



We can solve problems with practice with the help of the NQS



The NQS can guide our critical reflections



The NQS is what we assess against to write our QIPs



The NQS is what assessors assess us against to write their A&R report



Families can make a choice based on our NQS rating

How are the National Quality Standards used by stakeholders?



Educators

3.2.3 Environmentally responsible –*The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.*

Looking at the element in detail - A service reviewed what the NQF Guide said about element 3.2.3 and it includes:

- teaching children about their responsibility to respect and care for the natural environment in a sustainable way and
- implementing sustainable practices at the Service.



Solving Problems with the NQS

Problem the element can 'solve' – Weather events resulting from climate change impacting children's

Week 32, 17 October – 21 October 2022 – 3.2.3 Environmentally responsible

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mental health and wellbeing eg unable to engage in usual play/activities.

Aim: Children supported to understand impacts of climate change and participate in engaging and diverse activities and play.

What to do: Go to NQS element 3.2.3

Select just one point from the element that could help guide or change your practice.

Assessors may observe

- *children being given opportunities to increase their knowledge of and respect for natural and constructed environments, and awareness of the interdependence of living things.*

Reflect and think about the point in relation to climate change events eg floods, fires.

Practice change – We’ve had local floods and wet weather for months which prompted reflection about engaging outdoor activities that would be fun for children and provide opportunities for learning about environmental issues. Resulting from our reflections, the Approved Provider supported the construction of a frog pond in the outdoor environment. The children can’t wait to get out there and look for the frogs and tadpoles, and have been learning a lot, for example, about frog habitats/life cycles and how weather can impact these.

Problem to improve upon – we have a growing pile of lost clothing.

Aim: Clothing which is not collected by families does not just go to landfill.

What to do: Go to NQS element 3.2.3

Select just one point from the element that could help guide or change your practice.

Assessors may discuss

- *the development and implementation of strategies to support children to be environmentally responsible and to show respect for the environment (page 203 NQF Guide)*

Reflect and think about the point in relation to recycling lost clothing.

Practice change – Discussion at a staff meeting led to suggestions for a ‘swap-and -go’ clothing rack located in the foyer. Lost clothing is displayed, and families can also add their child’s outgrown clothing and ‘swap’ it for larger items. Educators are using the system to teach children about the ‘circular economy.’

From the list below, select a point and explore how you could improve children’s learning about sustainability and caring for the environment when:

- dealing with adverse weather events
- redesigning/reorganising indoor and outdoor spaces

- sourcing new resources
- implementing daily routines
- interacting with community members and families
- planning activities and experiences.

What problem needs to be improved upon?

Aim (selected from the above points)

Select just one point from the NQS Element

Reflect and think about the point in relation to the problem.

Create a practice change

Week 32, 17 October – 21 October 2022 – 3.2.3 Environmentally responsible



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 there's something on the checklist that you're not doing, you need to adjust your practice to do it, or ask for help and training to implement it ie work with your educational/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	

ED1 ED2 ED3 ED4 ED5

Do you implement activities and experiences which:

	ED1	ED2	ED3	ED4	ED5
• help children learn how living things depend on each other and their environment to survive and thrive?					
• help children appreciate, care for and learn more about natural and built environments?					
• help children learn more about plants, animals, insects and their habitats, including those native to Australia?					
• include First Nations' views and practices about caring for the environment?					
• help children learn more about the way people use and impact the natural environment eg microplastics, water conservation, dust storms, renewable energy (wind, solar, hydro), deforestation, erosion, farming, endangered animals/plants?					
• increase children's understanding of environmental issues, particularly those affecting your local community?					
• connect service operations with environmental responsibility eg monitoring electricity, gas, water usage, amount of rubbish going to landfill?					
• use spaces for activities that promote life skills like growing food and recycling?					
• include lots of diverse natural materials?					
• encourage families to participate in sustainable practices and caring for the environment eg energy efficient home appliances?					
Do you always model environmentally sustainable practices consistent with the activities and experiences in the program eg heating/cooling temperatures not set too high or low, recycling food/drink containers?					



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:

- Have children been really engaged in an activity related to caring for the environment? If yes, what made it so engaging? If no, what could you do to really engage their interest (eg see QIP/SAT improvement example)?
- First Nations people have successfully cared for the environment for thousands of years. How could you help children learn more about the cultural practices they implement to care for and respect the environment?
- Do you make the most of local geographical features to help children learn more about caring for the environment eg rivers, dams, bush reserves, bogs? How could you better use local resources to teach children more (eg see QIP/SAT improvement example)?

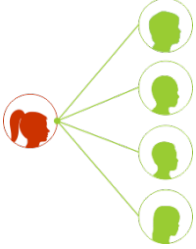
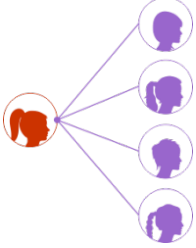
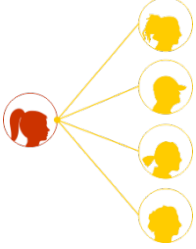
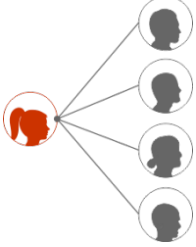
Critically reflect through the eyes of:	Write your critical reflection below	What changes did you or will you make because of the reflection?
<p>a child</p>	I'm really scared about what's happening in the world with all the floods and fires everywhere. I need to know more about the environment. What can I do? What can others do?	<p>The EL and educators reflected and decided they could implement more engaging activities to support children's understanding of caring for the environment.</p> <p>They decided to start regular excursions to the local park and to learn more about the plants, animals, insects and habitats there. This is leading to many exciting activities eg frog life cycles and habitats, and impact of poor water quality and rubbish.</p>
<p>an educator</p>	I'm not sure why we have to teach children about the environment on top of everything else.	
<p>your families</p>	The local park may not look like much but there's so much children could learn during visits there eg about the ecology of the pond, the life cycles and habitats of the local birds, impact of rubbish left by park visitors, types of plants adapted to local conditions.	
<p>theorist and current research</p>	Socio-cultural theorists like Rogoff, Fler, Malaguzzi and Vygotsky say children are active participants in their own learning – which often comes from activities related to their everyday lives.	

Week 32, 17 October – 21 October 2022 – 3.2.3 Environmentally responsible



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

Week 32, 17 October – 21 October 2022 – 3.2.3 Environmentally responsible



Complete your QIP

Instructions If you are happy with a Meeting rating you do not need to answer the Exceeding questions. Note if you can't answer all meeting questions you are not meeting the element, and you need to create an improvement plan and make changes to your practice.

If you are striving for an Exceeding rating, we suggest you answer all meeting and exceeding questions. You can copy your answers into your QIP, or SAT (NSW ONLY).

For a MEETING QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)	For Exceeding the QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)
<i>Please give an example of an activity or experience where children learnt about the impact of human activity on the environment and the effect this has on other living things.</i>	Embedded Practice <i>Please give an example showing how you or your team regularly organise child-directed activities promoting environmental awareness or responsibility. (see QIP/SAT Strength example)</i>
<i>Please give an example of the way you use spaces to promote life skills, for example, growing food and recycling.</i>	Critical Reflection <i>Please give an example showing you or your team reflecting on opportunities to support children's environmental awareness and responsibility. (see QIP/SAT Strength example)</i>
<i>Please give an example of an activity/experience where children learnt how living things depend on each other and the environment.</i>	Engagement with families and community <i>Please give an example of how you/your team support families to understand and engage in environmentally responsible and sustainable practices.</i>

Week 32, 17 October – 21 October 2022 – 3.2.3 Environmentally responsible