# 1.2.3 Child directed learning

*Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.*

Educators recognise children’s capabilities, and support and encourage children to:

1. make choices that support their own wellbeing and that of others
2. choose, plan for, and help set up play experiences and activities
3. develop skills in assessing risk.

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| To **MEET** QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) | TO **EXCEED** the QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) |
| *Please give a recent example of your children planning and setting up an activity they’ve chosen to implement.*  | ***Embedded Practice -*** *Please give an example of changes made in practice to support children’s agency (ie ability to make and implement choices and decisions.* |
| **Children Planning and Setting up an Activity:** Recently, our children showed interest in a "garden project". They decided to create a veggie patch. Educators facilitated the process by discussing what plants to grow and the materials needed. Children actively participated in preparing the garden beds, choosing seeds, and planting them under supervision. This initiative was entirely led by the children's curiosity and enthusiasm for gardening. | We introduced "choice boards" in our classrooms, allowing children to select activities based on their interests each day. This change supports children's agency by empowering them to make decisions about their learning. The boards are updated weekly with input from the children, reflecting their evolving interests and ideas. This approach was highlighted as a strength in our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) as it aligns with promoting child-directed learning. |
| *Please explain how you ensure all children are given opportunities to lead activities.* | *Please explain how your ‘child directed’ curriculum connects with your service Philosophy.* |
| **Ensuring Opportunities for All Children to Lead Activities:** To ensure all children have opportunities to lead, we rotate roles such as "activity leader" or "group leader" weekly. This allows every child to have a turn at leading an activity, choosing what it will be, and organising the setup with the help of their peers. Educators support by providing resources and guidance, ensuring every child feels included and has a chance to express their leadership abilities. | Our 'child-directed' curriculum deeply resonates with our service Philosophy, which emphasises respect for children's rights, individuality, and their role as active participants in learning. By allowing children to lead their educational journey, we embody our belief in fostering independence, curiosity, and a lifelong love for learning. This approach ensures that our practices are not just about providing education but nurturing confident, capable, and self-assured individuals. |
| *Please give a recent example of the way you supported children to manage their behaviours, and express their feelings and ideas, as they interacted and collaborated with their peers.* | ***Engagement with families and community****.Please give an example showing how you actively seek out and use the voices, and views of children throughout the day.* |
| **Supporting Children to Manage Behaviours and Express Feelings:** Following a recent biting incident, educators used it as an opportunity to discuss emotions and social interactions. We referred to our Behaviour Guidance Policy, using strategies like role-playing to explore feelings, empathy, and alternative ways to express frustration. Children were encouraged to articulate their feelings and taught to recognise and respect the emotions of others, fostering a supportive peer environment. | We utilise daily reflection journals where children can draw or write about their day, which are then shared with families. This practice not only gives children a voice but also engages families in their child's learning and experiences. Feedback from families is encouraged and used to adapt and enrich our program. This method of incorporating the voices and views of children throughout the day is a testament to our commitment to engaging with families and communities. |
| *Please give an example where you or your team supported children to assess and manage the risk involved in an activity or experience.* | *Please give an example of changes made in practice to support children’s agency (that is, the ability to make and implement choices and decisions.)*   |
| Educators support children to assess and manage the risk involved in an activity or experience. For example, when children: During a cooking activity, we guided the children in identifying potential risks like burns or cuts. We discussed safety measures, like using oven mitts and proper knife handling, enabling them to cook safely while learning important life skills. | Educators regularly make changes to practice to support children’s agency. For example, they: children’s agency, educators frequently adjust their teaching practices. They prioritize flexibility in their room and group routines, allowing for changes to occur as necessary. Educators incorporate spontaneous planning to better respond to children's interests and needs. They may also alter their teaching strategies to support children's learning. In addition, educators may arrange more excursions and walking outings to encourage children to explore their environment. |
| *Give an example showing how you or your team supported children’s attempts to gain new skills or knowledge.* | *How does your child directed curriculum reflect current recognised guidance on the most effective teaching practices?* |
| Educators support children’s attempts to gain new skills or knowledge. Examples include the following Our team facilitated a STEM project where children built simple machines. We supported their learning by introducing basic physics concepts and problem-solving strategies, encouraging experimentation with different materials to understand mechanics and motion. | Our child-directed curriculum reflects current recognised guidance on the most effective teaching practices. Socio-cultural Theory (e.g., Vygotsky, Malaguzzi, Rogoff, Fleer): Our curriculum places a strong emphasis on the social context of learning. We understand that children learn best through interactions within their community—both with adults and peers. Educators scaffold children's learning experiences, extending their knowledge and skills in a supportive manner.  |