

Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline

DRAFT



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Purpose

The *Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline* supports Kindergarten teachers' professional practice in a range of contexts across Queensland. The guideline is based on *The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF)* and embraces the vision that “all children experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life”.¹

The *EYLF* describes a vision of children's learning, characterised by:

- **belonging** — recognising that knowing where and with whom you belong is integral to human existence, providing a basis for children's interdependence and relationships with others
- **being** — recognising and valuing the “here and now” in children's lives, and viewing childhood as more than simply preparation for adulthood or for the future
- **becoming** — recognising the rapid and significant learning and development that occurs in the early years, and the capability and potential of all children.

While the *EYLF* focuses on children from birth to five years, the *Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline* aims to enrich children's learning in the Kindergarten Year. In Queensland, the Kindergarten Year is the year prior to the Preparatory Year of schooling.

The guideline provides specific advice to support Kindergarten teachers to:

- make deliberate and well-informed decisions to promote and enrich children's holistic learning and development
- build respectful relationships with partners, including children, parents, carers, communities and colleagues
- promote children's wellbeing, sense of belonging and ongoing learning progress
- interact with children, with a clear learning focus, in order to support learning
- effectively monitor and assess children's learning, and communicate appropriately with relevant partners about children's progress

- build connections between children's prior, current and future learning experiences to promote continuity of learning.

The guideline describes a set of five learning and development areas in terms of observable behaviours. These learning and development areas relate to the five broad learning outcomes identified in the *EYLF*:

- Children have a strong sense of identity.
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world.
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
- Children are confident and involved learners.
- Children are effective communicators.

This guideline also supports the national commitment to improving outcomes for Indigenous children by recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their traditions, histories and experiences prior to colonisation through to the present time.

The guideline strengthens children's appreciation and understanding of Australia's first peoples, and promotes learning about:

- Indigenous ways of knowing, being and learning
- contexts in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples live
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' contributions to Australian society and culture.

The Kindergarten program provides opportunities for teachers to explore and build their own and others' cultural competence, including making connections between aspects of Indigenous Australian culture and children's personal cultural heritages, and exploring relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Australia.



Partners include children; parents; carers; community members; colleagues and inter-agency support personnel, such as therapists, psychologists and social workers involved in prior-to-school, school and community settings.

Cultural competence is the ability to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures.

DEEWR, EYLF²

Perspectives and principles

The pedagogical perspectives that teachers adopt influence how effectively they promote children's sense of belonging, being and becoming. While there are many perspectives on learning and teaching, the *Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline* reflects the overarching view that interactions between children and adults shape learning.

In the learning and teaching relationship, the image of the competent and capable child goes hand-in-hand with an image of the capable, resourceful and creative teacher.³ Establishing strong connections between these images enables teachers to adopt insightful and effective practices.

Perspectives

The engaged child

Children are active learners who make sense of their world and themselves when they have opportunities to investigate and explore materials and ideas while interacting with people. Learning occurs as part of the social and cultural interactions between children and teachers, carers, families, community members and others.

The engaged child is characterised as a learner who is:

- competent, capable and creative
- secure, connected and respectful
- happy, playful and curious
- confident, motivated and involved
- a questioner, problem-poser and problem-solver
- empowered to express ideas and make choices about their learning.

Engaged learning and teaching

Children learn best when they take an active role in constructing their knowledge. Teachers play a vital role in supporting learning through positive social interactions, using responsive and culturally sensitive teaching practices.

This guideline adopts a holistic perspective of learning and teaching — one that promotes social, emotional, physical and cognitive wellbeing through integrated and interconnected learning.⁴

The engaged teacher

Resourceful, engaged teachers achieve a balance between their interactions with children, behind-the-scenes organisation of the learning environment, and ongoing professional reflection. They maintain a focus on the “here and now”, as well as children's long-term success. Their observations of and interactions with children inform their spontaneous and planned decisions.

The capable and creative teacher:

- takes both active and observational roles in children's play
- plans authentic learning experiences that hold meaning and interest for children
- is sensitive to the influence of children's changing feelings, needs and interests in learning
- creates a balance between child-initiated, co-constructed and teacher-initiated learning
- forms respectful relationships with children, families and other partners
- values children's rights to express ideas and opinions, share decision making and engage in reflection

Our image of the child is rich in potential, strong, powerful, competent, and most of all connected to adults and other children.

Loris Malaguzzi⁵

When teachers collaborate in children's learning, they are “deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and action”.

Iram Siraj-Blatchford⁶



- uses a range of intentional teaching strategies to promote deep learning, including co-construction, scaffolding, questioning, attentive listening and sustained shared thinking.

The engaged teacher is also a learner who:

- is culturally competent
- examines their own assumptions and understandings about children to ensure that all children have opportunities for educational success
- challenges children’s assumptions to promote empowerment, equity, fairness and social justice.

Principles

The pedagogical perspectives that teachers hold about children, learning and teaching, and their own roles shape the principles that guide professional practice.

The principles that guide Kindergarten teachers’ practice promote continuity in children’s learning by integrating and building on the principles and practices identified in the *EYLF* and that guide practice in P–3 contexts in Queensland.⁷

High expectations and equity

Children achieve when all partners hold high expectations and promote equity.

Respect for diversity

Respect for diverse social and cultural experiences builds connectedness.

Holistic learning

Children’s learning is holistic and connected.

Respectful relationships

Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships provide strong foundations for learning and development.

Continuity in learning

Continuity and connectedness between children’s past, present and future are essential for success in life and learning.

Shared decision making

Effective decision making involves active engagement with partners.

Intentional teaching

Intentional teaching extends children’s thinking and builds deep understanding.

Reflective practice

Engagement in ongoing reflective practice helps teachers to build understanding and examine assumptions and practices.

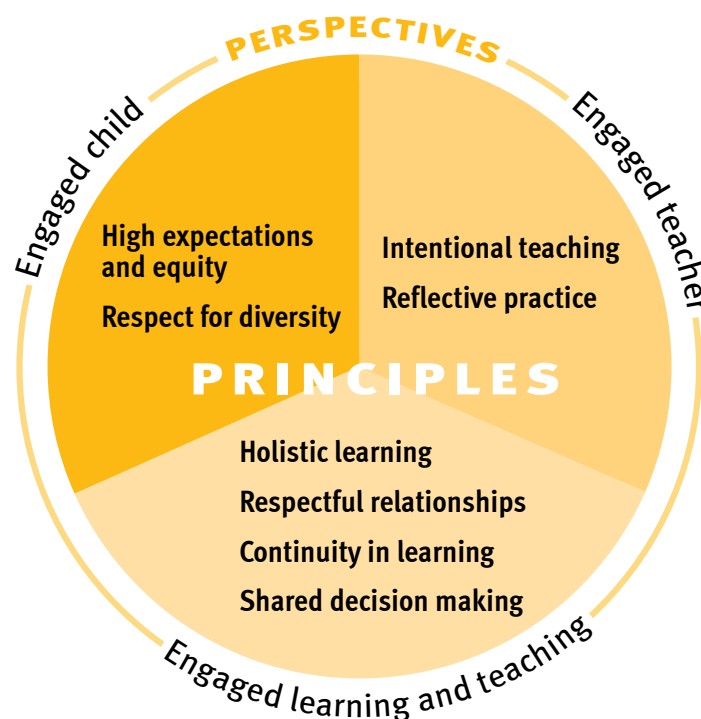


Figure 1:
Relationships between
perspectives and principles

Exploring decision-making practice

Making decisions about the Kindergarten program is a dynamic and challenging practice that involves teachers, children and their families. Perspectives about children, learning and teaching, and teachers' roles influence the myriad of decisions that teachers make every day about what they do, how they interact with and observe children, and the priorities they establish. Teachers make some decisions spontaneously in response to children, while others occur when reflecting on events over the course of the day or the week.

Teachers' decision making, as Figure 2 shows, is an integrated practice. It involves using a range of key decision-making processes:

- **planning** and organising for learning
- **interacting** and co-constructing learning
- **monitoring**, documenting and assessing children's learning
- **making judgments** and reporting on children's learning progress
- **reflecting** on learning and practice.

When teachers plan, interact, monitor, make judgments and reflect, they consider a number of key elements. These elements include:

- **responding** to children, families and communities
- building **partnerships**
- creating learning **environments**
- developing learning **contexts** — play, real-life engagements, and routines and transitions
- promoting children's **learning and development**.



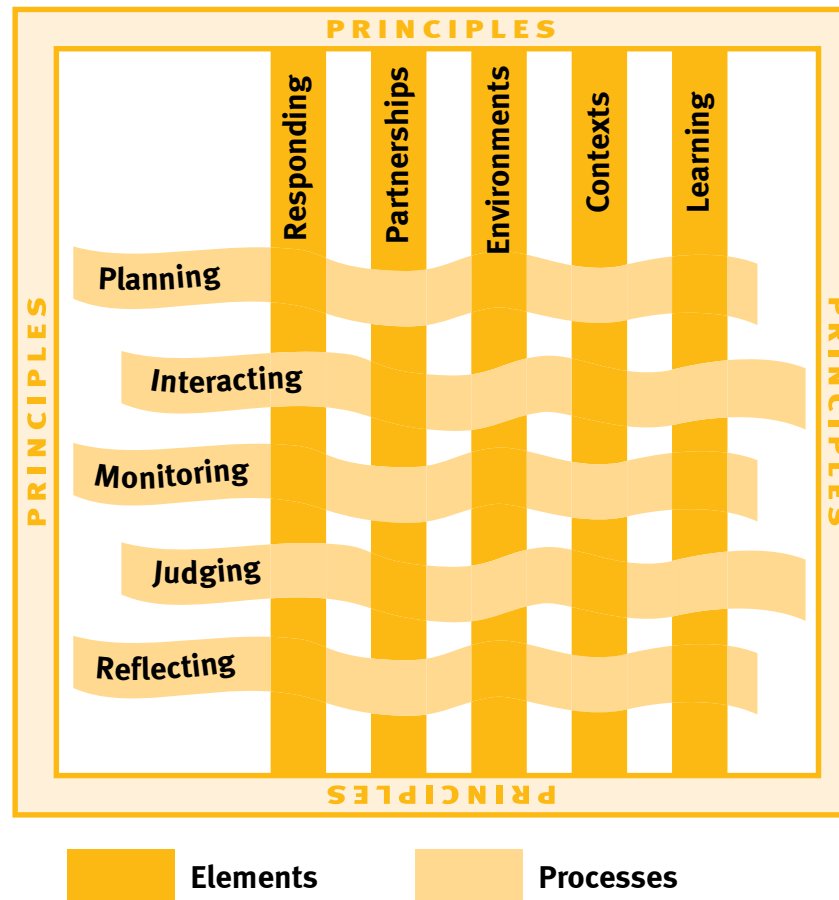
The weaver

A teacher's description of decision-making practice

To me, decision making is like weaving a piece of fabric. The **principles** provide the strong frame that holds my decisions together. I continuously repeat the **processes** (weave the weft threads) as I attend to each **element** (the warp threads). I think about the elements all the time, not just when I'm planning, but also as I interact with children, monitor and make judgments about their learning, and when I reflect.

Over time, the fabric takes shape. Each piece of fabric is different. Sometimes it is smooth; other times it is a bit uneven. Either way, the fabric reflects the look, sound and feel of the learning and teaching in my room at that time. When everything is working well, there is a feeling of familiarity and energy that is shared by the children, staff and families.

Figure 2:
Teachers' decision making — an integrated practice



Decision-making processes

- **Planning and organising for learning**
- **Interacting and co-constructing learning**
- **Monitoring, documenting and assessing children's learning**
- **Making judgments and reporting on children's learning progress**
- **Reflecting on learning and practice**

Teachers use a range of key processes when making decisions. The following are examples of the decisions that teachers make when using these key processes.

Planning and organising for learning

- Planning and organising the learning environment
- Finding ways to involve partners
- Identifying ways to promote children's learning and development through play

Interacting and co-constructing learning

- Using intentional teaching practices, such as introducing ideas and language, explaining, directing, challenging ideas, talking out loud about thinking, modelling, demonstrating, making connections and celebrating
- Using teachable moments and co-constructing learning through active listening, questioning and sustained conversation

Monitoring, documenting and assessing children's learning

- Observing and conversing with children to gather information about their learning and development
- Documenting learning in relation to learning expectations, and analysing the information gathered (evidence of learning) to inform future decisions

Making judgments and reporting on children's learning progress

- Reviewing evidence of learning to make an informed judgment about the distance travelled in relation to identified learning expectations
- Sharing evidence and judgments, informally and formally, with partners throughout the year
- Summarising information for end-of-year reporting about a child's capabilities to promote continuity in their learning and development

Reflecting on learning and practice

- Reflecting while interacting with children and partners to make spontaneous interpretive decisions
- Reflecting on the principles for practice at the end of a day, term and year
- Critically examining assumptions and practices to promote professional learning and enquiry

Intentional teaching involves educators being deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions. Intentional teaching is the opposite of teaching by rote or continuing with traditions simply because things have "always been done that way".



Decision-making elements

- Responding to children, families and communities
- Building partnerships
- Creating learning environments
- Developing learning contexts
- Promoting children's learning and development

Teachers consider a range of key elements when they plan, interact, monitor, make judgments and reflect. These key elements are introduced below. What teachers focus on in each of the key elements is explained in greater detail on the following pages.

Responding to children, families and communities

Respecting, appreciating and celebrating children's diverse social and cultural knowledge and experiences helps children develop a sense of belonging and build confidence as learners.

Building partnerships

Teachers' investment of energy and time in creating and maintaining equitable and inclusive partnerships enables a range of individuals to contribute to children's learning.

Creating learning environments

Teachers purposefully create welcoming, safe and nurturing environments that are inviting, flexible and responsive. These environments promote children's learning and development, extend thinking and promote success.

Developing learning contexts

Play is the most important learning context in Kindergarten: what teachers value about play, the pedagogical approaches they use to support play, the nature of their interactions with children and their interpretations of play experiences are vitally important. Play is supported by real-life engagements, and routines and transitions. Each of these contexts actively engages children and partners in learning.

Promoting children's learning and development

Teachers make decisions to promote children's holistic learning and development in five areas — identity, connectedness, wellbeing, active learning and communicating — that describe the breadth of knowledge, skills and dispositions children engage with during the Kindergarten Year.



Exploring decision-making elements

Responding to children, families and communities

Responsive early years programs respect, appreciate and celebrate the diverse social and cultural knowledge that children bring to Kindergarten, and the values that family and community members hold for children. Children develop a sense of belonging when their actions, experiences, values and ways of interacting are respected. This sense of belonging helps to build children's confidence as capable learners, increasing their capacity to become motivated, successful learners.

Why is responsiveness important?

Developing supportive relationships with partners helps teachers become attuned to children's feelings, needs and interests. This responsiveness enables teachers to understand the expectations of families and communities, and to build continuity in children's learning and experiences as they move across services and settings.

Teachers construct their knowledge of children when they:

- gather information about each child's capabilities, abilities, interests, skills and dispositions
- respect and value the social and cultural experiences that shape children's and families' ways of knowing and interacting
- understand children's ways of being and knowing in the present, and connections to the past and future
- establish safe and nurturing relationships with children
- build cultural competence.

What are the implications for practice?

Teachers' perspectives shape the ways they understand children, how they interact with and respond to children, and the learning experiences they value and support.

Responsive teachers examine their assumptions and beliefs to consider how well they:

- build their understanding of children through observations and interactions
- interpret children's responses as they participate in "here-and-now" learning experiences
- respond to children's feelings, changing needs and interests
- differentiate to cater for diverse needs and abilities
- establish high expectations and build on the capabilities and potential of all children to be successful, confident learners
- provide opportunities for children to demonstrate understanding, capabilities and dispositions in multiple ways and in a variety of contexts
- support children's holistic learning and development, including social, personal, physical, sensory and intellectual development
- identify different interactional and teaching strategies, resources and types of support required to extend children's thinking
- engage intentionally with children in co-constructed interactions and conversations that foster children's thinking skills
- build understanding of the multiple interacting factors that affect children's learning and development
- actively address barriers to learning and promote access and participation
- model inclusive, socially just and fair behaviour

Partners include children; parents; carers; community members; colleagues and inter-agency support personnel, such as therapists, psychologists and social workers involved in prior-to-school, school and community settings.

Cultural competence is the ability to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures.

DEEWR, EYLF²



- communicate in culturally sensitive ways with partners to support children's learning
- coordinate information, support, skills and resources with partners to make smooth transitions across and between services, Kindergarten and home and to Preparatory programs
- identify ways to augment children's communication skills and extend children who are gifted learners
- build professional knowledge about strategies for working with children with diverse abilities and needs
- recognise and support the needs of families who have children with disabilities.



Building partnerships

Building and maintaining partnerships involves energy, commitment and time from teachers. Teachers work to create supportive relationships that balance professional knowledge with the knowledge, expectations and contributions that children, families, community members and other professionals bring to the Kindergarten setting. Building partnerships is an exciting, complicated and dynamic process that draws together the experiences, beliefs, practices and social and cultural knowledge of many individuals.

When teachers take a transformative approach to building relationships, they seek to create equitable and inclusive partnerships, built on trust and respect. Such partnerships recognise the contributions that partners can make, and provide opportunities for them to contribute to children's learning in a variety of ways.

Why are partnerships important?

Children learn best in environments where supportive relationships exist among all partners in the learning community. As children engage as a member of this community, they experience a sense of connectedness with others and begin to see how rights, responsibilities and respect form part of everyday interactions. Children develop increasing confidence and trust in others when they know they are cared for and respected. Partners work together to promote children's wellbeing, enthusiasm for, and success in learning by creating a sense of continuity between home and Kindergarten. They also establish shared high expectations that reflect and value family, community and professional priorities.

What do teachers focus on?

When developing genuine, collaborative partnerships with a range of partners, teachers:

- communicate openly and with respect
- listen to and respond with empathy to the diverse concerns and priorities of various partners
- respect diverse ways of knowing and being
- share and build knowledge of children's learning with partners
- create time for regular shared conversations.

Partnerships may be formal and informal, and develop in partner-specific timeframes. For example, the partnerships developed with children by engaging in their play may serve a different purpose and require a different style of interaction than a partnership developed with an Aboriginal Elder in the local community. However, both types of partnerships should be characterised by respect and trust, and may help to build knowledge about children that supports their learning.

What are the implications for practice?

Teachers build genuine relationships with children, families and community members when there is a foundation of respect, empathy, consideration and effective communication.

When reflecting on partnerships, teachers consider how well:

- the physical environment welcomes and invites families and other partners to participate
- they work with partners to implement intentional teaching practices that engage children and motivate them to learn
- they develop their own and others' cultural competence
- children, families and community members are included in decision-making processes



Transformative approach is pedagogy based on respectful and inclusive relationships with children and their families. It is a process of learning and teaching through relationships that empower all involved.

- connections between children’s experiences at home, in Kindergarten and other settings and services are encouraged
- a variety of partners respond to children’s abilities, feelings, needs and interests
- informal and formal communication strategies recognise families’ preferences for language and communication style, and support the protocols and practices of diverse communities
- the diverse concerns and priorities of various partners are addressed
- respect for diverse ways of learning, knowing and being are demonstrated
- understandings of children’s learning are shared by partners to build a holistic picture of each child.

Privacy and ethics

Teachers gather a wide variety of information and are in a privileged position in their communications with children and partners. Therefore, it is important to be mindful of ethical considerations and privacy concerns and legislation when working with partners and sharing information about children, families and communities.



Creating learning environments

Teachers plan and create welcoming, safe and nurturing environments that promote children's holistic learning and development. They purposefully create environments that are inviting, flexible and responsive to children's diverse needs, interests and abilities. Teachers collaborate with a range of partners to ensure that the learning environment reflects shared ideas, beliefs and values, identities and cultures.

Learning environments provide opportunities to extend children's thinking and engage them with concepts that are important for their future learning success. Teachers respond sensitively to shifts in children's physical, social, and emotional needs, and build continuity across the day providing a sense of predictability that supports children's wellbeing.

Why are learning environments important?

Creating caring and responsive environments helps children to develop their sense of being and belonging. Establishing challenging environments that evoke curiosity, imagination and thinking promotes children's success in learning. Carefully planned social environments engage and enable children to co-construct learning and build deep understandings. These environments recognise and build on children's competence, and reflect the high expectations that their partners hold for them.

Teachers create environments that invite children to:

- wonder, be curious and enthusiastic, share their joy and excitement
- have fun, relax, enjoy quiet times, be noisy, watch from a distance or join in
- feel secure and comfortable, trusted and competent
- make choices and engage deeply in learning and conversations that are meaningful to them

- reflect on their learning through shared conversations
- play independently and collaborate with others
- engage all the senses, including visual, auditory and kinaesthetic modes, and explore beauty and aesthetics
- engage children in all the areas of learning and development.

What do teachers focus on?

Teachers create environments that support children to learn through play, real-life engagements, routines and transitions. Teachers purposefully plan the:

- **physical environment**

Teachers make decisions about the use of space, location of resources and variety of materials that children can use in indoor and outdoor areas to support learning and develop children's positive social behaviours.
- **social environment**

Teachers organise the learning environment in ways that support children's interactions with people, ideas and language, and build confidence and independence. This includes sustaining respectful relationships that enhance learning.
- **temporal environment**

Teachers use time flexibly and organise long blocks of uninterrupted time for play, interspersed with times that are responsive to children's emerging interests and needs. These include:

 - routines, e.g. meals, rest times
 - short periods of time for children to participate in real-life engagements, e.g. cooking, gardening
 - group experiences, e.g. shared reading, music and movement, conversation, reflection and planning.



What are the implications for practice?

Kindergarten environments send strong messages to children, parents, carers and the community about the kinds of learning that are valued.

Teachers reflect on how well an environment:

- supports a range of positive social interactions
- is flexible in the use of time, space, resources and ways of interacting
- enables teachers to respond to the changing feelings, needs and interests of children
- balances the teacher's need to have a smooth-running and well-organised environment with children's physical, emotional and social needs
- provides choice and opportunities to participate in decision making
- reflects, values and extends children's social and cultural experiences.



Developing learning contexts

Play, real-life engagements, and routines and transitions are contexts that best suit the learning and development needs of young children — with play as the dominant context in the Kindergarten program.

Why are these learning contexts important?

Each of these contexts for learning actively engages children, parents, carers, teachers, assistants, community members and professional support staff as partners in learning. Together, they co-construct learning, reconstruct ideas, and reflect on new ways to make sense of the world and build relationships. As children build connections to people, place and language, they strengthen their wellbeing, developing identity and sense of cultural heritage.

When teachers pay careful attention to planning these contexts, it is possible for children to:

- engage in active social, emotional, physical and intellectual learning
- build the knowledge, skills and dispositions described in the learning and development areas
- learn through multiple sensory pathways
- explore, manipulate, experiment and imagine
- negotiate, make choices, express ideas and collaborate with others
- extend oral language development and engage with literacy and numeracy experiences in meaningful ways
- explore issues associated with diversity, equity, social justice and inclusion
- build connections between their home, community and Kindergarten experiences
- explore roles and relationships
- share new experiences and learn about their world
- engage in learning that is responsive to children's changing feelings, needs and interests.

What is the teacher's role in play-based learning?

How teachers understand play is particularly important. These understandings shape what teachers value about play, the pedagogical approaches they use to support play, the nature of their interactions with children and their interpretations of play experiences. Teachers must become attuned to their own patterns of interaction with children, the rules they establish with children, and the implicit and explicit messages that children receive about accepted ways of interacting and playing in the Kindergarten setting.

In practice, this means that teachers need to consider:

- the perspectives through which they understand play and its influence on how they support play-based learning
- the social interactions they create to support play
- the influence of children's cultural and social experiences on their play
- family expectations and understanding of the value of play
- children's experience with and preferences for particular types of play.

What do teachers focus on?

Play

Teachers develop play-based learning environments that are open, offer choice, build a positive group climate and stimulate children to take the initiative. The more choices children have about their activities, the greater their level of involvement.⁸

Teachers focus on sharing control over the direction of learning by:

- being sensitive to the influence of children's social and cultural experiences on their play, family expectations and beliefs about the value of play, and their abilities in making choices



To understand the play of children, teachers need to consider the social context of the play, the influence of the social interactions and the influence of culture on that play.
Sue Dockett & Marilyn Fleer⁹

- creating a balance between play that is child-initiated, adult-initiated and co-constructed
- engaging children in decision making about the types of play, resources, materials and spaces they use for their play
- using teachable moments to help children consider others' perspectives, and that challenge and extend their thinking
- taking on shifting and changing roles in play.

Teachers also consider how children's varying patterns of attendance can affect their developing social interactions, and how this may influence their play and learning. In addition, teachers differentiate their planning and interactions to cater for children's diverse abilities, needs and cultural experiences with play. As teachers observe and join in children's play, they reflect on the types of play that dominate and those that are more highly valued by children. These observations guide teachers' decisions to intervene in play situations that may exclude children or be unfair.

Real-life engagements

When teachers plan real-life engagements they consider the priorities of families and communities and the interests of children. They ensure that experiences are relevant, enjoyable and authentic learning opportunities. Real-life engagements in the Kindergarten may include:

- gardening
- cooking
- experimenting with materials and tools
- making artworks
- talking with visitors about their family or work roles, histories and experiences
- participating in cultural celebrations, e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' stories, dance and music

- undertaking active investigations in the Kindergarten, e.g. exploring how and why water disappears in the sandpit, visiting the local library to discover who uses it
- writing a message to a friend
- using books and technology to investigate a topic of interest
- testing out ideas about ways to move objects, e.g. sinking and floating.

Routines and transitions

Routines and transitions are an important part of daily life in Kindergarten, and provide opportunities for children and teachers to engage in spontaneous and planned learning. Routines include daily organisational practices such as mealtimes, rest and relaxation, toileting, tidying up, greetings and farewells, and group-learning times.

Transitions in Kindergarten settings may be frequent and varied. The number and nature of the transitions that children experience may vary according to the number of hours that children spend in childcare services over the day and over a week. Teachers need to respond sensitively to the demands that variable attendance patterns place on children. This means planning effective ways to manage changes throughout a child's day to minimise the levels of stress that children experience.

Teachers plan to ensure transitions:

- are flexible
- are responsive to the physical, emotional and social needs of children
- cater for mixed-age groups
- accommodate changes of care providers.

Routines and transitions need to be carefully planned and negotiated with children so that these elements form an integrated and meaningful part of the learning program. This helps children to become increasingly independent and confident, and supports success in learning.



Teachers use routines and transition times to:

- introduce concepts
- provide meaningful practice of skills
- recall information
- make connections between classroom discussions and life experiences
- recount experiences
- respond to texts
- share and think about relationships and patterns
- share ideas and knowledge
- read to children
- plan collaboratively with children
- share movement and musical experiences with children.

What are the implications for practice?

Teachers' perspectives about how children learn best, and their understanding and expectations of children influence how they manage all responsive contexts for learning. The perspectives that teachers adopt influence the roles they take in supporting learning, and the agency and voice that children have in decisions about their learning. Teachers support children's positive dispositions to learning when they create inviting and interesting opportunities that motivate and excite children's interests.

Teachers:

- actively engage in children's play, observe play and use intentional teaching practices to support children's learning through play
- recognise children's competence, and promote each child's learning by providing opportunities to experience a wide variety of indoor and outdoor play
- consider children's preferences for types of play, and build opportunities for children to engage in a range of play to support learning

- encourage children to explore a variety of types of play, e.g. sociodramatic play, fantasy play, physical play
- organise time, spaces and resources for children to explore, manipulate, elaborate, experiment and imagine, providing extended periods of time for play
- establish a flow to the day so that children are unhurried and have a balance of active, quiet, individual and collaborative experiences
- explore the influence of children's social and cultural backgrounds on the language, interactional patterns and social relationships that develop as children participate in play, real-life engagements and routines and transitions
- make explicit how literacy and numeracy is a part of children's everyday lives, e.g. predicting and counting how many buckets of water will be needed to fill the fish tank, and discussing ways of recording children's estimations to embed a literacy and numeracy focus into familiar learning experiences.

For some children "the daily stress of their lives comes from a day packed with experiences to promote their learning, to keep them busy and to help them get ahead ..." This can lead to chronic tiredness.

Marilou Hyson ¹⁰



Promoting children’s learning and development

Teachers make deliberate and well-informed decisions to promote children’s holistic learning and development in five areas.

The Queensland Kindergarten learning and development areas relate to the broad outcomes for children aged 0–5 years identified in the *EYLF*,¹¹ as shown in Figure 3.

The learning and development areas describe the breadth of knowledge, skills and dispositions that children may engage with during the Kindergarten Year, within a holistic learning program. Within the learning and development areas, examples of observable behaviours, typical of children’s learning and development at the end of the Kindergarten Year, support teachers to plan for learning, monitoring and assessment.



Figure 3: The relationship between broad learning outcomes and Kindergarten learning and development areas

Broad learning outcome	Kindergarten learning and development area
Children have a strong sense of identity	Identity A Kindergarten child with a strong sense of identity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feels secure and safe • acts independently and perseveres • demonstrates self-confidence.
Children are connected with and contribute to their world	Connectedness A Kindergarten child who is connected with and contributes to their world shows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a sense of belonging • a sense of social responsibility and fairness • respect for diversity • respect for environments.
Children have a strong sense of wellbeing	Wellbeing A Kindergarten child who has a strong sense of wellbeing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feels happy and content within themselves • feels happy and content in the company of others • explores ways to promote their own and others’ health and safety • explores ways to promote their physical wellbeing.
Children are confident and involved learners	Active learning A Kindergarten child who is a confident and involved learner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • builds positive dispositions and approaches towards learning • shows confidence and concentration • engages their imagination and creativity • explores information and communication technologies (ICTs).
Children are effective communicators	Communicating A Kindergarten child who is an effective communicator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explores and expands ways to use language • explores and engages with literacy in personally meaningful ways • explores and engages with numeracy in personally meaningful ways.

Why is it important to define learning and development areas and related expectations?

The Kindergarten learning and development areas and related broad outcomes help teachers to:

- recognise and value children's current competencies, capabilities and potential
- establish and make explicit high expectations for all children
- plan a range of pathways to enable each child to be a successful learner
- engage in intentional teaching to help build concepts and dispositions that are vital for future success
- monitor, document and assess children's learning and development
- communicate about and report on children's progress in meaningful ways to various partners
- work with partners to promote continuity in children's prior, present and future learning and experiences.

The Learning and development areas section of this guideline provides a more detailed outline of the Kindergarten learning and development areas, related broad outcomes and observable behaviours.

What are the implications for practice?

When making decisions about how, when and to what depth children will engage in particular learning, teachers draw together their understandings of children and their communities. They focus on building children's sense of belonging, positive dispositions to learning, and what children need to know to develop as successful learners.

Teachers also work with partners to negotiate learning and development expectations for the end of the Kindergarten Year. These expectations reflect the values and expectations of children, families and communities, as well as reflecting current research about the knowledge, skills and dispositions that support children to be successful learners now and in the future.

Teachers engage in ongoing reflection and examine the assumptions that underpin:

- their expectations for learning and development for all children
- the choices they make about how, when and to what breadth and depth children will engage in particular learning
- ways of working with children to extend their learning and development
- how they differentiate teaching practices and learning environments to ensure that children with diverse abilities and needs can engage in rich learning
- how they plan, interact intentionally to promote learning, monitor, assess and communicate about children's learning progress to relevant partners.

When teachers engage in reflection, this has the potential to enrich their capacity to be a responsive teacher and better meet the needs of a diverse range of children. Teachers also consider ways to promote continuity of learning.



Promoting continuity of learning

Teachers effectively promote continuity of learning using their knowledge of the learning and development areas. They view learning along a continuum to:

- understand what children bring to Kindergarten from their prior experiences (starting points for learning)
- build children's understanding, skills and dispositions during the Kindergarten Year
- communicate (report) about children's progress, at the end of the year to parents, carers and Preparatory teachers, in relation to identified expectations for the end of the Kindergarten Year.

Note: During the trial of the *Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline*, the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) will develop a continuum of learning and development with teachers. The continuum will provide examples of observable behaviours for each learning and development area to guide teachers as they monitor, assess and plan for learning.

Kindergarten teachers also promote continuity in learning and experiences by building positive relationships between partners involved in children's learning in prior-to-school and school contexts. Through reporting processes, teachers also help parents, carers and other partners to build an accurate picture of children's learning. This enables partners to support children as they make the transition into early schooling. The content of a report to a parent, carer or a Preparatory teacher is likely to differ to match the specific needs of that partner.

Note: The QSA will develop advice, examples and templates to support reporting to parents, carers and Preparatory teachers. Teachers will be able to adapt and modify the templates to suit their contexts.



Learning and development areas

- **Identity**
- **Connectedness**
- **Wellbeing**
- **Active learning**
- **Communicating**

The learning and development areas describe the breadth of knowledge, skills and dispositions that children may engage with during the Kindergarten Year. Teachers use the learning and development areas to plan opportunities to engage children in integrated learning through play, real-life engagements, routines and transitions.

This section provides examples of observable behaviours typical of children's learning and development at the end of the Kindergarten Year. These examples support teachers to plan for learning, monitoring and assessment. They are not exhaustive, and teachers are invited to add their own examples to those identified.



Identity

Learning outcome: Children have a strong sense of identity

A Kindergarten child with a strong sense of identity:

- feels secure and safe
- acts independently and perseveres
- demonstrates self-confidence.



Feels secure and safe

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
Teachers promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feelings of security and trust in familiar adults and children • secure and safe relationships with familiar people and in familiar environments • a sense of stability and dependability • confidence that familiar people will provide support in times of need or change. 	The child: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feels comfortable in the presence of familiar people • displays a sense of feeling safe and secure in familiar environments • is comfortable with the daily routine • seeks and accepts help, when needed, from familiar adults.

Acts independently and perseveres

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
Teachers promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • independence to manage needs, tasks, routines • the ability to manage classroom routines and processes • independence in a variety of play situations • self-organisation of personal belongings • self-organisation of resources and materials for play • perseverance when trying new and challenging tasks. 	The child: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follows simple directions to manage familiar classroom routines and processes • plays independently in familiar play situations • keeps their belongings organised • locates and manages materials and resources for play • will try and retry to complete a new or challenging task before deciding to seek help.

Demonstrates self-confidence

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
Teachers promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-confidence and knowledge of each child's own cultural background, heritage, abilities, preferences and achievements • confidence to explore the environment and engage in a variety of types of experiences • confidence when approaching tasks, people and situations • confidence to share feelings and ideas • confidence to try new and challenging tasks • confidence to make choices and take considered risks. 	The child: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confidently shares aspects of their culture and heritage with familiar people • talks with others about the things they can do, like and have achieved • confidently explores their environment and engages in a variety of types of play • confidently approaches familiar tasks, people and situations • expresses feelings and ideas to familiar people • confidently tries new and challenging tasks • confidently makes choices during play, sometimes choosing more challenging options.

Connectedness

Learning outcome: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

A Kindergarten child who is connected with and contributes to their world shows:

- a sense of belonging
- a sense of social responsibility and fairness
- respect for diversity
- respect for environments.



Shows a sense of belonging

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pride in each child's connection to familiar places, people, groups, language, communities, culture, shared pasts and futures • willingness to initiate interactions with others • ways to help and care for others • interest in and concern for others' feelings and ideas • social skills for interacting in and contributing to play • skills for cooperating (including sharing and turn-taking) and collaborating • conflict resolution and problem solving in social contexts • active engagement in group-learning situations • engagement with community people or places • children's abilities to connect to others using responsive communication strategies, e.g. learning some basic signing, using non-verbal or a home language. 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shares, in informal conversations, personal experiences related to their family, culture, language and community • follows directions to help and care for others • shows interest in others' feelings and ideas • enjoys playing and working with others in familiar tasks and situations • initiates and joins in play with others • willingly shares play resources and takes turns • cooperates in resolving conflict, with adult guidance • actively participates in group-learning tasks or situations • shows interest in community events, people and places • willingly tries ways to communicate that allow them to connect with others, e.g. greets a hearing-impaired child using signing, uses their community language when speaking to a community member.

Shows a sense of social responsibility and fairness

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appreciation for similarities and differences in people's feelings, ideas and needs • a willingness to respond, in positive ways, to others' efforts to interact • ways to be respectful of others' feelings, ideas and needs • a desire to help others to enjoy, join in, achieve their goals and manage tasks or situations • awareness of the reciprocal nature of rights and responsibilities • awareness of fair and unfair behaviours • awareness that behaviours and ideas can show bias or be stereotypical, e.g. challenging the idea that "only girls dance". 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows awareness that others have feelings and ideas that may be similar to or different from their own • responds to others' interactions and shows consideration for others' ideas and feelings • follows directions to manage some classroom responsibilities • shows an awareness of their own and others' rights in familiar situations, e.g. waits while others have a turn • follows an adult's lead to make a situation fair, including dealing with unfair behaviour • follows directions to help choose appropriate ways to behave and interact in play and group-learning situations.

Shows respect for diversity

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• active engagement with a range of people, groups and communities• appreciation of diverse needs, interests, ideas, capabilities and practices• ways to respond positively and show respect for diverse viewpoints, cultures, heritages, backgrounds, traditions, languages and ways of knowing and being• understandings about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and their strong connection to place, language histories and community.	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• notices and responds positively to similarities and differences among people• adjusts their behaviour and interactions to show respect for others• shows interest in artefacts, stories and accounts about people from various cultures and heritages, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Shows respect for environments

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• interest in natural, built and technological environments and change in these environments• respect for and social responsibility towards environments and equipment• respect for and interest in plants and animals• understandings about the interrelatedness between people, land, plants and animals• awareness of positive and negative interactions between humans and environments.	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• shows interest in interacting with natural and built materials and environments• helps to care for familiar natural and built environments• uses tools, equipment and technologies with care, e.g. gardening tools, digital camera, music device or computer• shows interest in observing natural changes in their environment• shows interest in animals and plants• interacts with animals and plants with care• observes and responds to changes caused by interactions between people and environments.



Wellbeing

Learning outcome: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

A Kindergarten child who has a strong sense of wellbeing:

- feels happy and content within themselves
- feels happy and content in the company of others
- explores ways to promote their own and others' health and safety
- explores ways to promote their physical wellbeing.



Feels happy and content within themselves

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • happiness and contentment • resilience, including the ability to manage change and unexpected situations or occurrences • strategies for dealing with disappointment • courage to try experiences and participate in situations that are challenging • willingness to make decisions and choices • the ability to express feelings • the ability to self-regulate feelings and responses to people and situations • children's confidence, e.g. in their ability to manage challenges, new interactions, routines and situations • enjoyment of solitude, quietness, reflection and relaxation. 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expresses happiness and contentment regularly and frequently • is willing to adjust or make a change when they face a disappointment • shows courage in everyday situations that they may find challenging • has a sense that they can make choices and be involved in decisions • responds when others help them to express feelings • tries to control reactions when frustrated • tries out ways to manage unexpected situations and changes • participates in quiet activities.

Feels happy and content in the company of others

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect, empathy, concern for and care of others • desire to share joy, enjoy companionship and build satisfying relationships • ways to recognise and celebrate children's contributions • ways to accept and give affirmations. 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expresses happiness and connects with particular peers and adults • follows an adult's lead to show respect, empathy, care and concern for others • attempts to work with and relate positively with others in play and group-learning situations • joins in opportunities to share and celebrate their own and others' contributions to the learning community.

Explores ways to promote their own and others' health and safety

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ways to be healthy and safe healthy food and lifestyle choices increasing independence in managing personal hygiene and self-care. 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> follows familiar routines and rules to keep themselves and others safe and healthy shares ideas about healthy foods and activities follows familiar routines to manage their hygiene and bodily needs, e.g. eating, drinking, resting, using the toilet, participating in physical activity.

Explores ways to promote their physical wellbeing

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> confidence in developing movement skills and managing movement challenges sensory skills/awareness and perceptual motor skills kinaesthetic and spatial awareness balance, coordination, muscle tone, strength and flexibility fine motor skills, including manipulating tools and objects with control; visual tracking, e.g. scissors, drawing tools, manipulative and construction equipment locomotor skills, e.g. hopping, jumping, crawling, climbing, running, galloping non-locomotor skills, e.g. swaying, turning, twisting hand-eye, foot-eye coordination and ball skills. 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sustains active involvement in movement experiences willingly tries a variety of whole-body movement experiences willingly tries out ways to manipulate objects, tools and equipment, e.g. using carpentry tools, construction materials or kicking/rolling/striking a ball shows control when manipulating objects, tools and equipment using a range of fine motor skills, including cutting with scissors and using drawing tools moves with control using a range of large movement skills including locomotor, non-locomotor and ball skills willingly tries out new climbing and balancing challenges.



Active learning

Learning outcome: Children are confident and involved learners

A Kindergarten child who is a confident and involved learner:

- builds positive dispositions and approaches toward learning
- shows confidence and concentration
- engages their imagination and creativity
- explores information and communication technologies (ICTs).



Builds positive dispositions and approaches toward learning

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • curiosity, wonder, enthusiasm, drive and motivation to learn • skills for learning and when to use these in particular learning situations, e.g. use the senses; listen, observe, talk; follow instructions; actively manipulate objects and tools; remember, link, apply and adapt learning; copy, repeat and practise actions, behaviours and language • capabilities required to make informed choices, plan and carry out plans • ways to find out, research, investigate, inquire and solve problems • thinking, including inferring, predicting, hypothesising, testing, experimenting, evaluating and generalising • exploration of relationships, including cause–effect • ways to link and apply learning to new situations • reflection by talking about and using feedback on thinking and learning. 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows curiosity and drive to explore and find out in familiar situations • is able to listen, observe and talk with others in order to learn • follows instructions to manage tasks and investigate ideas and relationships • shows interest in links between prior and new learning • shows interest in exploring ways to apply learning to a new situation • shows interest in exploring ways to solve problems, investigate and inquire • joins in adult-supported discussions about ways to find out, solve problems or learn.

Shows confidence and concentration

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sustained concentration and the ability to focus on important aspects of learning situations • confidence to actively engage in and contribute to a range of learning situations • confidence in learning and contributing to learning. 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes an effort to maintain concentration to complete a task • shows confidence when approaching a variety of familiar learning experiences and interactions • contributes to learning conversations with familiar people.

Engages their imagination and creativity

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • imagination and experimentation with possibilities • the ability to generate ideas and solutions, innovate and invent • the ability to create using a range of ideas, materials, tools and processes, e.g. construct, assemble, use visual arts processes and ICT • exploration and conversation about arts processes and elements • understandings about art as a language and ways the elements and principles of the arts can be used to construct visual, musical, dance and/or media texts • engagement in creative movement, dance, drama, imaginative, fantasy and role play • creative responses to traditional and contemporary music • interest in creating stories and responding to storytelling. 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explores ways to use their imagination in play and when interacting with others • explores ways to use materials, processes and ideas to create • explores ways to represent ideas, feelings and experiences creatively • shares personal responses to music, artworks, dance, drama and media.

Explores information and communication technologies (ICT)

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • skills for using a range of technologies and ICT • an awareness of technologies in the child's world • confidence to use ICT and technologies for a range of purposes, including to support play, for enjoyment, to create, find out, communicate, share ideas and learning, inquire, investigate and solve problems. 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses ideas about everyday technologies in play • contributes ideas to collaboratively create and use real/pretend texts* using ICT • enjoys using ICT to play games and create • knows ICT can be used to find out information and communicate with others. <p>*Note: Texts may include words (spoken and/or written), visuals and/or sounds.</p>



Communicating

Learning outcome: Children are effective communicators

A Kindergarten child who is an effective communicator:

- explores and expands ways to use language
- explores and engages with literacy in personally meaningful ways
- explores and engages with numeracy in personally meaningful ways.

Explores and expands ways to use language

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • verbal and nonverbal communication, home languages and Standard Australian English required to communicate clearly and purposefully • development of a repertoire of songs, rhymes, jingles and stories • development of vocabulary for exploring mathematical, scientific and historical ideas • development of vocabulary for describing what each child sees, hears, tastes, smells, touches and feels • the use of conventions (cultural cues and behaviours) for talking and listening • skills for listening for different purposes and in different contexts • the ability to interpret meanings presented using spoken words, sound and music • awareness that there are different ways of interacting and communicating that are linked to social and cultural practices and experiences, e.g. to show respect, some people maintain eye contact while others avoid eye contact. 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses simple sentences to communicate* ideas, needs and feelings to familiar people • uses simple vocabulary to describe what they see, hear, taste, smell, touch and feel • with prompts, attempts to take turns to talk and listen in interactions with others • uses language in play and real-life situations for real purposes • interacts in conversations with familiar people • listens to and follows simple (one-step) directions • uses spoken and nonverbal language to help communicate with others in everyday situations. <p>*Note: Children are encouraged to communicate in Standard Australian English and, if/when appropriate use home language, signed (alternative) or augmentative communication.</p>



Explores and engages with literacy in personally meaningful ways

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> confidence to explore print and use texts in play and for real purposes, e.g. create a menu/list during pretend play the understanding that ideas can be written down and that print conveys meanings understandings about the relationships between oral, written and visual representations exploration of sound-letter relationships, rhymes and patterns in language in ways that are personally meaningful engagement with a wide range of print, visual, auditory and multimodal texts engagement with early reading behaviours and the development of concepts of print interest in and ways to talk about sounds, letters, words, sentences and texts the ability to make connections between meanings in texts and personal experiences engagement in drawing, early writing, and dictating ideas engagement with community literacies and cultural texts, including dance, story, drama, visual arts, music and multimedia texts. 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> knows that print carries a message, e.g. asks, “What does this writing say?” dictates labels or sentences to be written by an adult names some letters or sounds from familiar words, e.g. “M for Mum”; “/j/, like in my name” responds to sounds, rhythms, patterns in words, rhymes and songs looks at or “reads” books and other texts for personal purposes uses initial letter and word shape to recognise their first name, or part of it joins in shared reading activities makes links between ideas in a text and personal experiences enjoys and experiments with writing letters or letter-like symbols (that represent writing) for own purposes.

Explores and engages with numeracy in personally meaningful ways

Knowledge, skills and dispositions	Examples of observable behaviours
<p>Teachers promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the use of counting and number names in play and for real-life purposes the understanding that numbers in their environment convey meaning interest in recording numbers for play and real purposes skills for identifying the number of objects in small collections, e.g. pointing to each object and saying familiar number names in sequence up to three, four or five exploration of and specific language for talking about the attributes of objects and collections, including their number, length, height, width, mass and volume exploration of and specific language for talking about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the properties of the shapes, e.g. curved, straight, side, point, edge repeating patterns, e.g. long, short, long, short, triangle; red triangle, blue square, red triangle, blue square position and direction, e.g. when climbing, dancing or playing a musical game time periods and order of everyday events, e.g. “Today you can ...”; “Next we will ...”; “First we will, then we will ...” money and money exchange, e.g. when paying for items in a pretend shop a whole and its parts, e.g. cutting a ball of dough into parts then recreating the whole ball. 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> points to each object in a small collection and uses familiar number names to try to count in sequence recognises the quantity of a small collection, e.g. threads three beads and says, “Now, that’s three.” asks about numbers in the environment and their purpose actively explores and talks about the attributes of everyday materials and objects when classifying, sorting, sequencing and comparing, e.g. “I’ve got more/less”, “It is full/empty”; “My spade is longer”; “Now, your bucket is heavier” uses everyday language to talk about the properties of shapes and repeated elements in patterns, e.g. “The triangle has points like a star”; “The circle is curvy/round”; “The pattern is boy, girl, boy, girl ...” responds to directions from others to show understanding of spatial positions used in daily activities, e.g. “Sit on the chair”; “Put the rubbish in the bin” explores ideas and talks about time and money in personally meaningful situations explores relationships between a “whole” and its “parts” in personally meaningful situations.

Appendix 1: Intentional teaching practices

When teachers use intentional teaching practices they take an active role in children's learning. Teachers invite children to share their experiences and ideas, identify opportunities to help children to become involved in play and build on interests and ideas that they observe. Teachers recognise that learning occurs in social contexts and make deliberate, well-planned decisions to support children's learning through their social interactions with a range of partners.

Teachers also embed intentional teaching practices in the decisions they make as they plan and organise the physical learning environment, and engage with children through the contexts of play, real-life engagements and routines and transitions.

Teachers use a wide range of interactional strategies to extend children's thinking, challenge their ideas and encourage children's interests. The following definitions, from the *Interpreting the Early Years Learning Framework*,¹² highlight some of the strategies that teachers use to facilitate learning:

- **Challenging** — In the context of secure relationships, educators gauge when to offer challenges and opportunities for children to extend their skills and ideas. Educators can extend children's thinking through provocation and reflection.
- **Co-constructing** — working together with children to investigate and explore ideas. Educators take their own ideas and those that children bring, and build on them to discover new possibilities and develop and test hypotheses.
- **Collaborating** or enabling children to take the lead in an investigation or an idea while working alongside them to contribute to, rather than dominate, the direction of the experience. This can also include involving others, such as family members and members of the community, who may have particular expertise or knowledge that can inform the learning.

- **Encouraging** and supporting, particularly when children are making an effort, through making comments that motivate and encourage them to persist.
- **Explaining** or making ideas and requests clear for children. This is useful at times when children want or need to understand a concept or idea, often in relation to their own and others' safety or rights.
- **Identifying** — drawing children's attention to new ideas and topics. Pointing out things of interest may generate areas for exploration and investigation.
- **Imagining** — This includes creating an environment where children are encouraged to use imagination and creativity to investigate, hypothesise and express themselves. Educators plan for children to have opportunities where there is freedom to engage in experiences with no set expectations for outcomes, and where children can explore their own possibilities.
- **Instructing** — using techniques that engage and are respectful of children's ideas. Educators use direct instruction when other strategies might not be appropriate. For example, teaching children about road safety on an outing requires educators to be clear about their expectations for children, and to identify the safe practices needed in these types of situations.
- **Listening** — deeply and thoughtfully, to encourage children to lead conversations. Through actively responding to children's contributions, educators create opportunities for authentic and lengthy exchanges resulting in sustained shared conversations.
- **Making connections** — assisting children to see relationships and incongruities. Educators contribute to children's thinking by comparing and contrasting [experiences and ideas].



- **Modelling** or demonstrating a skill or how a task is done. Modelling should always be supported with opportunities for children to have a go themselves and practise the skill.
- **Negotiating** — enabling children to have a go at solving problems and addressing complex issues. Educators provide scaffolding to allow children to see multiple sides to an argument or issue, and encourage children to find reasonable solutions that can address their own and others' perspectives.
- **Providing for choice** through recognising children's capacities to make safe choices and experience the consequences of their actions. Provisions for choice need to be well considered in the context of the relationships, and should not place children at risk or in danger. Supporting children to make choices is valuable when autonomy and independence are encouraged.
- **Questioning** sensitively to engage children in thinking and problem solving. Questions should be genuine and respectful, and not used to gather responses already known by educators. Educators should encourage children to ask questions of them and of their peers.
- **Researching** — working with children to find out and investigate. This can involve asking others, using the internet and local library, or telephoning relevant agencies. Researching helps children learn about the many ways of finding solutions and gathering information.
- **Revisiting and revising** — taking the opportunity to revisit experiences and thinking, which enables children to reflect on and build on prior learning.
- **Scaffolding** — using knowledge of children's abilities. Educators can break down tasks and ideas, and provide children with a supportive framework for taking the next steps or moving onto a higher level of thinking.



Glossary

Agency	Being able to make choices and decisions, to influence events and to have an impact on one's world. ¹³
Alternative communication	See <i>Augmentative communication</i>
Augmentative communication	Method of communication that <i>enhances</i> conventional forms of speech and writing. An alternative communication method <i>replaces</i> conventional forms of speech and writing. Alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) includes both electronic and non-electronic communication devices that help people to represent language concepts. Non-electronic, or manual, communication boards often display pictures, photographs, graphics, abstract symbols, or printed words. Electronic devices synthesise common spoken phrases or produce written text.
Culture	Learnt in families and communities, belongs to groups of people, and is a shared way of doing, believing and knowing.
Cultural competence	The ability to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures. ²
Disposition	Enduring habit of mind and action, and tendency to respond to situations in a characteristic way. A disposition is currently understood to develop primarily through interactions with others. An example of a disposition that is important for lifelong learning includes the willingness to explore, communicate, act independently and collaboratively, persevere and maintain an open mind.
Group climate	Sum of shared general attitudes and feelings, and quality of interactions within a group of people.
Inclusivity	Taking account of the social, cultural, physical and linguistic diversity of all children (including learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographic location) in the decision-making processes of organising and structuring learning experiences and observation opportunities. Inclusivity ensures that all children are provided with equitable access to resources and participation in the classroom, recognition and value of their experiences, opportunities for valuing difference, and multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning.
Intentional teaching	Involves educators being deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions. Intentional teaching is the opposite of teaching by rote or continuing with traditions simply because things have "always been done that way". For a detailed definition and examples, see Appendix 1, page 30.

Observation	Assessment technique used for gathering information about children’s learning. The technique involves watching and listening to children, as well as interacting with children deliberately and purposefully to interpret children’s learning across a range of contexts. Teachers gather and record observations in many ways, including anecdotal records, checklists, and taking photographs and audio/video recordings of children’s learning.
Partners	Children; parents; carers; community members; colleagues and inter-agency support personnel, such as therapists, psychologists and social workers involved in prior-to-school, school and community settings.
Partnership	Formal and informal relationships and processes that people or groups participate in to support children’s learning and development in the early years. Effective partnerships are characterised by people having common goals and expectations, communicating openly and treating each other with respect. See <i>Partners</i> .
Play	Context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds as they engage actively with people, objects and representations. Play often involves pleasure and imagination. Play is usually initiated by the child or negotiated between children, rather than imposed by an adult.
Routine	Regular event during the day that has a familiar organisational and temporal pattern and that is used as a context for learning, e.g. mealtime, quiet activities or story reading.
Real-life engagement	In an educational context, an everyday experience that is typical of an activity a child may engage in as part of their family and community contexts, and that provides an opportunity for learning. Examples include cooking, gardening, reading or participating in community events.
Social justice	Involves challenging unequal structures in society that enable discrimination to occur based on gender, race, class, religious beliefs, culture, etc. Social justice involves raising awareness of unjust or unfair thinking and ways of behaving.
Transformative approach	Pedagogy based on respectful and inclusive relationships with children and their families. It is a process of learning and teaching through relationships that empower all involved.
Transition	Experience designed to support learning that also helps to organise children as they move from one learning situation to another. Transitions promote continuity between settings such as, from home to Kindergarten, and between the Kindergarten program and long day-care services or family day care.

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- ¹² Commonwealth of Australia 2009, *Interpreting the Early Years Learning Framework: A guide for educators*, Draft for trial, April, pp. 35–36.
- ¹³ Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations 2009, *The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, p. 58.

DRAFT

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