



Educational Leader

There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.

Looking at the element in detail - A service reviewed what the NQF Guide said about element 7.1.3 and understood educators should have a clear understanding of:

- their roles, responsibilities and expectations for their performance
- the staffing structure.

This week we continue with our review of the article about inclusive practices discussed from a behaviour management perspective – also an essential part of an educator’s role and responsibilities. We review scenarios 4 to 6. Remember the rationales discussed are the ‘Essentialist’ and the ‘Relational’ summarised below.

Issue	Essentialist	Relational
Identity	Stable & determines how we act	Fluid & shaped by continual interactions
Social rules & norms	Consists of a basic structure	Varies between & within different groups
Social competence	Know & act in line with basic structure	Know & act in ways suitable for specific context.
Problem identification	Problem children lack social competencies	The conditions to build child-teacher & child-child interactions are not suitable
Level of problem	Individual	Structural & interactions
Strategy for solving problems	Changing the conduct & personality of children. If too demanding, removing children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflexive pedagogy* • Better conditions eg ratios

Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More (rigid) rules, structures & limits • Observation schemes for diagnosis • Special institutions or groups for problem children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking critically at one’s own contribution to the interaction • Clear communication about expectations & demands • Small groups for all children
Value orientation	Children assimilate & submit to existing conditions & social order.	Inclusion, addressing equality, mutual recognition, social justice & participation.

Scenario Four: constructing the possibility of inclusion through reflexive pedagogy

“We wanted to become better at integrating the acting-out children... our supervisor suggested that we should work with all the children in smaller groups. ... She videotaped our work,...and we had some very thought-provoking and instructive discussions... when I work with these small groups and recognise their good behaviour rather than yelling and scolding...the reaction is very good. I don’t need to scold the children. What we try to do now is to take ourselves, our wishes as points of departure: I would like you to ... rather than: Stop doing that! The children look quite astonished at us. You see, that is such changes in maybe some teachers’ attitude, such a different way of approaching the children...”

Points to note:

- focus on interactions and teachers’ reactions
- move from demanding children adjust and meet required rules, to teacher practices which remove some of the teacher/child power imbalance and promote inclusion.

Scenario 5: conflicting rationales

“Our supervisor drew our attention towards the cultural codes, that we expect the children to understand, and towards the fact that some of the children might have different codes – and that was kind of an eye-opener. I

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can give you an example. I came into the room and saw a child who was doing something that he was not allowed to. Normally, when one comes into the room and watches some children, and they look up and see you, they stop doing what they very well know that they are not allowed to. However, this boy didn't. And then I wondered: Why...Is something in our communication going wrong? Why do I have to hold him and tell him that he should not do what he is doing?..."

Points to note. The teacher:

- assumes their way of doing things is better than the child's 'cultural code' – because their social norms etc are the only correct ones
- enforces a power imbalance by holding the child and telling him how to behave
- focuses on the child's problems even though prompted to consider communication and different social norms by the supervisor.

Scenario 6: constructing a need for diagnoses

"Most observation schemes focus on identification of lacking abilities which we then have to work on. This one is different as it focuses on the child as a person, and that has been fantastic to look at children in a broader way. It has provided the staff with a pedagogical tool that is that you are able to see: Well, we knew very well that he was good at speaking. However, actually he also has a very good imagination. We can use that to help him regarding his problems about being allowed by the other children to take part in their games. He usually hits them rather than asks them. But then we can use that he is good at speaking and has a good imagination to develop his competences regarding successful interaction with the other children."

Points to note:

- it's assumed teachers need to work individually with each child, supported by broad observations which focus on the child as a person rather than focusing on the abilities they may lack
- this approach focuses on the child rather than on teacher/child relationships.

Do you think these scenarios show essentialist or relational practices? Why? (Not all scenarios may be the same.)

How could you help educators change their focus from the child's behaviour to their interactions and practices – and what they could potentially change?

Source Hanne Warming (2011) Inclusive discourses in early childhood education International Journal of Inclusive Education, 15:2, 233-247

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Staffing Arrangements Policy

Policy includes requirements:

- for adequately supervising children and the issues which affect adequate supervision
- for always supervising educators under 18 years of age
- ensuring students and volunteers are never left alone with any child
- that a 'Responsible Person' is always present (ie approved provider, nominated supervisor or person in day to day charge) and they have suitable skills, experience and fitness
- that Responsible Persons implement a hand over procedure when they leave and another Responsible Person takes over
- for educators, Educational Leader and Early Childhood Teachers (ECTs) - including minimum ratios and qualifications
- for first aid qualifications and child protection clearances
- for fitness and propriety in persons dealing with Child Care Subsidy
- to design and implement rosters which promote continuity of care.

Do you have any feedback or comments about this policy? Please include below.

Educator's Name	Educator's Signature