

Educators - *Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.*

A service reviewed what the NQF Guide said about element 3.1.2 and understood there were two parts to the element to ensure the safety and health of all children and staff:

1. Effective cleaning practices
2. Effective maintenance practices.

Case Study – Children maintaining safety and cleanliness

There are two very interesting parts to this element. First, when you first look at this element it seems boring and no more than a series of checklists to ensure the environment is safe and clean, but when you think outside the square and reflect upon how you can involve the children it can become exciting. This is where the second part relating to our philosophy connects. Most philosophies say something about seeing the child as ‘capable’ but is this our actual practice? Does it match the philosophy?

On many occasions services run great play and learning sessions, but once the care routine kicks in the educators jump to and, for example, start serving the children’s food or making their beds, often using the excuse ‘it’s quicker for us to do it.’



What are young children capable of doing to help with this element?

Case Study

At one service Friday is cleaning day so they use the opportunity to get the kids involved with the jobs.

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For example, skirting boards and chairs are all scrubbed. The children enjoy the activity, and it helps them feel like they belong when they’re given real responsibility, as well as teaching them to care for their environment.

How do you currently involve the children in cleaning?

All cleaning should be completed with the children. One complaint I hear a lot is educators saying they don’t have enough time to do things. I say they’re not getting the children to help with what’s needed. The examples below are all from babies’ rooms, so please be inspired to get your children of all ages to help clean their learning environment and equipment.



Cleaning



During afternoon tea, Toby began to clean his highchair with his washer before hopping out. Once everyone was finished eating, Cody (educator) asked Toby if he would like to help clean. Toby quickly walked over to grab a cloth. Toby showed his capabilities and

independence cleaning, while Cody maintained high expectations by encouraging him to help. Toby made sure there were no stains or crumbs left and persisted until the tables were clean. Thanks for the help Toby. We will continue to model and encourage these hygiene practices into our daily routine.



After morning tea the children washed their own plates, showing us just how much they enjoy taking responsibility and using the kinds of

equipment they see grown-ups using all the time. They even waited patiently to have their turn. Olivia enjoyed the activity so much she got extra plates off the trolley to wash. Perhaps we could use her in the kitchen.

Where can you improve your practices by including the children in room cleaning?

Maintenance

A centre obtained a large part of a tree recently cut down by the local council, and placed it in their yard. As the months went on and natural decay occurred,

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the bark started to peel from the log revealing very spiky nodules which cut children while they played on the log. Something needed to be done about this. Above is a child cutting off the spiky nodules under an educator's guidance.



Today Kodie discussed fire safety issues with Tully, Stella and Nate and involved them in completing a fire safety checklist (LO 3.2) within our room. The children first looked at the fire extinguisher. "This is our fire extinguisher," Kodie explained. "Can you check to

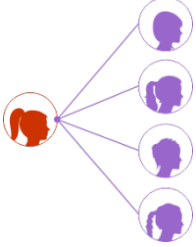
see that it's good and up to date?" Stella pressed her ear against the fire extinguisher. "It good Kodie" Stella responded. Tully and Nate both nodded their heads recognising the contributions they make to shared projects and experiences. "It's all good" agreed Kodie as she checked the tag. "Let's have a look at our emergency evacuation plan" said Kodie as she pulled the plan down from the wall and handed it to Stella. Tully and Nate watched as Kodie pointed to the plan and said "this shows what we do and where we go if there's a fire or fire drill in the centre."

What safety and maintenance checklist can you complete with your children? What barriers do you have in doing this?



The EYLF and MTOP says “Critical reflection involves closely examining all aspects of events and experiences from different perspectives.” Pick one of the following reflection points to complete the table below:

- Could we make the outdoor play space more engaging for children in a safe and low maintenance way (included in Improvement example)?
- Is training needed to ensure all staff understand and follow our cleaning and/or maintenance procedures?
- Are budgeting issues impacting the effective cleaning and maintenance of the service?

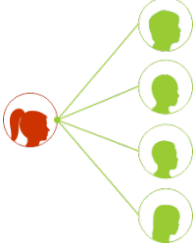
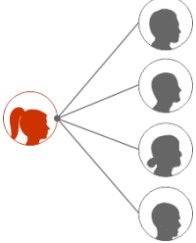
Critically reflect through the eyes of:	Write your critical reflection below	What changes did you or will you make because of the reflection?
 <p>a child</p>	<p>It'd be more fun outside if we had some new things to play with.</p>	<p>The EL, having recently reviewed information about Alexander's 'Thinking Keys', discussed these with educators and they decided to use a couple of the Keys with the children eg The Disadvantages Key and the Bar Key.</p>
 <p>an educator</p>	<p>It would be good if we could make the outdoor play area more stimulating for children and add some new elements.</p>	<p>After several conversations the children suggested adding stepping stones through the play area. Educators then used the Brainstorming Key with the children who suggested they make their own stepping stones.</p>
 <p>your families</p>	<p>The playground's a bit boring. I've seen play areas in some centres that I would like to spend time in!</p>	<p>Educators then reflected on how to do this safely and in a way that would be easy to maintain. Miss Angie suggested researching Kidsafe resources, and they found a 'Steeping Stones' Information Sheet which included a stepping stone 'recipe.'</p>
 <p>theorist and current research</p>	<p>Lloyd Alexander developed what he called “thinking keys” to help us look for answers to a question. Some of these may help find ideas to refresh the playground. (We discuss the Keys more in the Educational Leader section.)</p>	<p>Educators then reflected on how to do this safely and in a way that would be easy to maintain. Miss Angie suggested researching Kidsafe resources, and they found a 'Steeping Stones' Information Sheet which included a stepping stone 'recipe.'</p>

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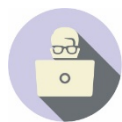


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 <p>an educator</p>		
 <p>your families</p>		
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Complete your QIP

The information you write below can go directly into your QIP or Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) (NSW ONLY)
Instructions

For a MEETING QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)	For Exceeding the QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)
<i>Please give an example of the actions you took (or would take) when you found something broken/damaged in the building or grounds.</i>	<i>Please discuss how educators contribute to ensuring outdoor/indoor spaces are always safe, clean and well-maintained.</i>
<i>Please give an example of a scheduled cleaning procedure you regularly implement (ie discuss what's involved), and what you do when there's been a spill or an area looks visibly dirty.</i>	<i>Please discuss how any changes to the design, use or maintenance of indoor/outdoor spaces made by managers or other educators/staff are communicated to all employees and volunteers so everyone understands what they are, why things have changed and how to implement the changes properly.</i>
<i>Please give an example or explain what you would do before allowing children to use a new, potentially dangerous tool or piece of equipment.</i>	<i>Please discuss how families or the local community have been encouraged to support the maintenance, hygiene or safety of the physical environment at the service. Include any actions you've taken to involve families or the community.</i>
If you cannot answer these questions above the you are not meeting. This means you need to create an improvement plan and make changes to your practice	If you cannot answer these questions above the you are not exceeding. This means you need to create an improvement plan and make changes to your practice

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Checklist

Why are you doing the checklist?

The practices identified in the checklist are what the assessor needs to see you do so they can check you're 'meeting the NQS.' If you embed all the things in the checklist, then you are meeting the Element 3.1.2. If there's something on the checklist that you're not doing, then you need to either adjust your practice to do it, or ask for help and training to do what's on the checklist ie work with your educational leader or room leader who should teach/coach you how to do it.

The checklist keys to use.

E = Embedded I do that **ALL** the time

K = I know I need to do that, but I don't do it all the time

T = Please teach me how to do it or improve my understanding of why I need to do it.

Name Educator 1	
Name Educator 2	
Name Educator 3	
Name Educator 4	
Name Educator 5	

Cleaning

Are you familiar with all service cleaning procedures including those for the bathroom, toilet, nappy change areas, rooms, high chairs, toys, cots/ stretchers/beds and sandpit?

Do you diligently implement service cleaning schedules as rostered/required?

Do you know how to properly clean up spills of blood or other body fluids?

Maintenance

Do you diligently complete daily safety checks of indoor and outdoor areas using a checklist when assigned this task?

Do you complete risk assessments to remove or minimise risks in the environment, including for potentially dangerous equipment/furniture?

Do you know and implement your centre's maintenance procedure when you find broken/damaged resources, premises or equipment?

Do you immediately remove broken/damaged resources, premises or equipment, or make sure children can't access them?

Do you follow safety advice from recognised authorities and manufacturers when arranging, securing or using equipment and furniture eg anchoring furniture and equipment?