

Educators

Looking at the element in detail - A service reviewed what the NQF Guide said about element 4.1.1 and understood the effective organisation of educators:

- supports children to engage in meaningful learning and interactions with educators
- ensures the safety and wellbeing of children.

Supporting children to engage in meaningful learning and ensuring their wellbeing

One of the things Services should consider when organising educators is where individual educator strengths can best be used. It's important that your strengths and interests are known, for example, to the Nominated Supervisor who organises room/group staffing, and to the Room/Group Leader who can take these into consideration when organising daily routines and assisting with learning activities.

Positive relationships and meaningful learning outcomes are much more likely when educators get to use what they love or what they're good at. Here are some example from one Service who made sure they used their educators' strengths in the best way to support children's learning and wellbeing:

- one educator uses the skills she gained as a cartographer (map maker) in a previous career to enhance the toddlers' learning. For example, they learn about maps and things related to maps like addresses in case of emergencies, the new word 'address' (added to the new words list), how numbers work with street names, the most common street names in Australia ('George, William, Church and High Street,') symbols which represent map features, who lives in their home, roundabouts,

service stations, shopping centres and car park design features in shopping centres

- another educator loves connecting with local community organisations and businesses and uses this to organise many excursions into the local community. For example, she organised an excursion to the local coffee shop where they chatted with the owner Adam about how beans are roasted, where they come from (Rwanda, Ethiopia and Brazil), which continents those countries are from, that Brazil is located in South America which has icebergs at the bottom. This led to a discussion about an iceberg sinking the Titanic and the ethics behind which passengers were allowed to board the lifeboats. The children expressed their views on whether they would use the same methods of prioritising access to the lifeboats.
- one educator moved back into the preschool room to help engage a group of active boys in physical activities which met their needs. He's a football player in the local team and often runs physical activities using his football coaching skills and drills to promote the children's concentration and physical co-ordination
- one educator recently moved from the Preschool Room to the Toddlers room after she reflected with her Preschool Room Leader that that the preschool room was not the best location or age group for her to use her natural nurturing skills.

Are your strengths and interests used to advantage in your current role? If not, what action might you take?

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Gillies and Deleuzian Theory

This week in the Educational Leader's section we talk about Deleuzian Theory. Deleuze says we manage our complex world by grouping people or things we see. Whether we organise these groups with strict boundaries (eg babies' activities/preschool activities) or with a more flexible approach (eg preschool activities but babies can participate) has an impact on the learning opportunities available to children and their sense of belonging.

Helping with daily tasks

Haley was busy setting up our yard for outdoor play this morning and using the blower to clear the space free of sand and leaves to create a safe space for the babies to explore.

After blowing a bunch of leaves from one section, Haley placed the blower on the ground to reset the climbing equipment.



Alex saw the blower lying on the ground when he stepped outside, racing over to pick it up. When picking the blower up with its handle, Alex found the button to make it go and without hesitation he pushed it with a smile,

watching as the remaining leaves and sand blew away from the end of the blower's spout.

Haley was surprised to discover how much Alex knew just from watching her for that short amount of time, or perhaps he's observed his mum and dad completing the same task at home? Maybe he helps mum and dad as well? With Alex's interest and curiosity in mind, Haley took this as an opportunity to challenge and support the children to engage in and persevere at tasks and play by encouraging Alex and his peers to continue with the yard clean up. We can see how children often want to be just like us, completing tasks that we do daily as they explore their world and extend their understanding of why we do things and how they benefit us. Providing children with opportunities to explore with items they may not normally have access to prompts them to reflect on why things happen and what can be learnt from these experiences.



With Haley's encouragement Levi, Olivia and Cody all took the blower into their hand, pushed the trigger and watched as the leaves and sand blew away. "Great work, everyone! Have a look. Our yard is almost clean. Can you see all the

leaves and sand blowing away?" asked Haley. Even though for some children the noise was a little daunting, they persisted even when they found the task difficult, and showed their curiosity and enthusiasm while participating in their learning.

See in the above example how Haley has removed the concepts and boundaries placed upon young babies' capabilities to ensure they can participate and have a sense of belonging.

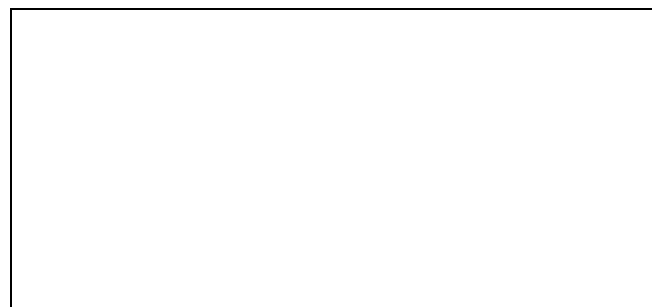
Ask your Educational Leader to discuss this with you in more detail and maybe reflect on your approach.

Ensuring children's safety

Educators must be organised so minimum educator to child ratios are always maintained. Remember ratios are calculated across the whole Service, not per room/group, and where there are mixed ages attending they're based on the youngest children in care. You must understand the required ratios, and how to make sure these are maintained during, for example, educator breaks, shift changeovers and when educators leave due to illness.

Also remember Services can be meeting minimum ratios but not providing adequate supervision. Educators must also be organised in ways which promote adequate supervision ie by considering individual educator's experience, qualifications and knowledge of each child and age group.

How do you monitor ratios? Is there information you need to do this properly? What action will you take?



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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:

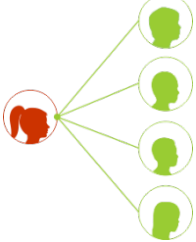
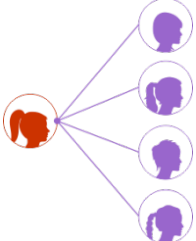
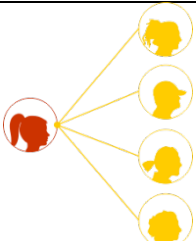
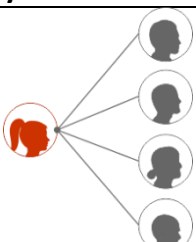
- How much do you really know about the interests and strengths of other educators at the Service? How could you increase your understanding?
- How could you improve your communication with families about educators’ strengths or staffing changes?
- Could you be limiting children’s potential learning by excluding them from certain activities or experiences based on their age, gender, ethnicity etc (included in QIP improvement plan)?

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>	What’s in the new boxes? I want to explore.	After reflecting, Room Leader Haley encouraged educators to think outside their rigid ideas about what babies can do and engage with them in an ‘unboxing’ experience.
<p>an educator</p>	Our new prams arrived in the post yesterday. I guess we’ll be ‘unboxing’ and assembling them in our ‘spare’ time when the children aren’t here.	Educators found the babies accepted the invitation to explore and learn eg by sitting down with the little manual booklet and flicking through the pages. Educators offered the babies the chance to help build the prams, showing them where parts needed to go, and lining the parts up before encouraging them to manipulate objects and experiment with cause and effect, trial and error, and motion as they pushed, pulled and giggled parts into place.
<p>your families</p>	Hamish has been saying ‘big box’ all evening. I wonder what he’s talking about. Did he play with a big box today?	
<p>theorist and current research</p>	<p>Deleuze says when people interact with others and the world they automatically group people and objects in 1 of 3 ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigid ‘this or that’ groups with predefined outcomes • Supple groups which allow some ‘leakages’ from rigid groups • Flexible groups – the opposite extreme to rigid groups with potential for new, different and unknown outcomes. 	



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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>an educator</p>		
 <p>your families</p>		
 <p>theorist and current research</p>		



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 how the organisation of educators supports children's learning eg which rooms/groups educators are in, number of educators in rooms/groups, responsibilities allocated to educators, non-contact time.</i>	<i>Please discuss how the organisation of educators, including relief educators, consistently aligns with the service philosophy, policies and procedures.</i>
<i>Please give an example showing the way educators are organised supports children's safety and supervision.</i>	<i>Please discuss any changes that have been made to the organisation of educators to enhance children's learning outcomes and why the changes were made eg continuity, qualifications, strengths.</i>
<i>Please give an example showing the way educators are organised supports the development of professional relationships and communication with families.</i>	<i>Please discuss how the organisation of educators reflects the unique geographical, cultural and community context of the service.</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	

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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 4.1.1. 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	

Practice	ED1	ED2	ED3	ED4	ED5
Do you ensure ratios are always maintained eg when you or other educators take breaks for meals, programming, administration, interviews?					
Do you always follow a playground supervision plan if there is one?					
Do you actively support/coach/mentor new or relief staff so they quickly become valued and effective team members?					
Communication and Reflection					
Do you share any ideas you have about organising educators more effectively to enhance communication with families, supervision or learning, including during room/group set ups or pack ups, with your Room/Group Leader or Nominated Supervisor?					
Do you make sure your interests and strengths are known and used in the best way eg love working with babies so in Nursery room, love gardening or cooking so involved in these activities?					
Do you talk to families about the organisation of educators and pass on their views to the Nominated Supervisor eg Danni's mum says Miss Tehanna seems to love doing quite involved science experiments with the older children?					
Do you communicate educator changes in your room/group to families before they occur or as soon as possible eg at morning drop offs?					
Do you share your concerns about any extra staffing needs required to support children with additional requirements with your Room/Group Leader or Nominated Supervisor?					

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