

2024

# Quality Improvement Plan for Naracoorte North Kindergarten

Site number:

6537



## Service name

Naracoorte North Kindergarten

## Service address

39 Park Terrace, Naracoorte SA 5271

## Service approval number

SE-00010701

## Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the **Meintangk** 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

The Naracoorte North Kindergarten is co-located in the Childhood Services building with the Naracoorte Day Child Care Centre, with whom we work very closely. The Kindergarten has a large outdoor natural learning area, which enables the children to engage in imaginative and creative play. The Centre is surrounded by the natural North Parklands, with the inhabiting wildlife often seen grazing nearby. Although the Naracoorte Primary School [adjacent to the Centre] is our main feeder school, children also transition to the Naracoorte South Primary School, Lucindale Area School, Frances Primary School, Sunrise Christian School, Padthaway Primary School and Apsley Primary School (Victoria).

The Kindergarten operates sessions for children from 8.30am – 3.30pm Monday through Thursday, with 6 additional Fridays over a child's Kindy year from 8.30am – 3:30pm. Naracoorte North Kindergarten is staffed with a shared Director (one being 0.8 and the other 0.2), two teachers (one being 0.6 the other 0.8) and three early childhood workers who all have varying fractions of time based on capacity and support for individual children.

Playgroup is offered Fridays from 9:30am to 11:00am, run by an ECW and supported by teachers. Our playgroup curriculum is guided by talk, play, read, sing and do.

Naracoorte North Kindergarten's improvement goals and priorities are developed through data collection, analysis and decision making while also reflecting against the National Quality Standards. This enables the site to identify strengths, areas for growth and the next steps moving forward. As an educator team we analyse and critically reflect on children's learning and development twice a week. This is also a time where educators reflect on their practice and interactions with children. Families feedback is sought regularly through individual child focussed conversations, parent conferences and through conversations with Governing Council.

# Statement of Philosophy

The Naracoorte North Kindergarten and Naracoorte Child Day Care Centre have undertaken a collaborative approach in developing a shared Philosophy Statement that outlines our beliefs and values in relation to curriculum and learning, partnerships and wellbeing of all children, families, educators and visitors within our Centres. We work in partnership with families to care for and educate their children by providing a safe, nurturing and enriching environment that promotes learning for life. Through our commitment to the community we will assist children to reach their optimum potential and prepare for the future with confidence, independence and optimism.

## Naracoorte Children's Services Philosophy

### Our Values

We value being

- Kind
- Flexible
- Collaborative
- Innovative
- Nurturing
- Respectful

### Our Beliefs

We believe

- Children are capable individuals, communicating in their own way, and bringing dispositions like curiosity, resilience and creativity. They draw on their ongoing experiences, knowledge and connections to make sense of the world around them.
- Children grow and learn through experimenting, risk taking, discovering, revisiting and exploring. They thrive in inclusive, playful and engaging environments, with opportunities for collaboration and communication.
- Families want the best for their children. Every family has their own values, beliefs, experiences and understandings which contribute to their child's world. Sharing insights and perspectives supports children to grow and learn.
- That developing a respectful community of educators who support children, families and each other, builds a sense of belonging and connection for all
- Respectful, responsive and trusting relationships provide children, families and educators a secure base for belonging and learning.
- Building responsive relationships supports children's increasing wellbeing and resilience
- Learning environments that are inclusive, flexible, inviting, open and challenging enable children to extend their sense of agency, collaborate and lead their own learning.
- That when educators are intentional in creating responsive, engaging, playful opportunities and experiences, children grow, learn and flourish.

### Our Commitments

Through responsive interactions we will understand and value each child's evolving dispositions, strengths, interests and experiences as a basis for their learning.

We will provide flexible materials and environments to facilitate individual and group learning through challenge, reflection and revisiting.

We will ensure all families have opportunities to share insights and perspectives with educators, collaborating to support children's wellbeing, growth and learning.

We will develop structures and opportunities to actively build a community of colleagues

We will model, nurture and promote secure attachments and relationships.

We will intentionally plan for and design playful environments that invite and provoke engagement and learning.

We will purposefully engage with children to extend thinking, explore theories and construct meaning.

### Our Intentions

To be redeveloped in Week 8 following Inquiry PD and State Leaders Day/Numeracy Summit.

Last reviewed January 2023.

# Strengths

## Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice

Our Centre Philosophy, alongside the Early Years Learning Framework, Numeracy and Literacy Indicators, Child Protection Curriculum and the Australian Curriculum guide curriculum planning and reporting. Educators continually challenge, extend and embed their knowledge and pedagogical understandings to ensure the educational program enhances each child's learning and development.

Observations of children's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests drive our cycle of planning. Observations are collated in a shared space where the educator team collaboratively analyse children's learning, drawing out strengths to be explored and areas where stretch and challenge is required. These learning opportunities provide the basis for future planning cycles. Analysis of children's learning and future learning goals are discussed with families, seeking their input to support and extend their child and educator's goals. Educators collate children's learning against the Numeracy and Literacy Indicators and the EYLF Outcomes. Educators analyse and reflect, seeing patterns in each child's learning as well as the learning of the cohort as a whole, planning to extend accordingly. It provides opportunities for deeper discussion and reflection by the educator team on areas for children's development as individuals, small and large groups. This has enabled educators to reflect on their knowledge and understandings in specific areas, guiding them to seek professional development in areas where they wish to build skills and understandings.

Families are the child's first teacher and their involvement and collaboration at Kindergarten is crucial to their child's success. Family and Child surveys are completed as part of the enrolment process, guiding initial interactions and learning opportunities for children and families. Families provide valuable insight into their child's strengths, interests and areas for development. Educators collectively reflect upon these and utilise them to create an engaging, welcoming and familiar environment for children to begin their learning. Family conferences were introduced in 2020, with Governing Council and Educators agreeing that face-to-face conversations are a more meaningful method of communicating their child's achievements and future needs than a written report. Conferences occur in Term 1, 3 and are optional in Term 2.

From these Families provide input which guides educator's planning, ensuring we have shared aspirations for each child.

Educators form a shared agreement on daily routines, reflecting upon the children's needs and engagement, checking in with each other prior to preparing for and transitioning through each part of the day. This flexibility is crucial to allow children deeper engagement and the ability to follow through with their own learning and to manage themselves more independently in daily routines.

Sustained, lengthy play is a priority to foster and enable children to develop and enhance their own learning. Through this play, educators observe, wait and listen, offering intentional interactions to extend, challenge and promote deeper thinking. Children are encouraged to explore their own solutions and are provided choices at all times. A range of indoor and outdoor experiences are available to children, with open-ended, flexible resources available to them so they can adapt and change their play as they need. Children are encouraged to challenge themselves, including attempting new experiences. Educators observe and take note of when support is required, assisting children to attempt new learning and celebrating their learning and achievements with them.

# Strengths

## Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Educators ensure that children's health needs are identified, promoted, discussed and supported in a respectful and responsive way. Parents provide current health care plans for children who require regular medication and or care. A form is signed medication be required to be given incidentally, with two educators checking correct dosage prior to any administration. Risk minimisation plans are created with educators and families for all children with identified medical needs. Medication is stored appropriately in labelled medication pockets, which are easily removed in case of emergency. Immunisation status and medical details are obtained for all children through enrolment conversations, being recorded and shared with educators to ensure individual health requirements are supported. All children's details are regularly reviewed, with educators being made aware of any changes via confidential conversations, particularly in the weekly child or WHS updates in Educator Meetings which are documented in One Note for anyone absent. Parents are notified promptly of any incident or accidents involving their child, with supporting documentation provided and kept in the accident/injury folder. These are reflected upon regularly with any patterns of incidents noted and action taken to prevent further instances. During outbreaks of infectious diseases, information is shared with all families accessing the Centre via email, handouts and displays at the sign in bench outlining symptoms, exclusion periods and treatment options.

Educators effectively meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation, by ensuring both individuals and groups have opportunities to relax, rest and/or sleep if needed. Children are actively supported to become independent in managing their self-care and self-regulation. The smaller play space is a designated quiet and restful space, intentionally having quieter activities, cushions and chairs, which promote restful and relaxing learning opportunities. Relaxation and rest periods are also incorporated into group learning times, with children actively participating in a range of experiences including yoga, quiet drawing, stories and music. There is a variety of quiet spaces intentionally created for children to rest in both the indoor and outdoor environments.

Educators actively promote effective hygiene practices including hand washing, toileting and blowing noses, which are embedded in daily routines and supported with visual prompts. Daily routines are developed to support children's healthy and active lifestyles, providing opportunities for healthy eating and physical play. Children are encouraged to eat together at fruit and lunch times in a hygienic and community oriented manner. Healthy eating is promoted through the parent handbook, newsletters and in curriculum planning. Families are encouraged to pack healthy food options for children, using reusable containers, with educators modelling this with their own lunchboxes. All lunchboxes are stored in the fridge to ensure perishable food items are kept at a safe temperature. The Kindergarten garden offers another learning opportunity, with children growing their own produce, which is used for cooking or simply tried raw. Children are encouraged throughout the day to drink water, with filtered rainwater available to refill their bottles as needed.

Play spaces and equipment are arranged to ensure effective supervision, with educators balancing themselves over the play spaces at all times. Educators collaborate to ensure effective steps are taken to identify and manage risks, including daily safety checks and risk assessments, with children encouraged and supported to make their own risk assessments during play. Risk benefit analysis is also undertaken and recorded as part of the risk assessment process. All children and educators follow sun and inclement weather procedures, with 100% of children and educators wearing hats year round.

Incident and emergency strategies are practiced twice per term and implemented by educators at varying times and days to ensure all children and situations are considered. Emergency processes are intentionally introduced to both families and children, with all educators confident in their implementation. Children are involved in the reflection process with educators, along with families, playgroup attendees, visitors and volunteers who are on site at the time of the practice.

Educators understand their roles and responsibilities in accordance with relevant child protection legislation and act accordingly. A number of educators have been trained to use the 'Keeping them Safe' curriculum, which is woven throughout our planning cycle. Educators remain vigilant, being aware of signs of abuse or neglect and manage family concerns sensitively and appropriately. Families are supported to access Department and external support providers, with information and advice provided through newsletters, information booklets and directly if requested.



# Strengths

## Quality Area 3: Physical Environment

Children move freely around the Kindergarten, being able to access both the indoor and outdoor environments throughout the day. Educators actively promote the choice of learning environment, providing children with opportunities to independently choose, establish and lead their own learning. Educators create a diverse range of learning experiences and opportunities both indoors and outdoors that inspire children to engage in a rich and broad curriculum, incorporating and promoting fine and gross motor, social, emotional and dispositional development.

The Kindergarten has a large well utilised outdoor learning area which provides great interest to children as a natural learning provocation incorporating nature spaces, mud kitchen, cubby house, extensive lawn areas, large play equipment, digging patch, sand pit, swings and quiet areas for solitary moments. The mud kitchen has a working tap and both the digging patch and sandpit incorporate water courses, providing open-ended opportunities for exploratory, sensory play. The yard is intentionally fenced with open pool fencing, allowing children to view the North Parklands which back onto the Kindergarten. Kangaroos and wallabies are often seen grazing at the back of the Kindergarten, with children often forming inquiries based on what can be seen beyond the Kindy fence.

The outdoor space is well shaded in summer, with an established tree canopy. In autumn and winter a number of trees lose their leaves allowing an abundance of natural light to filter through to the learning environments beneath. The sandpit shade provides continual sun and weather protection for one of the most utilised play spaces. The outdoor learning environment has been designed to be inclusive, with ramps and level surfaces allowing movement through the majority of the yard for prams, strollers and movement aides.

Sustainability is a key feature of the outdoor environment, with composting built into the established wicking beds, butterfly gardens, fruit trees and worm farms which are a favourite of the children, who enjoy feeding the worms in the hopes of catching a glimpse of the resident frogs or geckos. These practices are explored both incidentally during daily explorations and intentionally in the program to delve deeper into the reasons why these practices are so important. Loose parts are continually added to both indoor and outdoor learning environments, with local community members and businesses donating items to our collection.

The internal learning environment is bright and airy, with educators ensuring learning experiences and spaces are open and visible, while still providing the opportunity for children to define them and have secluded spaces to utilise if they feel the need. A variety of recycled furniture and resources have been sourced to support our sustainability values and create a welcoming, familiar and comfortable space. Recycling is evident throughout the Kindergarten with practices embedded with both educators, families and children. Families and community members drop in their recycling to be used for making and creating. Children will often collect their own resources, both natural and man-made, bringing them into Kindergarten to use in their projects.

The bathroom was renovated to promote independence, with child friendly taps, soap dispensers and troughs allowing children to use them with ease. The larger toilet cubicle also supports disability access with the inclusion of rails and space to move. This also provides an environment for children to dress and undress independently. Children are encouraged to be water wise and manage the amount of paper towel used, while balancing the time needed to ensure they are washing and drying their hands adequately.

Both the indoor and outdoor learning environments are reflected upon and reviewed regularly by educators, children and families. Educators offer experiences and provocations with the intention for them to be adaptable to varying skill levels and interests. Opportunities are designed to encourage children's participation and engagement, with the ability to transfer resources and knowledge. An abundance of resources are available to children, with them confidently requesting more or different resources if they require, often seeking out natural resources for the yard, moving them in and out to add to their playful learning. All equipment and resources are monitored for any damage or problems, with repairs and maintenance carried out as needed. Members of the community frequently assist with this.

The kitchen forms a shared space where educators, children and families share cooking experiences. Children make playdough with an educator each week, exploring numeracy and literacy concepts. Building confidence in the process and teaching each other as the year progresses. Children take home the recipe, sharing the learning with their families and building a shared understanding of the learning opportunities occurring both at home and Kindergarten.

## Strengths

### Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements

Our centre often operates with a higher educator to child ratio than regulations require. This ensures that optimal learning and development is supported and provides the opportunity for educators to provide specialised programs such as Playgroup and Speech Programs. All educators hold Qualifications with all teachers Early Childhood trained and the ECW's having their Certificate 3 in Early Childhood Education and Care or working towards. Educators are allocated time for administration tasks, which allows them to focus fully on the children and families when they are working with them. Educators function as a cohesive team, supporting each other and working towards shared agreements and outcomes in all aspects of the service. The Department for Education's Code of Ethics, National Quality Framework, Respect Reflect Relate and Early Years Learning Frameworks guiding principles drive educator practice and site procedures.

The skills and knowledge of educators are broad and varied, with professional development offered frequently to the educator team. Professional development is sought to support educator growth and increase outcomes for children, families and the community. Educators are encouraged to attend development opportunities that align with Quality Improvement Goals, their individual Professional Development Plans or the needs of children, families and the community. Educators attend in pairs or as a team, feeding back their learning, leading reflection and change, leading to cohesive and effective practice, providing improved outcomes for children and families.

Educators constantly strive to improve their practice and increase their abilities and knowledge. There is a growing culture of educators as researchers, which is evident in their interactions with each other, their reflective practices and their striving to collaborate with the wider community to increase outcomes for children and families.

All educators also work alongside colleagues from other sites within our Portfolio, sharing best practice and knowledge, creating deeper connections and aspiring to increase continuity across our services. Current focus of shared professional learning across the region includes playgroup and engagement with families, phonological awareness and music based literacy learning. These focus areas are based upon our Portfolio's collective data, which accurately reflects the needs of our community.

Consistency in the educator team is a priority. Regular relief educators are used, with any new relief staff encouraged to spend time in the Centre as part of their induction, prior to being employed. This allows them to become familiar with the routines and allows the children and families to get to know them. With one teacher and three ECW being part time, they are our first priority for relief, enabling continuity of practice, skills and knowledge. Families appreciate the familiarity of knowing the educator team is small and consistent, this has been fed back consistently in parent opinion surveys. Regular ECW relievers also work at the adjoining Naracoorte Child Day Care Centre. This provides another level of continuity for children as a large number transition from NCDCC to NNK each year. The familiar face for children and existing confidence of families ensures these transitions are as seamless as possible and effective for all involved.

Educators acknowledge and respect each other's strengths and the skills they each bring to the service, collaboratively reflecting upon processes and working together to improve practices and outcomes for children and families. Reviewing and improving the effectiveness of the planning cycle is a prime example of this cohesion. Educators collaboratively undertake observations, analysis of learning, planning and reflection to create shared pedagogical documentation with families and children's input being considered and included. Educators have a Communication System in One Note where important family and child information is shared amongst educators, ensuring everyone is aware of family situations and can respond and support accordingly. A shared professional development book has also been introduced alongside One Note, ensuring all educators are able to see the conversations, learning and next steps that have occurred at professional development opportunities, teaching sprints or reflecting on the PQIP.





## Strengths

### Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children

Educators promote children's sense of security and belonging by providing a safe, happy, inviting and nurturing environment where Children, their Families and Colleagues are valued and respected. Educators respond to children and families in a respectful and trusting manner at all times. Educators greet all children and family members by name and farewell children and families in the same way. Role-modelling these interactions builds children's and families confidence in engaging with others, sharing mutual respect and strengthening connections to each other, the Kindergarten and their wider community. Educators promote children's sense of security and belonging by providing a safe, happy, inviting and nurturing environment where Children, their Families and Colleagues are valued and respected. Educators respond to children and families in a respectful and trusting manner at all times. Educators greet all children and family members by name and farewell children and families in the same way. Role-modelling these interactions builds children's and families confidence in engaging with others, sharing mutual respect and strengthening connections to each other, the Kindergarten and their wider community.

Our uninterrupted periods of play ensure that children have the opportunity to engage in deep discussions with educators and their peers. Children have time for exploration and to become deeply absorbed in the exchange of ideas and to move from one interaction to the next. Educators and children collaborate in all aspects of the daily routine, this allows increased opportunities for discussions and interactions. Educators respect children's ideas and opinions in conversations, discussions and interactions, encouraging their independence and self-help skills. Children are encouraged to see themselves as teachers sharing their knowledge and skills with their peers, educators and their families.

Through cyclic programming, driven by children's interests and suggestions, learning experiences are planned to enable children to involve themselves in play that encourages the development and use of cooperation, collaboration and team work. Educators aim to help children acquire the dispositions, skills and habits required for a lifetime of learning, exploring, engaging, communicating and interacting. Through careful observation, educators support each child when they require it allowing each child to feel empowered and excited by their personal achievements. Educator's model investigative processes, critical thinking and conceptual considerations during group interactions and casual conversations with children.

Children's unique abilities, interests and personalities are reflected upon, accepted and promoted to ensure there is always something within the environment that each child will find inviting, engaging and inspiring. Our educators promote an overall sense of respect for diversity. Each child feels the right to choose to engage in a collaborative endeavour when they see the social, emotional, intellectual and physical benefits of seeking assistance and input from peers. Children are provided with many opportunities to learn the language and behaviour required to initiate, maintain and conclude social experiences. This understanding of the structure of social play, combined with each child's confidence with problem solving, allows for countless harmonious and constructive group experiences.

If a child is unable to self-regulate, Educators seek the underlying motivation for a child's behaviour rather than focusing solely on the behaviour itself and therefore consider various psychological or emotional triggers for behaviours, seeking to rectify the root cause. Co-regulation based upon the Circle of Security principles is utilised along with understandings of interoception to support children through these processes. Each child will make mistakes or take missteps but educators treat these as opportunities for that child to learn. Educators assist children with building self-regulation strategies, primarily through intentional teaching at opportune times.

## Strengths

### Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

Educators work in partnership with families to care for and educate their children by providing a safe, nurturing and enriching environment that promotes learning for life. Through our commitment to the community we assist children to reach their optimum potential and prepare for the future with confidence, independence and optimism. Families are encouraged to join Governing Council and are offered numerous opportunities over the year to be involved in their child's learning. These include, but are not limited to Obstacle-a-thons, performances, Playgroup and simply coming to join the play with their children at Kindy.

Educators ensure time is available to talk to and connect with Families. Families are actively kept informed of their child's learning and kindergarten activities through Newsletters, emails, Facebook, Notice board displays, verbal interactions and conferences. The kindergarten also has a facilitated playgroup each Friday which provide families an opportunity to make connections with others. Educators endeavour to interact regularly with all families. Conversations reflect upon the child's wellbeing, learning and development with educators actively encouraging families to provide their input and views of their child as a learner. These conversations are recorded in One Note for all educators to keep up to date on each child and their family. Children who travel via bus, or attend Childcare have their own communication book which is used to convey conversations and send home accident reports, notes and information that other families collect from their information pockets.

Educators collect information on families and children's individual cultures, values, strengths, interests and beliefs as part of our enrolment process. This information is collated and utilised to respectfully make meaningful connections with children and families, celebrating the diversity we have within our Kindergarten and the Community as a whole. Our Indigenous heritage is respectfully acknowledged, incorporated and promoted. Elders are invited in to share their knowledge, traditions and Dreaming Stories with children, families and educators. While ensuring all children are able to fully participate in the Kindergarten program, educators collaborate with families and support services to build shared agreements on how to best support each child and their differing needs. These plans are reviewed frequently, with feedback being shared amongst all involved to ensure consistent approaches are upheld to foster the best outcomes for the child. Support services are engaged where needed, with the Director maintaining connections with service providers, ensuring the most up-to-date and accurate information is available to families if the need arises.

Continuity of learning is a key focus for our Kindergarten. The strong connection and collaboration with the Naracoorte Child Day Care Centre provides an effective and sustainable means of supporting families and children in our community. Both Directors meet regularly to discuss current policy and procedural concerns, needs of the community and shared development opportunities that we can collaborate on to increase the outcomes for children within both our services. Our shared philosophy drives the work within both centres, with educators collaborating and sharing skills and expertise across the differing contexts. Shared agreements are formed between both Directors and parents for children attending both Kindergarten and Childcare, allowing their time to be managed effectively between both services, minimising stress to the child and ensuring their wellbeing and safety if the first priority.

Continuity of learning is also embedded with the Naracoorte Primary School, who is our primary feeder site. The Reception teachers and educators from Kindergarten meet often to establish shared aims for visits occurring between the two sites. Children work collaboratively on shared projects, supporting each other, sharing their skills and knowledge along the way. Educators share their skills and knowledge with each other, working together to ensure playful pedagogies are being utilised in both contexts, providing familiarity and opportunities for confident engagement as children move from one environment to the next. Parents are provided feedback on these experiences, with it providing clear outcomes for all children.

Connections with other feeder sites are increasing, with involvement in community events such as Harmony Day and site-specific opportunities including Sports Days and performances. The Wrattontully Early Years Sites have collaboratively evaluated and aligned the Transition Programs to all schools in the area. This has allowed educators the opportunity to support all children effectively through their transitions to school, has provided families with the same information and expectations of processes and has supported children to be offered a research driven, reflective and engaging transition process which provided exceptional outcomes to all involved.

## Strengths

### Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership

The Naracoorte North Kindergarten and Naracoorte Child Day Care Centre have undertaken a collaborative approach in developing a shared Philosophy Statement that outlines our beliefs and values in relation to curriculum and learning, partnerships and wellbeing of all children, families, educators and visitors within our Centres. The philosophy is in the process of having a thorough review, with both sites engaging with Jane Lemon to deeply reflect upon our core values, beliefs and aspirations for the Centre and Community. We have rewritten our philosophy to provide more accountability and direction, clearly identifying our intentions for children, families, educators and the wider community. The Philosophy is reviewed regularly as educators reflect on the site and educator practice, inviting families and Governing Council to provide their beliefs and values too.

Administrative and management systems are well managed and contribute to continuous improvement. We have an active Governing Council who contribute to the management, operations and decision-making processes of the service. The site follows Department for Education policies and procedures. All policies and procedures are developed in collaboration with educators, families and the governing council and are reviewed as required. The parent information handbook is provided to all families on enrolment, with relevant policies and procedures included or available via our website.

At the beginning of each year, or with any new educator, staff are given a comprehensive induction of roles and responsibilities. Educators understand their individual roles and responsibilities and those of their peers, supporting each other to be successful to maintain the effective operation of the service. Decision-making is a shared process, with the Director ensuring transparency with educators, especially around Departmental requirements, ensuring all educators are involved in any changes or additions to programs or policies. All educators are involved in reflecting upon and improving practices, which fosters ownership over and accountability for following through and ensuring changes are effective in promoting outcomes for children and families.

Educators continually reflect on their own practices, discussing them with their peers and seeking ideas for continual development. All educators have built skills and knowledge in Learning Sprints (Simon Breakspear) with the educational leaders leading improvement cycles throughout the year. Educators feel valued and included in these processes, with the clear cyclic approach replicating the process used to support and plan for children. It is driving continual changes to practice in educators, which is in turn providing clear outcomes for children. All educators are considered leaders in their identified areas of expertise and are confident in supporting each other.

Performance development cycles are established with educators identifying areas for development, derived from self-reflection and guided by the Quality Improvement Plan and child, family and community needs. Regular meetings are held to check in on progress, with educators clearly articulating where they require support from the Director and their peers. Educators comfortably share their goals with each other, seeking advice and support from their colleagues. Professional dialogue about educator practice is held weekly, with educators reviewing and reflecting on pedagogical practice and documentation, identifying strengths and areas for further consideration and development.

The Education Director (ED) and Early Childhood Leader (ECL) actively and responsively support the Director and Educator Team. Kindergarten Directors within the Portfolio support each other termly at Portfolio meetings and incidentally as needed via email, phone or Teams chat. Communities of Practice has been recently introduced which is a small network of Directors which fosters deep critical reflection of individual site practices and processes and allow individuals to seek advice as well as sharing their achievements and effective practice in a meaningful and timely manner, improving outcomes for all involved.

# Learning Improvement Plan – Goal 1



## STEP 1 Analyse and Prioritise

Site name: Naracoorte North Kindergarten

**Goal 1: Extend children’s ability to communicate their thinking and ideas with others.**



## STEP 2 Determine challenge of practice

**Challenge of Practice:**

If educators embed intentional teaching strategies in play, then we will extend children’s ability to communicate their thinking and ideas with others.

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

Through ongoing analysis of pedagogical documentation, we will see children:

- use and understand tier 2 & 3 vocabulary more frequently, in different contexts
- represent thinking in range of ways, with increasing complexity
- initiate and maintain reciprocal shared conversations, which build understandings



## STEP 3 Plan actions for improvement

Actions	NQS Links	Timeline	Roles & Responsibilities	Resources
Educators will build understandings of and refine their practice in sustained shared thinking and child led inquiry.	1.1 1.2 1.3	26/02/2024	<p>Directors will provide opportunities for educators to attend PD, reflect on practice and plan for implementation.</p> <p>Directors will observe practice, model effective strategies and provide feedback to support continual improvement.</p> <p>Lead teacher (Nat) will guide teaching sprints to ensure the building of shared</p>	<p>EYLF <a href="#">Responsiveness to children</a></p> <p>EYLF <a href="#">Play-based learning and intentionality</a></p> <p>Professional Development budget</p> <p>David Gilkes – A culture of Inquiry PD series</p> <p><a href="#">Leading practice paper 1: supporting purposeful play</a></p>


			<p>understandings and accountability.</p> <p>Educators will engage in professional learning and teaching sprints to further improve their sustained shared thinking and inquiry practices.</p>	<p><a href="#">Leading practice paper 2: intentional teaching</a></p> <p><a href="#">Finding the questions worth asking, by Ann Pelo</a></p> <p><a href="#">Your image of the child: where teaching begins, by Loris Malaguzzi</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sustained, shared thinking course (plink), Iram Siraj</a></p> <p><a href="#">What is sustained shared thinking? Why is it important?</a></p>
<p><b>Educators will design flexible and responsive environments that support dispositions for learning and inquiry.</b></p>	<p>1.1 1.2 3.2</p>	<p>29/01/2024</p>	<p>Directors will collaborate with educators to create flexible and responsive learning environments.</p> <p>Directors will use the RRR active learning environment tool to critically reflect and identify areas for celebration and improvement.</p> <p>Educators will design flexible and responsive learning environments that support dispositions for learning and inquiry.</p>	<p>EYLF <a href="#">Learning Environments</a> EYLF <a href="#">Sustainability</a> EYLF <a href="#">Play-based learning and intentionality</a></p> <p><a href="#">QA 3 The environment as the third teacher</a></p> <p><a href="#">QA 3 Inclusive environments</a></p> <p><a href="#">Respect, Reflect, Relate</a></p> <p><a href="#">Creating environments that intrigue and delight</a></p>
<p><b>Educators will use pedagogical documentation to strengthen the planning cycle.</b></p>	<p>1.3 6.1.2</p>	<p>29/01/2024</p>	<p>Directors will guide professional inquiry, building knowledge and critically reflecting on practice.</p>	<p>EYLF <a href="#">Assessment and evaluation for learning, development and wellbeing</a></p>



			<p>Educators will participate in professional learning and use pedagogical documentation to inform curriculum decision making</p> <p>Educators will engage with families, sharing their children's progress and theories, while seeking family input on their wonderings, values, beliefs and view of their child's development.</p>	<p><a href="#">EYLF Planning Cycle</a></p> <p><a href="#">Leading teaching and learning with Pedagogical Documentation</a></p> <p><a href="#">Pedagogical documentation as a rich source of assessment</a></p> <p><a href="#">What's pedagogy anyway? Using pedagogical documentation to engage with the EYLF</a></p> <p><a href="#">ACECQA Building Partnerships with Families</a></p> <p>David Gilkes – A culture of Inquiry PD series</p> <p>NNK - Guiding prompts and questions for educators to use when sharing analysis conversations.</p>
<p><b>Educators will actively build their collective pedagogical leadership capacity.</b></p>	<p>7.2 4.2 1.3</p>	<p>29/01/2024</p>	<p>Directors will engage in communities of practice – reflecting, challenging, researching, collaborating and building improved understandings and practice.</p> <p>Directors will support and challenge educators through mentoring and coaching conversations.</p>	<p>From Teaching to thinking, Ann Pelo and Margie Carter</p> <p><a href="#">Leading practice paper 3: leadership in early childhood</a></p> <p><a href="#">Leading practice paper 4: reflective practice</a></p> <p>EYLF <a href="#">Collaborative leadership and teamwork</a></p>

			Educators will regularly meet to reflect and discuss professional readings and practices.	EYLF <a href="#">Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning</a> ,  David Gilkes – A culture of Inquiry PD series  <a href="#">Our strategy for public education in South Australia</a>
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**Goal 1:** Extend children’s ability to communicate their thinking and ideas with others.

 **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	<b>Evidence</b> Are we doing what we said we would do? Are we improving children’s learning? How do we know which actions have been effective?	<b>What are our next steps?                      Potential adjustments?</b>
	 Needs attention/work in progress		
Date your notes to ensure you track and monitor adjustments and progress of your plan			
<b>Educators will build understandings of and refine their practice in sustained shared thinking and child led inquiry.</b>	5/4/2024 – Term 1, Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Educators engaged with David Gilkes, exploring inquiry and learning environments on numerous occasions. Educators identified their lack of confidence and deep knowledge of inquiry processes. They engaged in deep data collection through observation and shared conversation with children to build a picture of the children’s predominate inquiries.</li> <li>● Educators reengaged with David having a stronger sense of the children’s inquiries and the basic principles. They trialled the process with shared documentation showing increased understandings, but some educators are still not confident.</li> </ul>	Kara and Nat to model and bring other educators voices in until they are ready to try for themselves. <i>Term 2 Action Plan</i>  Kara to share readings and PD to support educators to build understandings and confidence.




		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mud kitchen has been flagged by educators as an area for redevelopment. There is no space for children to work opposite, only alongside, and there is no seating, so children tend to come and go.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Educators will use pedagogical documentation to strengthen the planning cycle.</b></p>	<p>24/1/24 – Term 1, Week 0</p> <p>5/4/2024 – Term 1, Week 10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Educators formed shared agreements on continued use of One Note and Teams for sharing and documenting, as well as the continuation and strengthening of our Analysis conversations and reporting back.</li> <li>● Educators lacking confidence in documenting inquiry exploration with children.</li> <li>● All educators visible in shared documentation</li> <li>● Some great examples of raw documentation, but some lacking detail or depth for critical reflection and effective analysis.</li> <li>● Kara collated observations and analysis data for educators to note as we begin Term 2. Some children have minimal observations compared to others (mainly due to time away from Kindy), educators to make them a focus this term.</li> </ul>	<p>Explore inquiry through David Gilkes and add to once educators identify specific needs.</p> <p>Kara to provide examples of raw observations and data, ensuring the educators voice is included as well as the child's. Filming as a strategy for in depth conversations.</p> <p>ECW's provided 30 minutes NIT per day of work to ensure their observations have the same level of detail. <i>Added to roster clearly for all to see and enact.</i></p>
<p><b>Educators will actively build their collective pedagogical leadership capacity.</b></p>	<p>5/4/2024 – Term 1, Week 10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● IESP mapping and data has been a driving force for this area of improvement. Self-regulation, Social skills and Speech are our highest</li> </ul>	<p>Kara to upskill educators in data collection processes for IESP mapping. Initial focus on Speech and Social skills. <i>Allocated to educator meetings.</i></p>

areas of need and on reflection are all interconnected.

- Educators have collectively refined and increased engagement with this already embedded process.
- Nat researched and led planning and implementation on a wholistic self-regulation focus, encompassing CPC, Kimochis and basics of zones of regulation. Educators were upskilled, families provided detailed overviews and explanations.
- The improvements in children's abilities to co-regulate has been impressive along with educators using the same language and responding consistently to children's needs. Families are also noting children using the language and strategies at home.
- Kara collected the majority of background assessment/data or sought outside support for this.
- Meg effectively leading Playgroup and upskilling and sharing knowledge with Karen. Karen successfully took Playgroup while we were on excursion.

**Goal 1: Extend children’s ability to communicate their thinking and ideas with others.**

 **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?**

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?**

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## National Quality Standard priorities




Priority	NQS links	Key steps	Timeline	Resources	Roles & Responsibilities
<b>Strengthen family engagement in children's learning</b>	6.1 6.2.3	<p>Key educators will engage in the B-3 network, building their knowledge and transferring to programs on site.</p> <p>Playgroup will continue on Fridays, being led by Meg and supported by the teachers.</p>	13/02/2024	<p><a href="#">EYLF Principles- secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships,</a></p> <p><a href="#">EYLF Principle - Partnerships</a></p> <p><a href="#">EYLF Practice- cultural responsiveness</a></p>	<p>Directors to ensure PD is accessible, budgeted for and improved practice implemented.</p> <p>Kara/Nat, Meg and Karen to attend PD, reflect on practices and implement new ideas and knowledge.</p> <p>Meg to continue Coordinating Playgroup, upskilling Karen as Supporting facilitator and new staff of processes.</p>
<b>Improve collaborative partnerships with feeder sites to strengthen continuity of learning and transition process</b>	6.2	<p>Timeline proposal transition handover of information</p> <p>Regulation consistency</p> <p>Shared understanding on supporting ASD learners</p>	29/04/2024	<p>ECL/PC</p> <p>Continuity of learning</p> <p>Educator shared inquiry K and JP</p> <p>Shared agreements</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
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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				
<b>Strengthen family engagement in children's learning</b>	<p>24/1/2024 – Week 0</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration with Families Timeline reviewed and adjusted.</li> </ul> <p>5/4/24 – Term 1 Week 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playgroup began in Week 3, with us reaching capacity mid-way through the term if all attended.</li> <li>• Planning for Term 2, families were asked to book in, with it booking out within a week – 44 children, roughly 35 families.</li> <li>• Waiting list established. After 2 sessions are missed, Meg will check in and see if families plan to continue or will offer the spot to someone on the waiting list.</li> </ul>		<p>Families aware of educator plans and educators accountable to agreed sharing timeline.</p> <p>Families in the community are welcomed into the Kindy. They are supported by each other and educators.</p> <p>Educators model interactions with children and share achievements and milestones.</p> <p>Educators are also able to have initial conversations around early intervention as noticed.</p>	<p>Enact Timeline and ensure all actions are completed.</p> <p>Seek family feedback in Term 2 on effectiveness of sharing processes. – in <i>Educator Agenda wk4 T2</i></p> <p>Educators reflect on feedback and timeline and refine prior to Intake 2. <i>Educator Agenda Wk 8 T2</i></p> <p>Kara to work with Meg on baby specific planning as we have a higher number of babies registered. Consider resources, space and baby</p>



			<p>specific group time. <i>Term 2 Week 2 Educator Meeting.</i></p>
<p><b>Improve collaborative partnerships with feeder sites to strengthen continuity of learning and transition process</b></p>	<p>5/4/24 – Term 1 Week 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IESP mapping data shared with Paul mid term to support class planning for mid-year intake.</li> <li>• Both schools (NPS and NSPS) principals contacted to establish extended transition for identified children, and for all children as 2 days is not long enough to build connections with educators and familiarity with the environment and routines.</li> <li>• Paul (NPS) facilitated extended transition conversation with Andrea and Emma – thorough plan developed which is responsive to children’s needs with wave 1 and 2 processes included.</li> <li>• IESP planning for Wratttonbully – shared our processes with MDMK and both schools. Confident this process transitioning into school will be positive for children’s needs being tracked and monitored, not just their academics, which won’t develop if these key foundations are not acknowledged. <b>Schools need time to process and support to see how this fits the needs of children, also how practice may need to adjust to address and meet some of these needs.</b></li> </ul>	<p>Initial Educator and family feedback on 2 set transition days has been negative – not about the children’s needs, feeling is it is about school meeting their own needs (staffing).</p> <p>Additional transition plans with NPS have been well received by all parents, with many reaffirming the focus being on children and making the transition successful being clear.</p> <p>This collaboration is a huge positive step and showing a shared responsive approach to children’s needs and creating a positive start to school.</p>	<p>Educators to begin own inquiry into effective transitions, focus on what children need to be familiar with and exposed to for them to be successful – DFE transition document as starting point. <i>Term 1 Week 4 Friday Admin</i></p> <p>Educators to follow established transition plans, reflecting and adjusting as needed, ensuring we clearly share information and advocate for our children along the way.</p> <p>Kara to continue discussions with Wratttonbully Leaders, maintaining focus on the needs of all children and the focus on wellbeing being vital for any other success at school. Possible inquiry focus for project.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A plan for one child attending NSPS to have some additional visits was established, with a request to consider some familiarisation time for all children attending.</li></ul>		
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**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?**

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

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**Recommendations: What are the next steps to take?**

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# Endorsements

Endorsed by director/principal

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<b>Date</b> Click or tap to enter a date.

Signature:

Endorsed by governing council chairperson

<b>Name</b> Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Date</b> Click or tap to enter a date.

Signature:

Endorsed by education director

<b>Name</b> Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Date</b> Click or tap to enter a date.

Signature:



**Government of South Australia**  
Department for Education