizen of our community. Being - extending on children's interests, embracing culture, supporting individual needs, recognising values and skills, allowing time to express ourselves, and celebrating achievements. Be nice to each other...we should be friendly.

Welcoming differences, Being kind, Being respectful- Everyone is unique, we are not all the same on the outside. We all bring with us our own interests and skills. We are all competent. We are all capable, and with support we will experience success.

We are all learners and we are all learning together- Children, educators and families learning together and from each other...We are a community of learners. We can all learn from each other. This is our space to learn and grow together.

Learning through Play- Play is a child's framework for learning. Play provides rich learning opportunities and leads to children's success and self-esteem. Learning is fun...Play is fun. We can learn about counting,reading stories,making books, teamwork, exploring, gardening, science,technology,engineering and maths, we can learn anything at kindy!

Our Community Goal- families and educators working together to provide the best outcomes for our children.

We live on Narungga land

We play on Narungga land.

Thank you Narungga people for sharing the land with us.



Strengths



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Review
and evaluate

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

Practice is embedded in service operations. Aligning with our philosophy, the Early Years Learning Framework is at the centre of our program planning, supported by the Literacy and Numeracy indicators/Guidelines. With families, a learning goal is developed for each child and they are programmed for specifically each term within the fortnightly cycle. Routines are predictable and supported by visual cues and support from each other depicted as working as a team. There is flexibility to enable children to follow interests and projects with extended play opportunities which also allow for spontaneous events e.g. walking to the community garden to find a red flower. The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) is an integral and invaluable resource that is constantly used and referred to by educators with all aspects of our kindy setting. The framework allows us to gather vital information pertaining to each child and family at our centre to foster learning for all. By referring to the outcomes we can ensure opportunities are maximised for every child. The principles and practices provide educators with tools to reflect on their own pedagogies.

Practice is informed by critical reflection. We have researched various philosophies, principles and approaches to ensure that our centre is homely and inviting for our children and families. The planning and setting up of the environment is a consistent part of planning to ensure that the needs and interests of all children are catered for. Reflection regularly includes discussion with families of noticings, strengths, learning and development. Our reflection book that is written in at the end of each day also includes family feedback to ensure their inclusion. Notes and recordings are taken throughout the day to be able to recall and reflect with each other and the children later. Visual displays in relation to planning are easy to see and read. We regularly receive feedback from families on how well we are keeping them informed. Our reflective discussions provide opportunity to critically reflect on our own principles and practices and how they have been implemented throughout the day. We are becoming adept at being able to make changes to our program and our practice based on our reflections and feedback from each other. Children's comments about experiences are recorded and discussed with them and with staff during the day.

Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families, and/or community. Parents complete an information sheet on their children's interests, dispositions and their hopes for their children's learning at kindergarten when they enrol their child. Important information that may impact on the child's learning is discussed and recorded at a pre entry catch up meeting and again discussed later in term 1 and 3. This information is used to establish their individual learning plan and to support community involvement. e.g. connecting with families businesses. Parents who do not attend the kindy are communicated with through texts, emails and phone calls.

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Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Practice is embedded in service. With regular visits to the kindy forest and community walks, the children will experience the real version of nature, broadening their opportunities to explore and develop their motor skills on the uneven land. The forest is used for children to develop their awareness about keeping safe in a new environment, how they can look after themselves and their friends, and how to explore the environment safely. Close ties have been forged with Moonta Area School and in conjunction with them, we have developed joint fire and bushfire plans. We use the emergency bells to follow the various emergencies as well as having our own evacuation and invacuation practices planned and implemented in our program. After discussions with various parties and during staff reflection on emergency procedures, there have been modifications made to the building (solid wall replacing glass windows of storeroom) to ensure the safety of children and staff in the event that an invacuation should occur. Families are notified of these events to encourage conversations at home. Families may also choose to come along and experience the various emergency procedures with their children to better support and understand their child's thoughts and feelings towards such activities. The regular visits within our community supports children to notice their surroundings and to keep themselves safe. Promotion of sun safety, road safety, and responding to their body's needs (hot, thirsty, tired, etc.) are some of the learning outcomes that children are experiencing.

Practice is informed by critical reflection. We have identified through educator reflections and children's thoughts when discussing feelings and emotions that we needed an opportunity for quiet time and rest after the lengthy periods of unstructured play. Various methods and timeslots are implemented depending on need throughout the day for rest and relaxation. Quiet music, familiar songs, Yoga and stories are all approaches that we use for relaxation time. We also have a quieter area with a lounge where children have the opportunity to sit or lie, relax and have some quiet time amongst the other busy times of the day.

Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families, and/or community. Close relationships with families allow us to have honest conversations together to ensure that we are aware of changes to Family dynamics. This ensures that the best interests of the children are at the forefront of everybody's thinking and allows us to support all concerned if required. All children are very welcome at our kindergarten, if families or educators can see that support for children with special rights is needed within our kindy environment then we will look to accommodate these needs with extra staffing or a support worker when necessary. As relationships are a key focus, we are attuned to the needs of all children as well as any changes in their character, personality or behaviour. Trust and acknowledgement of no judgment has ensured trusting relationships with families. As a result, we are able to have honest conversations which result in families being able to accept help and advice when needed.

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Quality Area 3: Physical Environment

Practice is embedded in service. Our physical environment provides a rich and diverse range of opportunities and experiences for the children. Improvements over the past few years to our outdoor area have been the inclusion of rooms within the yard and imaginative areas for the children to create and engage with. These 2 areas have been highly successful in creating new role play experiences, physical activity and many opportunities for numeracy rich thinking and conversation. We have minimised and rearranged our indoor areas to better suit the needs of the children. Introduction of calmer colours, plants and natural materials assist many children who often struggle with sensory overload. We include pops of colour to create a warm, fun and inviting space.

Practice is informed by critical reflection. We have researched various philosophies, principles and approaches to ensure that our centre is homely and inviting for our children and families. The planning and setting up of the environment is a consistent part of planning to ensure that the needs and interests of all children are catered for. Situated in close proximity to school and council bush land and a community garden we are spoilt for opportunities to explore outside of our kindy yard.

Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families, and/or community. We are fortunate enough to have been able to adopt the council land behind the kindy, now affectionately known by the children as the 'kindy forest'. This area allows us to create fantastic fantasy and imaginative experiences, engage with nature and engage in sustainable practices by saving snack and lunch scraps to feed the school chooks that adjoin the area. The community Church garden enables us to engage with older members of our community as well as assisting the children to gain an understanding of sharing and caring for the community areas near to us. Our outdoor area has a rain water tanks for watering the nearby garden. Children also have the opportunity to learn about water usage and sustainability through learning about rain, water levels, guttering and an empty tank!

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Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements

Practice is embedded in service- Our staffing arrangements which include support workers allow educators to direct their full attention to their work with children. Staff has time to direct their thoughts to specific planning, assessment and administrative tasks at other times during the week. This has allowed staff to foster responsive learning relationships with the children as they learn together.

Practice is informed by critical reflection- We all believe that the key to a collaborative, empathetic and respectful environment is relationships, as is evident in our philosophy; we place relationships as a very high priority at our centre. We also ensure that the involvement and wellbeing of each child in relation to interactions and learning environment is also regularly observed and discussed. All staff acts in the best interests of all children and develop positive relationships based on mutual trust and open communication throughout the day. Staff are supportive of each other and strong relationships exist. This is evident during reflective conversations, staff meetings and throughout the day as we support each other. A strong culture of professional inquiry has been established where educators are constantly discussing and reflecting on the needs of every aspect of the centre. It is evident through our reflective conversations that staff have a strong motivation to learn through both successful and not so successful experiences. Staff are regularly involved in training and discussion in regard to EYLF, literacy and numeracy, our planning cycle, and gaining a better understanding of some of the theories that we use in relation to how children learn. We have a solid staff relationship that ensures sharing of tasks, assisting others, support not only while at kindy and ensuring that there is time for celebration and informal get together outside of centre hours.

Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families, and/or community. Teamwork is paramount within our staff group, yet comes easily to us due to our trust in each other and staff continuity. This also pertains to our philosophy and core work with our children and families. Families are part of continuous conversations with educators in regards to the children and the centre environment. Extra staff are employed to support children with additional requirements, as well as provision of non-contact time to enable educator's quality time to undertake relevant tasks. All educators share understanding and shared responsibility that is necessary for the occasional care program to be part of the preschool service. Occasional Care is an important and valued part of our community. Families are grateful for the opportunity to have the service and appreciate the contact that they have with educators in relation to support and guidance for themselves and their children. Occasional care is available for children aged between two to pre kindy. Having the occasional care program at our site enables us to promote young children's development and learning by increasing access to a high quality early childhood education and care program. Families who have started their journey in occasional care realise quite quickly, the importance of their involvement, support and influence that they can have in their child's education.

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Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children

Practice is embedded in service. Educators are consistently making conscious connections and encouraging children to interact with one another and engage in learning experiences throughout each day, we have focus children throughout the term to ensure every child is given the opportunity to participate in the program, take leading roles, make decisions, have others take notice of them and recognise their choices and achievements and goals. Children are asked for their opinions and recommendations i.e. agreements to keep everyone safe and happy at kindy, how spaces in the outdoor environment could be set up etc. Educators discuss with the children their plans and ideas throughout day, what learning can happen in certain spaces (i.e. what is on the story table, what is on the numeracy table, reminders about the bookmaking area, intentional learning experiences planned for the day, what possibilities could be in the outdoor area.

Practice is informed by critical reflection. Educators ask lots of questions which encourage children to share their knowledge; this enables educators to take a holistic view of the child and identify where the child is “at” (child’s Zone of Proximal Development,) and what areas of the child’s learning can be extended further. We scaffold children’s learning by sourcing and introducing resources which may extend the child’s interest and extend learning even further on a particular topic. Setting up ‘provocations’ in the environment help to spark curiosity, inquiry, investigation, discovery, deeper learning and “light bulb” moments.

Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families, and/or community- Everyone is made to feel welcome at our kindy regardless of backgrounds, culture, race, language, religious beliefs, abilities/ disabilities and needs. This is evident in the way families are addressed and supported as well as the genuine comfort families feel while at the centre. This we know through gratitude shown in conversations with our families and many positive comments from community members. Welcome to country is a part of our morning meeting and children are encouraged to be part of this by use of a Narranga welcome and an understanding that we are looking after our lovely kindy where Narranga people once were Through events which encourage families and the community to participate i.e. father’s night, mother’s day morning tea, elderly residents from the local aged care facility come and visit us at the kindy and visits to the aged care home, participation in the Christmas street parade, local cultural events, fundraising events and invitations to offer suggestions, feedback and ideas i.e. outdoor learning environment- display set up down the main street for the community to look at, talk about and share suggestions, ideas and memories of attending the Moonta kindergarten themselves.

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Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

Practice is embedded in service-As is evident throughout our whole strengths document, respectful relationships with our families is one of the highest priorities at the centre. Effective communication is essential at our centre, as at the forefront of our minds is the diversity of family types and unique family relationships. All caregivers are welcomed and made aware of such communication setups as reconnection times each morning, our notice pockets and text messaging and Face book page. Respect, inclusion and kindness are words that we put into practice and discuss constantly with the children, families and Governing Council.

Practice is informed by critical reflection-Educators intentionally consider alternate ways of engaging with families and supporting their participation at the service. We consider making changes where opportunities to further enhance children's and families' wellbeing are identified. Before changing, educators discuss and reflect how they will be able to clarify how the ongoing engagement with families will influence the plans and delivery of our educational program.

Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families, and/or community-Educators, coordinators and the educational leader, actively support families to build relationships with other families and with relevant community services to strengthen child, parenting and family outcomes. We tailor our approaches to communicating with and engaging with each family in recognition of individual families' circumstances. Educators draw on their knowledge of each family to provide thoughtful and personalised opportunities for each family to participate in the service, for example building a sense of belonging for our Aboriginal families.

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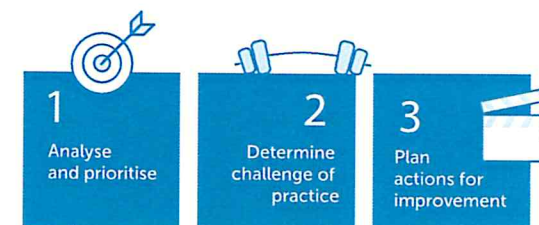
Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership

Practice is embedded in service. The Director is also the educational leader who in conjunction with 2 part time teachers and ECW ensures continuous development of curriculum. This occurs through meeting regularly, working with educators at other sites, and listening to each other, families and community. Through participation in partnership meetings the director is able to report back directly in regards to information given. This information is usually related to support we are able to give or receive throughout local schools and kindergartens. This year we will focus on deepening our learning in relation to the numeracy indicators as well as reviewing and extending our Pedagogical documentation processes and knowledge. Our success criteria are noted in Goal 1. Educator meetings are used as a way to reflect upon our planning cycle, best practice, our interactions, and relationships with the children and families of Moonta. The daily reflection book is also a way to document educator discussions held at the end of each day.

Practice is informed by critical reflection -Leaders are constantly reflecting on and continuously questioning how to improve teaching methods, educators' practices, curriculum quality, equity, and the wellbeing and inclusion of each child. This happens by building staff members' professional knowledge, regular professional development discussions and strengthening relationships with children and families. At the forefront of our curriculum organisation is the planning of practices that promote children's wellbeing, learning and development. Educators are encouraged to continuously reflect on and question how to improve their teaching approaches through professional development and experimentation. Incorporating regular self-assessment and quality improvement discussions in staff meetings enables us to focus on and regularly update and maintain our Quality Improvement Plan. Our plan is a working document which encourages involvement and documentation from all stakeholders. Parent feedback is also encouraged. An effective cycle of continuous improvement is in place in the form of a calendar schedule. While reference is continually made to this document it is important to understand that there is flexibility and room for changes throughout the process.

Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families, and/or community- The centres AGM is held in term one, with two Governing Council meetings are held per term. An invitation is extended to all parents at pre entry catch ups and again throughout the year. Having some clarity early on about what is involved in the meetings gives families confidence to attend or join the committee. Our meetings are designed to be informative, casual and at a time convenient to our families who are on the committee. When decisions are made, all parents are notified through newsletters, with the opportunity for clarification always offered. We are fortunate that for the past few years we have had members who stay on our committee longer. This provides support, stability and welcoming faces for new governing council members. Information required under the National Regulations is displayed in a parent area out in the main kindy room.

Learning Improvement Plan



Goal 1: Children will increase their confidence and skills in measuring and comparing incorporating the indicator "I measure and compare my world".

Challenge of practice:

If we develop deeper understandings of the Numeracy Indicator "I measure and compare my world" and then provide intentionally planned learning experiences in the kindergarten environment, we will strengthen children's learning in the area of measurement and data.

| Actions | NQS links | Timeline | Resources | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Discuss learnings, opportunities and possibilities from readings Implement/research one idea from book each f/n. What is successful what do we need to change/rethink/ Look at "Why" we are doing what we are doing. | 4.2.1 Professional collaboration. 1.3.2 Critical reflection. | Term 1 - fortnightly cycle, continuing throughout the year. | Pedagogical documentation in the early years. | Teachers to read set chapters and bring back notes opportunities/possibilities and questioning for f/n discussion. Passing learning on to ECWs. |
| Staff engage in professional development to gain deeper understanding of Indicator- 'I measure and compare my world.' | 1.2.1 Intentional teaching. 4.2.1 Professional collaboration | Every 2nd Friday 2020 | Numeracy guidebook - website links.EYLF Readings sourced by educators. Internal workshops/ programs. | RRR . Focus on where is measuring and comparing in our environment. f/n dedicated time to extend learning. |
| Review our Pedagogical Documentation knowledge- Data that we are collecting and how are we using. How are we tracking the children's learning . Is the doc/data useful. Deeper learning understanding of chns learning. More visible to others. | 7.2.1 Continuous improvement. | Commence T4 2020, continue T1 2020. | Initial use of Ped Doc sideshow for discussion in T4 2019. Site audit and analysis of our current Ped Doc practices. | staff trial/continue various mediums of recording ped doc-video,audio,photo.Bring evidence to meeting. indicator focus |
| Linking staff learning to assist with working with families to promote the message "everyone can learn maths. | 6.1.3 Families are supported. | Late term 2 or T3 2020. | Partnership incentive- PIE grant. Info in newsletters. Discussion in parent catch ups. Presentation of useful resources that we use. | - Director/educators. - Collaborate with MAS educators. NY Partnership. |
| Success criteria | Children will be learning alongside educators to co-construct Ped Doc. Families will see the children's learning clearly through educators making more visible the children's learning and children being able to see and show the learning in our environment. Children will demonstrate a higher level of understanding about measuring and comparing through intentionally planned experiences educators are learning through their own professional learning. All stakeholders will be conversing regularly in relation to mathematics with planned family orientated learning in 2020. | | | |