

# Queensland kindergarten learning guideline





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**Note:** This publication contains images that may cause distress to Indigenous Australians.

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Queensland kindergarten learning guideline

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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 inclusive vision that "all children experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life".<sup>1</sup>

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 specifically enrich children's learning in the Kindergarten Year. In Queensland, the Kindergarten Year is the year before the Preparatory Year of schooling. Throughout the Kindergarten Year, children's right to experience the joy of childhood is fundamental and learning is promoted through play, and emergent and planned learning experiences and interactions.

The guideline recognises that parents are children's first educators and values the vital role parents, carers and family members play in children's lives and their ongoing learning. The term "families", throughout the guideline, recognises the range of people who take on parenting roles and build close and supportive relationships with children in their home environments.

## Supporting professional practice

Teachers create a quality kindergarten program when they draw together advice in the guideline with their professional knowledge and understanding about children's interests, ideas and intentions, and parent, family and community priorities and contexts. The guideline provides specific advice to support kindergarten teachers to strengthen children's sense of belonging, being and becoming as they:

- make deliberate and well-informed decisions to promote and enrich children's holistic learning and development
- build respectful relationships with family, community and professional partners
- promote children's wellbeing, and ongoing learning progress
- interact with children, with a clear learning focus to promote learning
- support children with additional needs
- 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.

**Family partners** include children, parents, carers, kinship carers, and family members.

**Community partners** include members of the local community, volunteers and Elders.

**Professional partners** include colleagues and inter-agency support personnel, such as early years educators (other teachers, group leaders, assistants and directors); administrative officers; licensees; special needs, health and social workers; and therapists and psychologists involved in prior-to-school, school and community settings.

What we do with children changes who they are and what our community is and will become and what Australia will become.

**Denise Cedric**  
Kindergarten Teacher (B. Ed.)  
Indigenous Pre-Prep program

The guideline describes a set of five learning and development areas that 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.

### Embracing diversity

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

The guideline strengthens all 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.

Kindergarten learning programs provide opportunities for teachers to celebrate the richness and diversity of cultures and heritages that children and their families bring to the learning community. When teachers embrace diversity, they actively explore and build their own and others' cultural competence. This includes 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.



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

DEEWR, *EYLF*<sup>2</sup>

### Indigenous ways of knowing, being and learning

Evident in “our languages, art, imagery, technology, traditions and ceremonies, land management practices, social organisation and social control ... Understanding that we are part of the world as much as it is part of us, existing within a network of relations ... Our knowledge is learned and shared across time by “listening, sensing, viewing, reviewing, reading, watching, waiting, observing, exchanging, sharing, conceptualising, assessing, modelling, engaging, applying.”<sup>3</sup>

## Resources

The *Continua of learning and development: Queensland kindergarten learning guideline companion* provides advice to help teachers make consistent judgments about children's learning progress.

The continua and other materials that support the *Queensland kindergarten learning guideline* are available from the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) website <[www.qsa.qld.edu.au](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au)>.



# Perspectives and principles

This chapter explores the pedagogical perspectives and principles that shape teachers' professional practice.

The pedagogical perspectives that teachers adopt will influence how they enact the vision of children's learning, characterised by belonging, being and becoming. These perspectives also influence the principles that guide teachers' decisions as they create responsive and inclusive learning programs.

Teachers effectively embrace diversity and promote equity and success for all children by recognising and valuing different ways of knowing, being and learning. Drawing on diverse cultural and Indigenous assumptions, beliefs, life experiences and practices enriches the quality and connectedness of children's learning.

## Perspectives

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. This view acknowledges the significant and connected role parents, families and educators play in children's day-to-day and life-long learning. Adopting a connected view of the engaged child, parent and teacher enhances the learning and teaching relationship.

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.<sup>4</sup> Establishing strong connections between these images enables teachers to adopt insightful and effective practices.

### *Engaged learning and teaching*

This guideline adopts a holistic perspective of learning and teaching — one that promotes social, emotional, physical and cognitive wellbeing through inclusive, integrated and interconnected learning.<sup>5</sup>

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 inclusive, responsive and culturally sensitive teaching practices. Learning and teaching is enhanced through the active engagement of the child, parent and teacher.

### *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 through play and interactions with people. Learning occurs as part of the social and cultural interactions between children and teachers, parents, families, community members and others.

The engaged child is empowered to express ideas and make choices about their learning. As learners, they are:

- competent, capable and creative
- secure, connected and respectful
- happy, playful and curious
- confident, motivated and involved
- a questioner, problem-poser and problem-solver.

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

Loris Malaguzzi<sup>6</sup>







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

Iram Siraj-Blatchford <sup>7</sup>

### *The engaged parent*

Parents play a vital role in fostering and sustaining children's long-term learning and development. Each child's sense of belonging is enhanced through the relationships parents build with early years educators, other parents and children. They engage actively to:

- share information about their child's experiences, interests, needs and learning
- understand and support their child's learning
- advocate for their child
- draw on the advice and support of early years professionals.

Parents' ways of connecting and contributing to their children's learning take on many forms and reflect their diverse individual, family, community and cultural contexts.

### *The engaged teacher*

Teachers enhance learning and teaching when they build respectful and trusting relationships with all partners. This involves adopting inclusive practices that enable parents and families to engage in their child's learning in diverse and meaningful ways. It also involves collaborating and providing leadership within the kindergarten learning and teaching team and advocating strongly for children, parents and quality learning and teaching practices.

Resourceful, engaged teachers achieve a balance between their interactions with children, behind-the-scenes organisation of the inclusive learning environment, and ongoing professional reflection. As a pedagogical leader, 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, inclusive learning experiences that hold meaning and interest for children
- builds on children's emerging ideas, interests and needs
- is sensitive and responds flexibly to the influence of children's changing feelings, needs and interests
- creates a balance between child-initiated, co-constructed and teacher-initiated learning
- forms respectful and productive relationships with children, families and other partners
- values and seeks to actively engage parents, carers and families in learning and teaching relationships
- values children's rights to express ideas and opinions, make choices, share decision making and engage in reflection
- engages in attentive listening and sustained shared thinking
- uses a range of intentional teaching strategies to promote deep learning, including challenging, scaffolding, modelling, explaining, questioning (see Appendix 1).

The engaged teacher is also a learner who:

- is culturally competent, seeking to learn about children, their families and communities and ways of knowing
- examines their own assumptions and understandings about children and makes decisions to ensure that all children have opportunities for educational success
- challenges children's actions and assumptions to promote inclusion, empowerment, equity, fairness and social justice
- works collaboratively within a learning and teaching team
- is a strong advocate for children and families.

## Principles

The image of the child, parent and teacher actively engaged in learning and teaching is reflected in the principles that guide teachers' decision making in the kindergarten setting. The principles outlined here promote continuity in children's learning by integrating the principles and practices identified in the *EYLF* and build on these to guide Queensland practice in P–3 contexts.<sup>8</sup> These principles focus teachers' attention on the underlying factors that promote children's sense of belonging, being and becoming.

### *High expectations and equity*

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

### *Respect for and response to diversity*

Respecting and responding to diversity — including social and cultural experiences, geographic location, abilities and needs — promotes children's connectedness.

### *Holistic learning*

Children's learning is holistic; that is, children learn and develop in interconnected ways.

### *Respectful relationships*

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

### *Continuity in learning*

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

### *Shared decision making*

Effective decision making involves active engagement with partners, including engaging children in making choices and parents, families and communities in sharing understandings, expectations, and priorities.

### *Intentional teaching*

Intentional teaching extends children's thinking and builds deep understanding. Intentional teaching occurs in emergent and planned experiences.

### *Reflective practice*

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



# Exploring decision-making practice

This chapter explores how the perspectives and principles shape teachers' decision-making practice then elaborates on how and why teachers engage in particular decision-making processes and the elements they focus on as they make decisions.

The principles that underpin teachers' practice influence the numerous spontaneous and planned decisions that they make. In Figure 1, the analogy of the teacher as weaver creating an integrated decision-making practice illustrates the dynamic and interconnected nature of decision making. It shows how decision making is embedded within the frame of principles that guide teachers' practice.

Effective and inclusive decision making recognises and embraces:

- the intentions of children, as well as the teacher
- the capability and potential of all children, irrespective of diverse circumstances and abilities
- the hopes and expectations that families hold for their children
- the perspectives and priorities of educators, families, children and other professionals.

Making decisions involves using a range of key decision-making processes:

- **planning** and organising for learning
- **interacting** and co-constructing learning
- **monitoring** and documenting learning
- **assessing** to inform ongoing decisions about learning, and sharing information with families and other partners
- **reflecting** on learning and practice.

As teachers plan, interact, monitor, assess and reflect, they consider a number of key elements. These elements include:

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

**Inclusion** involves taking into account the social, cultural, physical and linguistic diversity of all children (including learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographic location).

Adapted from DEEWR, EYLF<sup>9</sup>





### *The weaver*

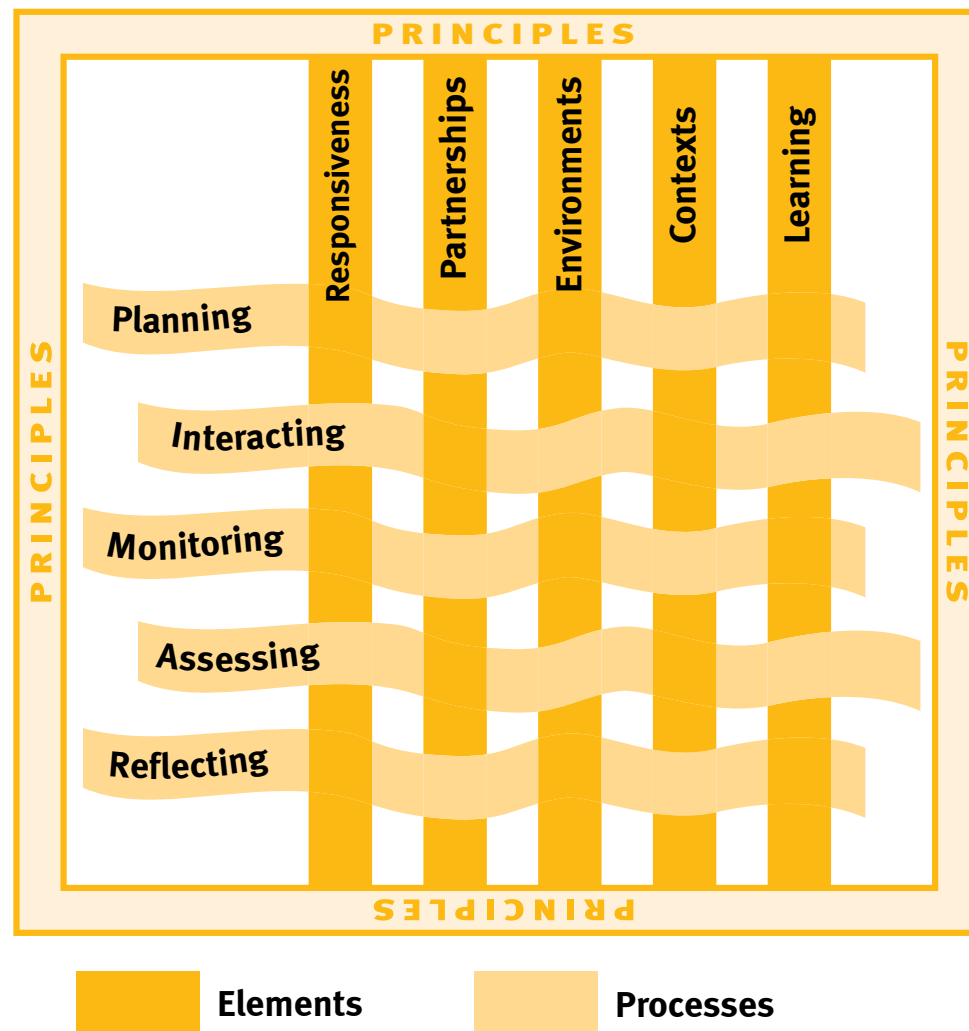
#### **A teacher's description of decision-making practice**

To me, decision making is like weaving a piece of fabric. The **principles** provide the strong frame that holds my decisions together. I continuously apply all 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 assess 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, the 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.

**Early years teacher**

Figure 1: Teachers' decision making — an integrated practice



# Exploring decision-making processes

This chapter provides detailed advice that supports kindergarten teachers to make deliberate and well-informed decisions that promote and enrich children's holistic learning and development. It explores key decision-making processes:

- **Planning** and organising for learning
- **Interacting** and co-constructing learning
- **Monitoring** and documenting learning
- **Assessing** children's learning
- **Reflecting** on learning and practice

The chapter also discusses how teachers effectively respond to children's interests when integrating decision-making processes with their intentional teaching practice.

Appendixes 2 and 3 provide specific advice about supporting children with additional educational requirements.

Decision making is an ongoing and interconnected process that is based on teachers' understandings about and conversations with parents, children and families. Every decision teachers make shapes the quality of the learning environment, relationships, conversations, learning possibilities and the balance established between emerging and planned learning opportunities.





## Planning and organising for learning

Planning involves the integration of long-, medium- and short-term decisions with daily and emergent responses to children's interests and ideas. When planning, teachers focus on individuals, small groups and the whole group.

Children actively contribute to planning and organising for learning when:

- they negotiate ways to follow emerging interests and ideas
- their intentions are understood and embraced
- they reflect on play and learning with an adult
- they choose ways to respond to ideas, objects and questions purposefully introduced by the teacher.

Teachers' plans are informed by their understanding of children's prior learning, strengths, interests and ideas and their judgments about children's current learning, made after analysing evidence of learning. In addition, teachers' plans take into account what children need to become successful learners, and consider partners' understandings, perspectives and priorities. A flexible approach to planning and organising also allows teachers to respond to emerging events and ensures resources are used effectively to promote learning.

When teachers purposefully plan and organise for learning, they identify:

- ways to connect learning with children's family and community experiences
- which aspects of learning and development to focus on for a particular child or group of children
- experiences that effectively build on children's strengths and target learning needs

- aspects of the learning environment to modify, including indoor and outdoor spaces and materials, social interactions and use of time
- the types of play and interactions that will most effectively support and extend learning
- opportunities to engage in real-life experiences that enrich children's lives
- ways to involve children in planning and reflecting on experiences and learning
- effective routines that best cater for children's different and changing needs
- ways to support children through transitions as they arrive and leave or move between spaces or caregivers.

### Documenting planning

Teachers document their intentions for learning and teaching before implementing their plans. They also document emerging learning and teaching opportunities retrospectively. The process of documenting helps clarify the purpose of decisions and makes plans visible to children, families, colleagues and other partners who support children's learning. This is an important aspect of intentional teaching.

Teachers choose documentation formats that:

- effectively support ongoing decision making, are not time intensive and avoid duplication
- help link day-to-day planning for individuals and groups with planning over longer periods of time, e.g. by helping to identify gaps and ensure all significant aspects of learning are promoted.

In addition, teachers identify ways for children and other partners to contribute when documenting and reflecting on planning.



### ***A teacher's description of their planning and organising process***

I think about children from a positive, strengths-based perspective. I make a conscious effort when observing children to look at what they can do, enjoy doing, and what excites them. The information I build up about children using this “way of seeing” helps when I am thinking about and planning ways to extend an interest, the sorts of materials and equipment that could be useful, and the interactions that are needed. When I work with what children can do and are interested in, then I am more likely to have a motivated child.

I also consider the skills a child may find challenging and need for future learning. I weave in the skills that might need more practice with their interests. If a child is interested in building block cities and reluctant to draw, I think about why. Do they need support with confidence, co-ordination skills, or experience? I will add felt pens, paper and clipboards to the block space, with some maps and signs. I will encourage children to represent their plans and ideas visually. I might also introduce construction materials that require hand strength to support this development.

**Early years teacher**



## Interacting and co-constructing learning

Children are active, competent learners who learn through interactions with people, objects, symbols and ideas. Teachers do more than simply set up the learning environment, provide time for play and assume that learning will occur. The quality of teacher interactions has a significant influence on children's levels of involvement in learning experiences and their learning outcomes.

Through interactions, teachers and children jointly construct learning as they collaboratively investigate, explore and build on ideas and thinking. Through these purposeful interactions, teachers also build connections between children's prior, past and future learning across the day and the Kindergarten Year.

When interacting with children, teachers focus on:

- responding to and building on children's interests, ideas and intentions
- inviting children to wonder, imagine and enquire
- building the intellectual quality of learning experiences
- promoting children's learning and development progress
- extending their own and others' understanding of local cultural practices and ways of knowing, being and learning to build continuity in learning
- negotiating learning pathways with children that are culturally and contextually relevant
- collaboratively planning and reflecting on learning with children
- building children's positive dispositions towards learning.

As they interact, teachers are critically aware of the roles they are taking and the balance between teacher and child initiation. This involves:

- building on and respecting children's emerging interests, ideas and intent, rather than taking over or distracting children from their focus
- introducing ideas and learning possibilities based on their observations, reflections, and understanding of children's current and future learning needs
- identifying learning opportunities and teachable moments
- using a wide range of intentional interactions to scaffold and support children as they co-construct learning within play experiences, real-life engagements and routines and transitions.

Appendix 1 provides specific advice about intentional teaching practices such as active listening, questioning, engaging in sustained and meaningful learning conversations, introducing ideas and language, modelling, explaining, collaborating and challenging ideas.



## Monitoring and documenting learning

Teachers monitor children's learning through observation, supported by conversations with the child or children. Teachers adopt a purposeful approach to observation that allows them to identify significant learning when it occurs and confirm that each child's learning is progressing across all areas of learning and development.

Teachers selectively document their observations of significant learning identified in the kindergarten learning and development areas. This documentation provides evidence of children's current knowledge, skills and dispositions. Teachers also confer with each child, their family and other partners to support their overall understanding of the child.

The information and advice that teachers gather helps them to form a "point-in-time snapshot" of each child's learning that informs their ongoing work with that child. This snapshot is constantly changing and developing as new information about the child is gathered and interpreted.

Observations and conversations can be documented using:

- anecdotal records and learning stories
- notes from discussions or conversations
- annotated samples of children's learning and objects or products that result from learning
- annotated images, recordings or multimedia records
- personalised checklists
- personal reflections by children, parents, family members, teachers and other partners.

Folios are a useful way for teachers to organise documentation of observations. A folio is a dynamic record of an individual child's learning and may include artefacts the child produces, records of conversations and interactions they engage in, and information on the relationships they establish.

Teachers choose a folio format that best suits their way of working and is easy to manage and maintain. It is important to regularly review, replace and select evidence of learning so that the folio reflects the child's current knowledge, skills and dispositions.



## Resources

The *Queensland kindergarten learning guideline* professional development materials on the QSA website <[www.qsa.qld.edu.au](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au)> include sample tools for monitoring and documenting learning.



## Assessing children's learning

When assessing children's learning, teachers review the documented evidence of learning they have collected. The main purpose of assessment is to inform short- and long-term planning to promote children's ongoing learning.

Assessment to support learning involves interpreting documented evidence and making judgments about a child's learning to:

- recognise and celebrate their learning
- identify their strengths, interests, ways of learning and relating and learning needs
- identify barriers to their learning and provide appropriate support
- inform future decisions, e.g. selecting interactional strategies and resources
- share information with families and other partners.

Assessment is an integral part of the overall process of decision making that is enhanced when teachers engage children, parents, families, colleagues and other partners in the process. For example, teachers and other partners can support children to assess their own and others' learning through focused learning conversations.

## Interpreting and making judgments

Teachers may interpret single pieces of evidence of children's learning. The judgments they make inform their moment-by-moment and day-to-day decisions about the learning environment, ways to work most effectively with partners, and interactions with children to promote learning.

Teachers also make judgments by considering evidence gathered over time. These judgments inform long-term planning and conversations with partners about children's learning. Teachers regularly reflect on their assessments of individual children while ensuring that they also



consider the learning progress of the group as a whole. They use this information to identify short- and long-term focuses for intentionally promoting knowledge, skills and dispositions identified in the learning and development areas.

Making judgments about learning enables teachers to be responsive to children, parents and families. To make consistent judgments about children's learning, teachers use their knowledge of the phases of learning and development along a continuum.

The *Continua of learning and development: Queensland kindergarten learning guideline companion* supports this guideline and provides advice to help teachers make consistent judgments about children's learning progress. See pages 34–37 of this guideline for advice about using the continua.

## Resources

The *Continua of learning and development* is available from the QSA website <[www.qsa.qld.edu.au](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au)>.

## Reflecting on learning and practice

Reflection is an integral part of teaching. It informs teachers' ongoing decision making and is essential for sustaining and enhancing professional learning and practice. Reflection builds insight, inspires teachers to explore new ways to improve learning and relationships, and provides starting points for making decisions about curriculum. It supports teachers to justify their decisions, connect theory to practice and maintain accountability and integrity in their practice. It also provides a way of identifying and addressing professional development needs.

Effective reflection takes time, commitment and courage. Reflection that is collaborative and supportive is particularly powerful for promoting professional learning and change. It requires partners to respect and value diverse viewpoints and consider the relevance of new insights for their kindergarten settings. When reflection leads to a change in practice, teachers need to carefully plan ways to manage the complexities that arise, since any change is likely to impact on other decisions, practices and partners.

Teachers reflect “on action” when an aspect of practice is complete (such as at the end of a day, term or year) as well as “in action”, as they are interacting with children and other partners. Reflection in action is an essential component of responsive practice and supports teachers to make spontaneous decisions informed by their interpretations of children's interactions.

Table 1: Dimensions of reflection

Dimension	Examples of teacher reflections
<b>Technical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>considering the effective and balanced use of decision-making elements</li> <li>developing ways to plan, interact, monitor, document, assess and reflect</li> <li>assessing the effectiveness and balance of learning opportunities across the five learning and development areas</li> </ul>
<b>Practical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>thinking about what is happening in the program, why it is happening, considering future directions and planning ways to get there</li> <li>finding ways to more effectively promote a child's or children's learning, e.g. planning for conversations, questions, spaces, materials, routines, partnerships and learning contexts</li> <li>considering different points of view and interpretations of events and interactions, e.g. how children, families, educators or colleagues feel about what is happening</li> </ul>
<b>Critical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifying whose views, intentions, or ideas are dominating or being overlooked</li> <li>examining values, beliefs, assumptions, biases and understandings</li> <li>examining expectations, decisions and interactions that may marginalise or create barriers to learning or the engagement of partners</li> <li>identifying ways to address barriers and promote equity, fairness and social justice</li> </ul>

Adapted from DEEWR, *EYLF*<sup>10</sup>



When reflecting on practice, teachers consider different dimensions of practice, as shown in Table 1 (page 15). The principles that guide practice as well as the decision-making processes and elements provide focuses for ongoing reflection.

While reflection often involves “self talk” during or after interactions, it is also important for teachers to record some reflections. Documenting reflections allows ideas, relationships, issues and possibilities to be explored, clarified and revisited.

### *Reflecting on learning*

Teachers reflect on children’s learning while engaging with them in learning — at the end of a day (when documenting learning), week or term. Ongoing reflection on learning guides decisions about children’s future learning and enables teachers to:

- identify starting points for learning that build on children’s identified strengths, talents, motivations, interests and needs
- respond sensitively and purposefully to children’s emerging play, ideas, feelings, interests and intentions
- identify the knowledge, skills and dispositions that children are developing
- plan ways to promote significant aspects of learning the following day, week or over a longer period
- identify ways to support and include all children in the learning
- identify different pathways and approaches to learning that best suit diverse children.

Teachers draw on their interactions, observations and assessments of individual children as well as the whole group’s progress to inform their reflections. They consider children’s current learning and what learning needs to be strengthened to promote children’s future success as learners.



## Reflecting with partners

Reflective practice engages a variety of partners, including children, parents, families, colleagues and community members. The focus for reflecting with different partners may vary and shift across time and in response to emerging needs and local situations.

Teachers support children to reflect on their learning by modelling ways to talk about what and how they are learning; asking specific questions; scaffolding using photographs, diagrams and questions; and supporting them to share reflections and responses by drawing, painting, talking and role-playing.

Through informal and formal interactions, teachers gather information about different family and community perspectives, priorities and goals and consider these in their day-to-day interactions and long-term planning. Engaging with parents, family and community members in reflection helps teachers to change their practice in ways that are responsive and empowering to children's learning communities.

## Reflecting for professional growth

Opportunities to engage with a wide range of people and reflect on different aspects of early years practice are essential for building and maintaining quality learning programs. Professional growth opportunities need to be well planned and supported by leaders and managers to build a culture of collaborative professional inquiry. Committing time and energy to professional development and reflection has value for everyone working in the kindergarten setting and benefits the children and families who access the service.

Teachers actively seek to engage with colleagues and the wider professional community as a way of reinvigorating and sustaining their professional wellbeing and enjoyment of teaching young children. They enhance their professional growth through active reflection when:

- attending formal professional development opportunities
- engaging with team members and colleagues within their service, e.g. during focused staff discussions or when implementing action learning projects
- networking with other early years colleagues, face-to-face or online
- accessing and engaging critically with current professional readings
- engaging with new local, state and national initiatives related to education in the early years.

Engaging in a range of professional growth opportunities allows all professional partners to consider other perspectives, challenge their thinking, question their assumptions and identify new possibilities for responsive practices.

Figure 2 (page 18) shows the central role reflection plays in decision-making practice. The diagram also identifies how the decision-making elements are embedded within informed decision-making practice and shows the relationships between the five decision-making processes.



**Figure 2: Informed decision making**



# Exploring decision-making elements

This chapter explores each of the decision-making elements:

- **Responsiveness** to children
- Building inclusive **partnerships**
- Creating inclusive learning **environments**
- Developing learning **contexts**
- Promoting children's **learning** and development

The chapter also identifies why each element is important, how it contributes to decision making, what teachers focus on when making decisions and how they use related intentional teaching practices.

Key decision-making elements provide focuses for teachers when they plan, interact, monitor, assess and reflect. Careful attention to each of the key elements helps teachers to create rich educational experiences that spark children's interests and enthusiasm for learning. When combined with decision-making processes, the key elements assist teachers to develop a dynamic, responsive and changing kindergarten program.





## Responsiveness to children

Responsiveness to children is a cornerstone of a quality kindergarten learning program. Responsive programs promote children's sense of belonging and build their positive dispositions towards learning. Being responsive, involves:

- adopting a view of children as active, competent, capable and creative learners
- holding high expectations and promoting all children's success
- embracing the diverse social and cultural knowledge, languages and ways of knowing and being that children bring to kindergarten.

### *What do teachers focus on?*

Responsive teachers genuinely know the children they work with. They focus on understanding and valuing:

- children's ways of being and knowing, their strengths, abilities, talents, motivations and needs
- the values, hopes and priorities that parents, family and community members hold for these children
- children's learning and experiences in other services and settings.

Responsive teachers focus on building strong, trusting relationships with children, parents, families and community members. They also build their own cultural competence, so that they can effectively communicate and interact with partners in culturally sensitive ways and support children's learning.

During play and other active learning experiences, responsive teachers focus on:

- honouring children's ideas, interests, intentions and play to promote children's sense of ownership of their learning
- being attuned to children's emerging and changing feelings, needs and interests
- supporting and including all children so they can engage fully in learning
- learning with children and sharing decision making
- anticipating and using teachable moments to promote learning in ways that are relevant and meaningful to children
- helping children to transition as they enter the program, move between experiences and spaces, and engage with different people.



When working with children with additional needs, teachers focus on understanding each child's strengths and the strategies they bring that will help them to engage in the learning environment. This involves working closely with parents, families and other support personnel to provide inclusive, responsive and differentiated learning opportunities for children.

Children come to kindergarten with diverse strengths. For example, a child may have the ability to speak a first language other than English. Where possible, teachers encourage children to use their first language to express ideas and engage in learning. They also build children's capacity to use Standard Australian English (SAE) for learning and identify alternative ways that children can show their learning when engaging with others who do not speak their first language, e.g. using gestures, actions, facial expressions, or SAE approximations.

## Intentional teaching practices

Teachers recognise that their own social and cultural experiences and the professional perspectives and principles that guide their practice shape their responses to children. Responsive teachers use a range of intentional teaching practices, including:

- establishing safe and nurturing relationships with children
- interpreting children's responses as they participate in learning experiences in the here and now
- building their understanding of the interacting factors that affect children's learning and development, e.g. through observations of children and shared conversations with parents, families and colleagues
- building professional knowledge about strategies for working with children and families with diverse abilities, needs, suspected or identified disabilities and gifted learners, their parents and families
- using knowledge of children, parents and their families to support learning
- providing opportunities for children to demonstrate knowledge, skills and dispositions in multiple ways and in a variety of contexts
- coordinating information, support, skills and resources with parents and other partners to help children transition smoothly across and between services, kindergarten and home and into the Preparatory Year.

Teachers enhance their intentional teaching practice when they:

- monitor and selectively document significant aspects of children's learning, interests, and their ways of relating to others and approaching learning
- differentiate plans and interactions to address barriers and cater for the educational requirements of children with diverse backgrounds, strengths, needs and abilities



- involve children in decision making and incorporate their interests and ideas into planned learning opportunities
- interact purposefully with children in learning conversations to extend their thinking, e.g. posing questions to evoke wonder or sensitively introducing ideas and resources to enrich learning
- reflect on their understandings about children, how they interact with and respond to children and the learning experiences they value and support.



## Building inclusive partnerships

Building partnerships is an exciting, complicated and dynamic process that takes time. Teachers foster inclusive partnerships when they recognise and value the complexity and diversity of children's home lives and family structures. This involves drawing together the experiences, beliefs, practices and social and cultural knowledge of many individuals.

This guideline recognises and values the vital role parents, carers and family members play in children's lives and learning. Parents, families and teachers together promote children's wellbeing, and enthusiasm and success in learning by creating continuity between home and kindergarten. They also establish shared high expectations that reflect the priorities held by family, community and professional partners. Within supportive relationships, children build their confidence and sense of trust, and feel respected. As a member of a learning community, children experience a sense of connectedness with others and begin to see how rights, responsibilities and respect form part of everyday interactions.

When all partners have a voice and share in decision making, they begin to feel empowered and connected with others. Engaged teachers purposefully create opportunities for partners to contribute to children's learning in a variety of ways, such as supporting children to make choices, involving parents in the program, inviting community members to share their cultural heritage and collaborating with support personnel to identify ways to support children with additional needs.

Partnerships are characterised by respect and trust. They may be formal and informal and operate within short- or long-term time frames. When interacting with different partners, teachers consider communication styles and language preferences. For example, a teacher may create a visual planning board for a child to communicate their play choices, or arrange for a language speaker to support a visitor when sharing their culture in their first language.

## What do teachers focus on?

Teachers focus on building genuine relationships founded on respect, empathy, consideration and effective communication with parents, children, families and local community members. When teachers establish these relationships, they create inclusive environments that help children to feel that their culture is acknowledged and valued.

### Family and community partnerships

Teachers follow cultural protocols to build connections with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and seek to build their own cultural competence. They develop:

- specific knowledge about the local Indigenous peoples, e.g. languages, relationships with country and place, and local protocols
- understanding of the cultural heritages, languages and practices of children and families accessing their service
- understanding and respect for diverse ways of knowing and being.

These relationships and understandings enable teachers to help all children to learn about and respect the first peoples of Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their own and others' cultures and heritage and to celebrate Australia's cultural diversity.

Teachers develop genuine, collaborative partnerships with families, communities, and teachers when they:

- create welcoming environments that invite parents, carers and family members to participate
- respect and use culturally appropriate protocols and practices in communications with parents, families and community members
- communicate openly using informal and formal strategies that recognise families' preferences for language and communication style



**Family partners** include children, parents, carers, kinship carers, and family members.

**Community partners** include members of the local community, volunteers and Elders.

**Professional partners** include colleagues and inter-agency support personnel, such as early years educators (other teachers, group leaders, assistants and directors); administrative officers; licensees; special needs, health and social workers; and therapists and psychologists involved in prior-to-school, school and community settings.



- establish regular communication and share information about children's learning to build a holistic picture of each child and engage parents and families in supporting children's learning
- address the diverse concerns and priorities of parents and families to remove potential barriers to learning
- invite families and community members to contribute to decision-making processes, e.g. establishing priorities for learning.

### Professional partnerships

Educators, support personnel and professional colleagues develop quality partnerships when they:

- value diverse backgrounds, skills and understandings, while also contributing their particular professional expertise
- are flexible and build understandings of the setting, demands on colleagues' time and their professional practices
- identify strategies for promoting effective and open communication
- contribute and promote each others' engagement, satisfaction and professional growth
- maintain a shared focus on children and maximising their learning.

### Intentional teaching practices

Teachers develop partnerships with children when they engage children as members of a learning community in making choices and contributing to decisions that affect their learning. They develop inclusive partnerships when they:

- build exciting, interesting and challenging environments that invite children to participate and that reflect children's cultural identity and heritage

- create learning programs that reflect important aspects of children's social and cultural lives and the contributions children make in their communities
- use intentional teaching strategies that are culturally sensitive, and recognise and extend children's preferred contexts for learning
- provide learning experiences that connect with family or community priorities
- build connections between children's experiences at home, in kindergarten and other settings and services
- engage children in decision-making processes, e.g. making choices about play, materials and ways to engage in new learning experiences.

### Privacy and ethical considerations

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 consider privacy, ethics and legislation when working with partners and sharing information about children, families and communities.

Teachers may be working with primary caregivers who care for children in kinship care arrangements. "Kinship care is provided by a person who is a relative, considered to be family or a close friend, or is a member of the child or young person's community. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, a kinship carer may be another Indigenous person who is a member of their community, a compatible community or from the same language group."<sup>11</sup> If a child is in kinship care, teachers need to seek permission from the birth parent or aunty to discuss or share information according to community protocols.





## Creating inclusive learning environments

Teachers plan and create welcoming, safe and nurturing environments to promote children's holistic learning and development. Inclusive environments acknowledge and value children's diverse abilities and social and cultural backgrounds. This helps all children to develop their sense of belonging and being, and supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to build connections between familiar ways of knowing and being, and kindergarten learning.

Establishing challenging social, physical and temporal environments that evoke curiosity, imagination and wonder extends children's thinking and engages them with concepts that are important for their success in learning. Carefully planned 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.

### *What do teachers focus on?*

Kindergarten environments send strong messages to children, parents, families and the community about the kinds of learning that are valued. Therefore, teachers focus on purposefully creating environments that are inviting, flexible and inclusive of children's and families' diverse needs, interests and abilities. This involves building their own cultural competence and collaborating with parents and other partners to ensure that the learning environment reflects shared ideas, beliefs and values, identities and cultures. Teachers also acknowledge the cultural significance of outdoor environments for many children, families and communities. Providing a balance of learning experiences in both indoor and outdoor settings enables children to learn in familiar and new environments.

Teachers focus on creating learning environments that invite children to:

- wonder, be curious and enthusiastic, and share their joy and excitement
- have fun, relax, enjoy quiet times, be noisy, watch from a distance or join in
- feel secure, 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
- be healthy, safe and hygienic and promote wellbeing
- engage all the senses, including visual, auditory and kinaesthetic modes, and explore beauty and aesthetics
- engage in all the areas of learning and development.

Teachers balance the need for well-planned, organised environments with children's rights to make choices and take ownership of their learning. They pay careful attention to the range and quality of materials available to children, the location and accessibility of materials, and the effective use of indoor and outdoor space.

Teachers also use a variety of time management techniques to allocate time for communicating informally, and occasionally formally, with all partners in the learning community. For example, the teacher might make time to chat with parents or carers at the beginning and end of the day, display the daily planning, organise a helpers' roster, or invite partners to contribute to diary entries or record messages in a communication book.

### *Intentional teaching practices*

Teachers create inclusive learning environments when they purposefully plan and organise the physical, social and temporal elements of the learning environment. Figure 3 (page 25) identifies how intentional teaching is made evident when planning and organising quality learning environments.

**Figure 3: Intentional teaching evident in inclusive learning environments**

Physical environment	Social environment	Temporal environment
<p>Teachers make decisions in collaboration with children parents and other partners about the use of space, location of resources and variety of materials that children can use in indoor and outdoor spaces. Shared decision making facilitates children's learning, fosters positive social behaviours and helps them to feel empowered to make choices.</p> <p>The careful selection and arrangement of materials helps teachers to focus children's interest and attention. Teachers and children plan ways to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• promote play, independence and collaboration by positioning materials to encourage easy access and exploration</li><li>• provoke new learning through careful selection of materials that can be used in multiple ways</li><li>• encourage meaningful conversation and intentional interactions through the rearrangement of materials to ignite new interests</li><li>• challenge thinking by providing a range of materials that vary in attributes, e.g. size and scale</li><li>• group materials together with similar or different attributes, e.g. texture, aesthetic qualities to help children notice and explore the similarities and differences</li><li>• promote respect for resources through organised, visually appealing displays that invite children to explore materials and return them to their correct location.</li></ul>	<p>Teachers organise the social learning environment in ways that support a range of positive social interactions. Teachers plan ways to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• support children's interactions with people, ideas and language</li><li>• build confidence and independence</li><li>• sustain respectful relationships</li><li>• engage a variety of partners to enhance children's learning</li><li>• respond to children's changing feelings, physical, social and medical needs</li><li>• respond to the changing and emerging interests of children</li><li>• provide choice and opportunities to participate in decision making</li><li>• extend on the diversity of children's social and cultural experiences.</li></ul>	<p>Teachers respond sensitively to shifts in children's needs, and build continuity across the day providing a sense of predictability that supports children's wellbeing. Teachers ensure that the flow of the day is calm and unhurried for children and provides a balance of quiet, active, individual and group experiences to help focus learning.</p> <p>Teachers use time flexibly. This includes organising time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• uninterrupted play</li><li>• children to participate in real-life engagements, e.g. cooking, gardening, investigations, visits, meal and rest times</li><li>• group experiences, e.g. shared reading, music and movement</li><li>• children to participate in conversations, reflection and planning</li><li>• building on children's emerging interests and needs as an individual, and as part of a group</li><li>• working and communicating with partners to review, reflect, document and plan.</li></ul>



## 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. When children actively engage with other partners in these contexts, they build relationships, co-construct learning, reconstruct ideas and reflect on new ways to make sense of the world. These contexts also provide opportunities to help strengthen children's wellbeing, sense of identity and pride in their cultural heritage by building connections to people, place and language.

Play, real-life engagements, and routines and transitions provide opportunities for children to share decision making and be supported to make choices. The more choices children have about their learning experiences, the greater the degree of involvement in their learning.<sup>12</sup>

Children's prior and current social and cultural experiences will influence their ways of engaging in the three learning contexts. Diverse values and practices shape children's experiences with play, their play preferences and ways of engaging and relating to others during play. Prior and current experiences will also influence how children connect with real-life engagements organised by teachers and how they adapt to routines within the kindergarten setting.

## What do teachers focus on?

Teachers carefully plan learning contexts to build knowledge, skills and dispositions described in the five learning and development areas. They focus on developing experiences with children that help them to:

- learn through multiple sensory pathways
- explore, manipulate, experiment, create and imagine
- investigate, question, hypothesise and wonder
- negotiate, make choices, express ideas and collaborate with others
- ask questions, extend ideas and challenge thinking
- explore issues associated with diversity, inclusion, equity and social justice
- build connections to people, place, language and cultural heritage
- explore a variety of roles and relationships
- share experiences and learn about their world
- reflect on new learning
- feel happy and develop a strong sense of belonging
- build connections between family experiences and kindergarten.

## Intentional teaching practices

### Play

Play is the primary context through which young children learn. Kindergarten children are encouraged to engage in a variety of types of play in both indoor and outdoor learning environments.

How teachers understand play is particularly important. This understanding shapes what teachers value about play, the pedagogical approaches they use to support play, the nature of their interactions with children and the interpretations of play experiences. Reflective teachers are attuned to their own patterns of interactions with





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 Fleer<sup>13</sup>

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 consider how to:

- create play-based learning environments that are open, inviting and interesting, and that will motivate and excite children's interests
- offer choice, build a positive group climate and stimulate children to take the initiative
- support play opportunities that emerge from children's ideas and interests as well as adult-initiated and negotiated play
- engage children in decision making about the types of play, resources, materials and spaces they use for their play (see Table 2)
- actively engage with children in play, observe play and use intentional teaching practices to support children's learning through play (see Appendix 1)
- use teachable moments to help children consider others' perspectives, challenging and extending children's thinking through play, or taking on shifting and changing roles
- be 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.

**Table 2: Examples of play types**

Type of play	Description
<b>Dramatic</b>	Children take on roles within pretend games about familiar experiences, e.g. going on a family fishing trip, sharing a family meal or celebration.
<b>Fantasy</b>	Children create props and use these as they engage in fantasy adventures, e.g. creating an ocean floor using sheets for water and baskets for rocks in an underwater adventure.
<b>Exploratory</b>	Children explore the properties and functions of materials, equipment and objects, e.g. experimenting with a tool to find out how it works with clay or dough, using a magnifying glass to view different objects.
<b>Manipulative</b>	Children manipulate and explore objects, parts and materials, e.g. threading beads, doing puzzles, using construction sets.
<b>Physical</b>	Children explore movements and ways to combine movements, e.g. running and playing ball, jumping, climbing, dancing, moving on an obstacle course.
<b>Games with rules</b>	Children follow or create rules to reach a shared objective in a game, e.g. playing outdoor games; following child-created games with rules; playing computer, board and card games.





## Real-life engagements

When teachers plan real-life engagements, they consider the priorities of parents, 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:

- caring for class pets, plants or a garden
- cooking experiences
- helping to keep the environment clean and healthy
- visiting community places, e.g. the local library
- investigating science and technology, e.g. investigating properties of materials, such as sand and water; ways to make toys move; which objects float or sink; the lifecycle of a silkworm; how seeds are dispersed
- experimenting with materials and tools for real purposes, e.g. using sticky tape to fix a torn painting, grating cheese
- engaging in making music by singing and playing instruments
- investigating art materials, tools and techniques, e.g. printing, collage, painting, drawing, sculpting and constructing with 3-D materials
- talking with visitors about their family or work roles, histories and experiences
- participating in cultural experiences or celebrations, e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' stories, dance and music
- using language, literacy and numeracy for real purposes, e.g. recounting personal experiences; measuring ingredients; sharing (dividing) food they have cooked; writing a message to a friend; reading and responding to a story, recipe or sign
- using books and ICTs to investigate a topic of interest.



## Routines and transitions

Routines and transitions are an integral and meaningful part of the kindergarten day and learning program. Routines include daily organisational practices, such as meal times, rest and relaxation, toileting, tidying up, greetings and farewells, and group learning times. Transitions help children to manage changes across the day, e.g. related to staff rosters and the regrouping of children into mixed or age-specific groups. They also help children to move smoothly between experiences, parts of the day and play spaces.

Routines at kindergarten may be different from home experiences, or not be a part of children's daily experiences. Teachers talk with parents and carers to enrich their understanding about family practices and routines in non-judgmental ways. Using knowledge of family routines helps teachers to support children and build bridges between home and kindergarten.

Teachers collaborate with colleagues so that routines and transitions:

- are carefully planned and negotiated with children
- are flexible and responsive, e.g. to children's variable attendance patterns and changing moods
- help to minimise the levels of stress that children experience
- support children to become increasingly independent and confident.

Routines and transitions provide opportunities to:

- focus and settle the group, e.g. singing a familiar song or quietly looking at a self-selected book
- introduce concepts and explore patterns and relationships between objects, e.g. counting or identifying similarities and differences in a transition game
- recall information and share ideas, e.g. share a personal event or knowledge about animals



- learn and practise skills, e.g. serving food or moving in different ways as they take turns to go to the bathroom
- plan, share and reflect on learning, e.g. learning to care for themselves and staying healthy by washing hands before meals
- learn to relax, rest and enjoy quiet time, e.g. ways to become calm and quiet so their body can rest
- build new relationships and work with others, e.g. greet friends, chat over meals, help tidy up
- learn and practise listening and speaking conventions, e.g. in group conversations
- learn to wait, share and take turns, e.g. in circle games.

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<sup>13</sup>

## 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 from birth to five years identified in the *EYLF*,<sup>15</sup> as shown in Table 3 (page 32). This figure also shows the key focuses and significant learnings within each learning and development area.

The learning and development areas describe the breadth of knowledge, skills and dispositions that children

explore during the Kindergarten Year within a holistic learning program. In addition, teachers work with parents, carers, the community and other partners to negotiate learning and development priorities.

The kindergarten learning and development areas and the 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
- share information about children's learning in meaningful ways with parents and other partners
- work with partners to promote continuity in children's prior, present and future learning and experiences.

See pages 38–62 for detailed information about the learning and development areas, related *EYLF* broad learning outcomes, and intentional teaching practices.

### What do teachers focus on?

Teachers consider children's prior, current and future learning when making decisions about how, when and to what depth children will engage in particular learning. As children's everyday language is the starting point for concept development, teachers work with parents, families, the community and colleagues to identify ways to value and build on all children's diverse language and experiential backgrounds.

Where possible, teachers work with partners to strengthen children's first languages, traditional languages and/or Aboriginal English, while expanding children's ability to use SAE. They also build their understanding of community and cultural literacies, texts and numeracy practices, and embrace these within the learning program. Building connections between prior and current experiences enables children to develop language, concepts, and dispositions needed for future learning success.

Teachers gather information through observations, professional readings and conversations to:

- build their understanding of children, families and communities, and cultures and languages, e.g. to understand how a child's multilingual background impacts on how they learn other languages including SAE, and to build new concepts and skills





- negotiate and adjust learning and development priorities and approaches, e.g. to integrate community health, safety or sustainability projects; or to expand children's skills in using their first language
- identify the knowledge, skills and dispositions children need to build to be successful learners now and in the future.

### *Intentional teaching practices*

The learning and development areas in this guideline provide examples of intentional teaching related to each key focus and significant learning. In addition, teachers purposefully engage in ongoing reflection and examine the assumptions that underpin:

- expectations of all children and priorities for learning and development
- 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 all children with diverse abilities and needs engage in rich learning
- ways to work with parents, families, educators and other partners to most effectively support children's learning
- how they plan; interact intentionally to promote learning; and monitor, assess and share information about children's learning progress with relevant partners.

When teachers engage in reflection, this has the potential to enrich their capacity to be responsive and better meet the needs of a diverse range of children.

The term "Aboriginal English" has been used to refer to a range of different language varieties spoken by Aboriginal people in Queensland and throughout Australia, including different creoles as well as other non-standard varieties and dialects. A single meaning of the term "Aboriginal English" should therefore never be assumed in the Queensland context due to its many possible meanings.

Department of Education, Queensland <sup>16</sup>



## Learning and development areas

**Table 3: The relationship between *EYLF* learning outcomes and Queensland kindergarten learning and development areas**

<b>Identity</b>  Related <i>EYLF</i> learning outcome: Children have a strong sense of identity	Key focus	Significant learnings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building a sense of security and trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A sense of being safe, accepted and supported</li> <li>A sense of belonging and confidence in others</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acting with increasing independence and perseverance</li> <li>Building a confident self-identity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organising self and belongings and managing routines</li> <li>Making choices</li> <li>Willingness to keep trying</li> <li>Pride and confidence in who they are, their family and culture</li> <li>Pride and confidence in their strengths and abilities</li> <li>Confidence in themselves as learners</li> </ul>
<b>Connectedness</b>  Related <i>EYLF</i> learning outcome: Children are connected with and contribute to their world	Key focus	Significant learnings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building positive relationships with others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills for connecting with and relating to others</li> <li>Awareness of own and others' rights and responsibilities</li> <li>Understandings about fairness</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Showing increasing respect for diversity</li> <li>Showing increasing respect for environments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ways to respond to others with respect</li> <li>Interest in their own and others' cultures and heritages</li> <li>Exploring aspects of culture and similarities and differences among people</li> <li>An awareness of bias and stereotyping</li> <li>Caring for and respecting environments</li> <li>Ways to investigate and understand natural and built environments</li> <li>Exploring interactions between people and environments</li> </ul>
<b>Wellbeing</b>  Related <i>EYLF</i> learning outcome: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing	Key focus	Significant learnings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building a sense of autonomy and wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delight in making decisions and choices (agency)</li> <li>Courage and resilience to manage change and challenges</li> <li>Ways to understand and regulate emotions</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring ways to show care and concern and interact positively with others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interest in and desire to interact with others</li> <li>Considering and empathising with others</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring ways to promote own and others' health and safety</li> <li>Exploring ways to promote physical wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ways to manage personal hygiene and self-care</li> <li>Ways to stay healthy and safe</li> <li>Control and strength for manipulating objects, tools and equipment</li> <li>Large movement skills, movement control, coordination and strength</li> <li>Confidence to engage in movement challenges</li> </ul>

<b>Active learning</b>  Related <i>EYLF</i> learning outcome: Children are confident and involved learners	Key focus	Significant learnings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building positive dispositions and approaches toward learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enthusiasm for learning and curiosity</li> <li>Problem solving and investigating</li> <li>Applying and reflecting on learning</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing confidence and involvement in learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confidence, interest and involvement in learning</li> <li>Making choices and organising resources for learning</li> <li>Ways to contribute to learning conversations</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging in ways to be imaginative and creative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A sense of wonder, imagination and creativity</li> <li>Ways to creatively represent ideas, feelings and experiences</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring tools, technologies and information and communication technologies (ICTs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using tools and technologies in play and active learning</li> <li>Using information and communication technologies for a range of purposes</li> </ul>

<b>Communicating</b>  Related <i>EYLF</i> learning outcome: Children are effective communicators	Key focus	Significant learnings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring and expanding ways to use language*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spoken and nonverbal communication</li> <li>Age-appropriate speech patterns, vocabulary and sentence structures</li> <li>Using language for a range of purposes</li> <li>Skills for listening and taking turns in conversations</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring and engaging with literacy in personally meaningful ways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive engagement with a variety of print and multimedia texts and the arts</li> <li>Exploring symbols and patterns in language</li> <li>Exploring text purposes and meanings</li> <li>Confidence and interest in exploring reading and writing behaviours</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring and engaging with numeracy in personally meaningful ways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring number symbols and their purposes</li> <li>Confidence and interest in counting and exploring patterns and relationships</li> <li>Exploring mathematical thinking, concepts and language</li> </ul>

\* **Note:** Children communicate using first language, signed (alternative) or alternative augmentative communication (AAC) and Standard Australian English (SAE) as or when appropriate. Nonverbal children may substitute alternative or AAC for words. See also the professional development materials.

## Promoting continuity of learning and development: the continua and transition statement

Promoting continuity involves teachers mapping children's learning and development along a continuum, and sharing information about children's learning progress with partners. To promote children's ongoing success, teachers build positive relationships between all partners involved in children's learning in prior-to-school and school settings. Effective communication between parents, carers, children and early years colleagues enables all partners to support children as they transition between settings.

Sharing understandings about children's learning and the learning programs provided in different settings allows parents, carers, family members and colleagues to:

- explicitly promote the skills and dispositions that help children to make smooth transitions, feel comfortable in new settings and maintain their identity in these settings
- plan ways to help children to gradually understand expectations, interactions, routines and practices associated with new social and physical learning environments
- identify different pathways and approaches to transitions that best suit diverse children and families
- identify starting points for learning that build on children's identified strengths, talents, motivations, interests and learning needs.

Teachers use their understandings about children's past, present and future learning to inform their ongoing decisions. Using the companion document to the guideline, the *Continua of learning and development*, as a professional resource helps teachers assess and reflect on evidence of children's learning progress and plan ways to promote continuity of children's learning development.

Figure 4: Promoting continuity — interpreting observations to inform planning

## 06/11/10 Context/commentary

Child's name: Lei

Lei played in the sandpit independently. She was happy and enjoyed building alone for about 15 minutes.

She referred to the drawn labels on the containers to locate (and later put away) the equipment she needed.

Once she had built a sand castle she chose different equipment to smooth and then mark lines/dots on the sand castle. She shook the sand off each piece of equipment as she returned the items. Without prompts, she worked with another child to help carry the containers into the shed.

<b>Learning and development area</b> <b>Identity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is building a sense of security and trust</li><li>• acts with increasing independence and perseverance</li><li>• is building a confident self-identity</li></ul>	Plays independently in familiar play situations
<b>Connectedness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is building positive relationships with others</li><li>• shows increasing respect for diversity</li><li>• shows increasing respect for environments.</li></ul>	Follows routines to take responsibility for equipment without prompts
<b>Wellbeing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is building a sense of autonomy and wellbeing</li><li>• explores ways to show care and concern and engages positively with others</li><li>• explores ways to promote their own and others' health and safety</li><li>• explores ways to promote their physical wellbeing.</li></ul>	Appears happy and content when playing alone  Able to manipulate tools and objects with control to make repeated line patterns
<b>Active Learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is building positive dispositions and approaches towards learning</li><li>• shows increasing confidence and involvement in learning</li><li>• engages in ways to be imaginative and creative</li><li>• explores tool, technologies and information and communication technologies (ICTs).</li></ul>	Motivated to actively manipulate objects and tools in familiar learning situations
<b>Communicating</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• explores and expands ways to use language</li><li>• explores and engages with literacy in personally meaningful ways</li><li>• explores and engages with numeracy in personally meaningful ways.</li></ul>	Refers to symbols and print for real purposes
<b>Analysis/judgments and future planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observe and encourage Lei to engage in cooperative play situations</li><li>• Provide a range of marking tools in sand pit/other play areas e.g. paint easel – to extend fine motor control</li><li>• Engage and talk with Lei about using symbols and labels in a range of contexts (e.g. icons used to play a computer game, labels used in play areas) – introduce language for talking about letters/visuals and their use/meanings.</li></ul>	

### The continua: Phases of learning and development

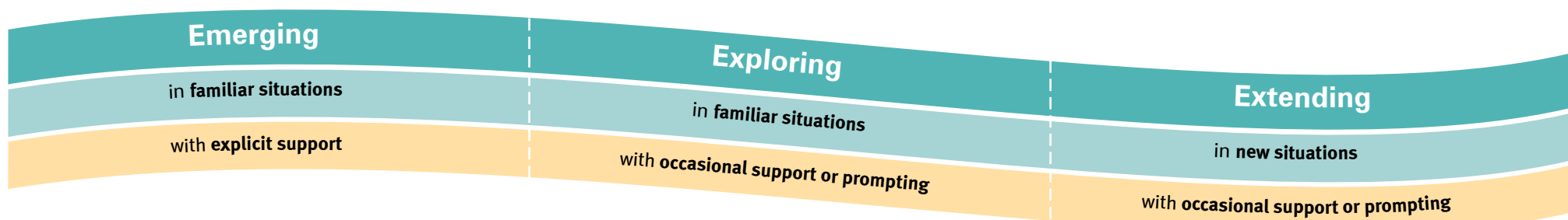
The continua are described using three phases — emerging, exploring and extending — and differentiated by the child's level of familiarity with the learning situation and the level of support the child required to demonstrate learning (see Figure 5, page 35). The continua support teachers to:

- identify and reflect on where the child has come from, where they are now, and where they are going

- monitor and interpret particular aspects of learning, and describe the child's learning progress
- identify and plan ways to promote significant learning described in the learning and development areas
- see, talk, think about and record learning as a whole; and focus on particular aspects of a child's learning
- reflect individually and with colleagues on practices to focus conversations about learning, and reflect on "how we got here and where we are going".



**Figure 5: Continua phases and sample observations**



### Examples of observations that provide evidence of learning in each phase

**Learning and development area:** Wellbeing

**Key focus:** Exploring ways to show care and concern and interact positively with others

#### 12 November — Emerging

Nam, Jorja and Trey were playing a board game they were all familiar with, called *Lotto*. Trey began by taking turns, turning one card over at a time to see if it matched a corresponding picture on his board. After two turns where the card he picked up did not match his board, he changed strategies. When it was his turn, he continued to turn pieces over and did not stop until he found a match.

Trey requires **explicit modelled support** to tolerate waiting and turn-taking in a small group experience and to play the game by the rules.

#### 12 November — Exploring

Nam, Jorja and Trey were playing a board game they were all familiar with, called *Lotto*. Jorja followed the rules of the game, matched cards to her board and waited for her turn. When Trey began varying the rules of the game she commented, “One turn at a time, so everyone gets a turn”, signalling “one” with her finger. However, when Trey ignored Jorja and Nam, Jorja made no further attempt to resolve the problem.

Jorja usually shares play resources and takes turns. In familiar situations, she is aware that others have rights. For example, she usually waits while others take a turn, and listens when another child speaks.

Jorja’s explanation shows that she is attempting to make a situation fair by using a **familiar adult-modelled** rule. When Trey does not respond to Jorja’s use of this strategy she makes no further attempts to resolve the situation.

#### 12 November — Extending

Nam, Jorja and Trey were playing a board game they were all familiar with, called *Lotto*. As the game progressed, Nam would patiently wait for his turn. If the card did not match his picture on the board, he placed it face down on the table and reminded Trey that it was his turn next. When Trey started turning multiple cards over to find a match, Nam commented, “That’s not fair Trey! You just have one go and put it back if it’s not the same.” He repeated this explanation several times before seeking adult support from the assistant, Julie.

Nam applies awareness of his own and others’ rights in **familiar situations**. For example, he organises ways to take turns to play a game, and **perseveres with a challenge** by explaining the rules to Trey several times. After repeated attempts to resolve the situation himself, Nam seeks the help of the assistant. Nam’s actions show that he is following the teacher-modelled strategy of attempting to solve a problem through communication and applies this strategy several times before seeking help. Nam’s persistence demonstrates that he is confident in trying to manage a **new** social relationship several times before seeking help.

**New situations** include new learning environments (such as unfamiliar spaces or areas), new types of interactions or groupings, or engaging with new people or materials.

## Diverse learning pathways

Each child's journey along the continua may start at different points in each learning area and continue along different pathways. This means that at the end of the Kindergarten Year, individual children may demonstrate learning described in any of the phases on the continua.

Children's learning may also be context-specific. For example, a teacher may judge a child's sense of wellbeing as "more like" a child in the exploring phase at the end of kindergarten. However, the child may show behaviours more like those in the emerging phase of wellbeing as they transition into a new setting, such as into a Preparatory Year.

Children may also have particular strengths in some aspects of learning. For example, their ability to speak a first language may be more like a child in the exploring phase, while their use of SAE may be more like that of a learner in the emerging phase.

## Using the continua

Teachers use the continua throughout the year whenever they review a collection of evidence to make an informed judgment about a child's learning and development. During this process, they:

- place the collection of evidence alongside the continua of learning and development for the relevant learning area or areas
- consider whether the child's learning occurred in familiar or new situations
- identify the level of support the child required to demonstrate learning — explicit support or occasional support or prompting
- judge whether the child's learning is more like the learning in one phase or the other
- record their judgment to help track learning progress over time and inform future judgments, e.g. a dated note can be made in the child's folio or on a summary sheet within the folio
- reflect on what the judgment means in terms of future decisions to promote this child's learning.

Using the continua often requires teachers to make judgments about which phase best describes a child's learning. Generally, it will be clear that one phase is not applicable to the demonstrated learning, so it will be a matter of considering which of the two remaining phases the child's learning is more like (see Figure 6, page 36).

Such judgments provide a basis to inform the specific decisions teachers make about each child's future learning.

Teachers' judgments inform their intentional teaching responses, including:

- identifying focuses for individual learning
- identifying ways to build on the child's strengths
- engaging in conversations with parents, families and other partners.

## Making consistent judgments

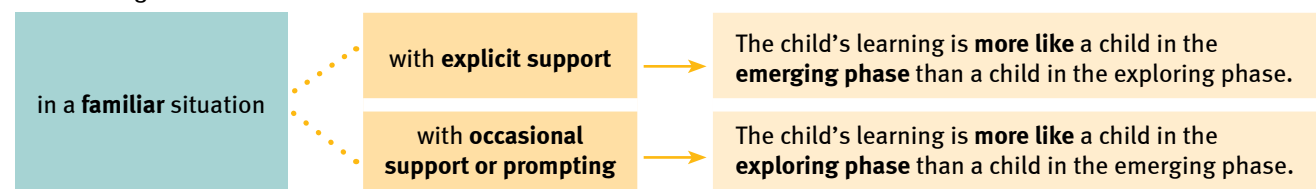
In addition to the continua, collections of descriptions are provided to support teachers to make judgments about learning that are consistent with those of other teachers. The descriptions were contributed by teachers as examples, and teachers are encouraged to add their own examples.

To confirm judgments, teachers refer to the collection of descriptions as a whole. The individual descriptions are not for use as a checklist, as they do not represent the full richness of children's learning and the range of diverse ways children may demonstrate learning.

Figure 6: Examples of the process for making more-like judgments

### Example 1

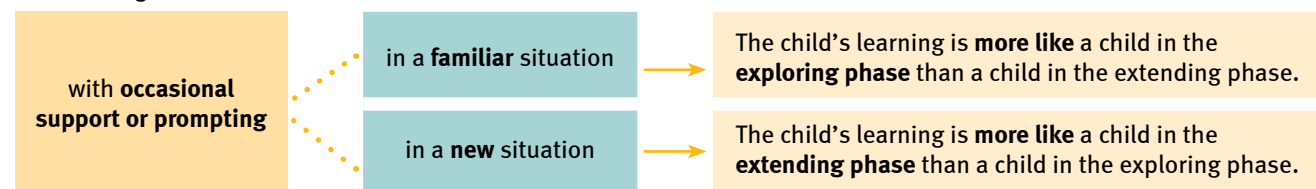
The learning occurred:



Because the situation is familiar, rather than new, the child is not demonstrating learning in the extending phase.

### Example 2

The learning occurred:



If the child needs explicit support, this indicates that the demonstrated learning is in the emerging phase.

## Sharing information

Sharing information about children's learning helps parents and other partners to promote continuity and support children as they transition into new settings. The process of sharing information is important for building strong, trusting relationships between partners.

Sharing information regularly enables parents, carers, children and support personnel to develop a shared understanding about the child's learning progress and to support their learning at home, in a centre, and in other early childhood learning services. Information sharing focuses on the child as an active, competent learner and includes conversations about:

- the child's prior experiences and family background
- the child's strengths, interests, talents and learning styles
- particular inquiries or creative projects
- relationships and friendships important to the child
- the child's learning progress along the continua of learning and development
- future plans and focuses for learning
- ways to extend and enrich learning
- support or referral to services for children with additional needs.

Information is shared between children, parents, carers and teachers and with relevant support personnel or other partners on entry into the kindergarten program and informally and formally throughout the year.

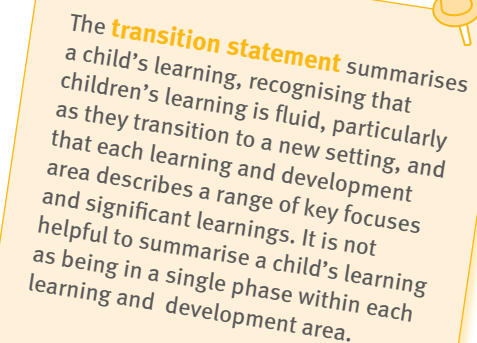
Parents and carers often value a planned focused discussion about their child's learning midway through the year. Towards the end of the year, a transition statement is created to build a shared and accurate picture of the child's learning. This helps parents and other partners plan ways to support the child to transition smoothly into school.

## Creating a transition statement

A formal discussion towards the end of the Kindergarten Year is a useful way to share information with parents and carers and support each child's transition to school. This discussion provides an opportunity for parents and other partners to collaboratively create a summary of a child's learning in the form of a transition statement. A printed copy of the transition statement should be made available to parents for their own records. Parents may choose to pass a copy of the transition statement on to the school during discussions on entry into the Preparatory Year.

The transition statement:

- focuses on communicating about children's motivations, strengths and higher-order skills, understandings and learning dispositions
- is recognised as a "snapshot in time" given that children's learning is fluid at this age
- includes information contributed by and documented with children, parents, carers and educators
- is based on information gathered throughout the year in informal and formal ways and in a variety of learning contexts through normal day-to-day activities, conversations and interactions
- includes information about the child's learning in each of the learning and development areas
- is written using positive plain language that parents and carers can easily understand
- describes the level of support the child requires in familiar and/or new situations
- includes information about the kindergarten service, teacher and contact information
- includes information about the child's attendance history and relevant family information.



The **transition statement** summarises a child's learning, recognising that children's learning is fluid, particularly as they transition to a new setting, and that each learning and development area describes a range of key focuses and significant learnings. It is not helpful to summarise a child's learning as being in a single phase within each learning and development area.

## Resources

Examples of transition statement templates are provided in Appendix 4.

The QSA website <[www.qsa.qld.edu.au](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au)> provides:

- *Queensland kindergarten learning guideline* professional development resources, including electronic samples of transition statements
- *Continua of learning and development*, which can be used as a resource when developing descriptions of learning for the transition statement.



# Learning and development areas

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The learning and development areas describe the breadth of knowledge, skills and dispositions that children explore during the Kindergarten Year within a holistic learning program. In addition, teachers work with family, community and other partners to negotiate learning and development priorities. 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 intentional teaching for each key focus and significant aspect of learning. A companion document, the *Continua of learning and development*, is available to help teachers interpret evidence of learning and make consistent judgments about children’s learning.

# Identity

A kindergarten child who has a strong sense of identity:

- is building a sense of security and trust
- acts with increasing independence and perseverance
- is building a confident self-identity.

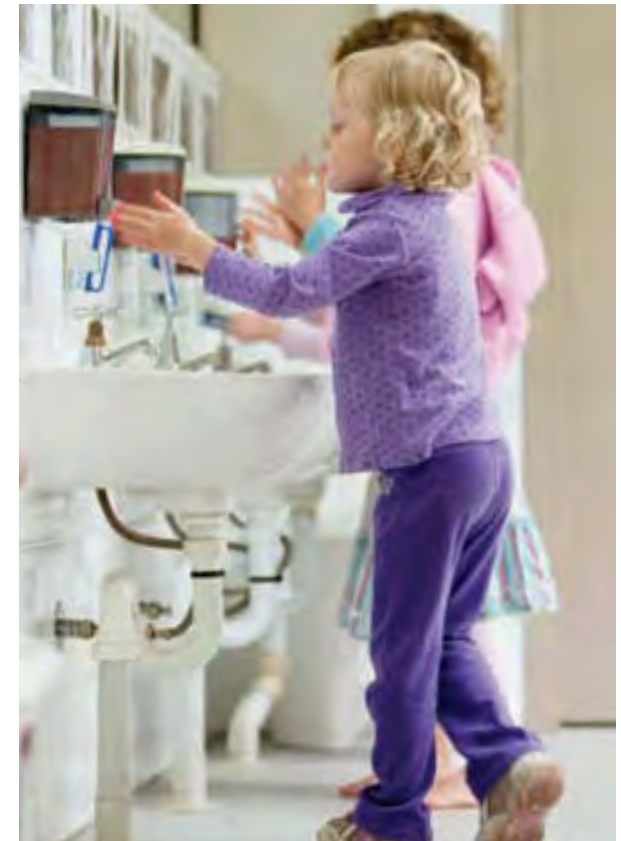
Related *EYLF* learning outcome: Children have a strong sense of identity.



*Feeling confident and secure*



*Perservering with a challenge*



*Building confidence by managing daily routines*

# Identity key focus: Building a sense of security and trust

A kindergarten child who has a strong sense of identity:

- **is building a sense of security and trust**
- acts with increasing independence and perseverance
- is building a confident self-identity.

Significant learnings:

- a sense of being safe, accepted and supported
- a sense of belonging and confidence in others

## Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- a sense of emotional safety in familiar environments
- confidence that familiar people will provide support in times of need or change
- feelings of acceptance for who they are by family, educators and peers
- a sense of stability and dependability in relationships with a variety of familiar people (family, educators and peers) in familiar environments
- a sense of belonging to their family, community and kindergarten community
- enjoyment and satisfaction as they explore the indoor and outdoor play environments
- enjoyment and satisfaction when engaging in play and learning with peers and familiar adults.

## Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

## Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- organise and take the time to engage in personal conversations with children and their families to make them feel welcome and valued
- invite children and families to share images, objects and resources that reflect their cultural and social backgrounds
- seek out partners who can assist them to understand and use culturally appropriate interactional patterns with children and families
- collaborate with families and children to develop farewell routines and set up activities that help children settle on arrival
- introduce and explain why new people are in the environment and what children might do or expect from these people
- explicitly teach children how to seek help from peers and adults, e.g. specific words, voice tones and behaviours
- talk with children about plans for play and new learning opportunities to help them look forward to learning
- talk with children about options they can choose when they need personal space or one-on-one time and about ways to seek and accept comfort
- work alongside children modelling ways to seek help, interact with new people, engage in new play or group learning situations, etc.
- frequently talk through the daily routine, refer to visual prompts, e.g. photos, and discuss or predict what will happen next
- openly discuss and negotiate changes, e.g. to stay outside for longer, and deal with related questions/concerns, such as, "But when will we eat our morning tea?"
- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-



## Identity key focus: Acting with increasing independence and perseverance

A kindergarten child who has a strong sense of identity:

- is building a sense of security and trust
- **acts with increasing independence and perseverance**
- is building a confident self-identity.

Significant learnings:

- organising self and belongings and managing routines
- making choices
- willingness to keep trying

### Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- the ability to organise and manage needs and activities
- the ability to manage classroom routines and processes
- the ability to organise people and resources in order to engage in a variety of play situations
- the ability to make choices
- self-organisation of personal belongings
- self-organisation of resources and materials for play
- perseverance when trying new and challenging tasks.

### Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

### Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- provide prompts and feedback to support children's attempts to play and make choices independently
- explicitly teach and reinforce routines and expectations for managing personal belongings and daily routines, e.g. using picture cues
- explain and guide children to learn ways to care for the classroom environment and keep classroom resources organised and tidy
- pose open-ended questions to help children identify ways to manage or solve everyday organisational problems, e.g. "What do you need to help you finish this?", "Who could help you?", "Where could you look?"
- provide encouragement and celebrate children's attempts to try and retry new or challenging tasks and experiences, that is, to persevere, e.g. "You are really thinking hard", "You have almost got it. Just one more!", "That's it, you did it! How do you feel about that?"
- apply a familiar skill or strategy to manage a new situation more independently, e.g. "Gallop is like walking but you keep the same foot forward", "Turn the bolt like you turn on a tap."

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-

# Identity key focus: Building a confident self-identity

A kindergarten child who has a strong sense of identity:

- is building a sense of security and trust
- acts with increasing independence and perseverance
- **is building a confident self-identity.**

Significant learnings:

- pride and confidence in who they are, their family and culture
- pride and confidence in their strengths and abilities
- confidence in themselves as learners

## Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- pride and confidence in “who they are” as a member of their family, community and place, that is, their environment
- pride and confidence in “who they are” and “where they come from” including their languages, cultural identity and heritage
- pride and confidence in “who they are” as a member of the learning community
- pride and confidence in their abilities, preferences and achievements
- confidence to explore the environment and engage in a variety of types of play and learning experiences
- confidence when approaching tasks, people and situations
- confidence to share experiences, feelings and ideas
- confidence to try new and challenging tasks
- confidence to make choices and take considered risks.

## Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

## Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- work with parents and families to create a personal poster, book or display to share with peers, featuring photos or objects related to children's families, community experiences and/or what they like to do, e.g. a display related to a child's experiences at a cultural celebration or wedding, a book about favourite weekend activities, a display related to cultural food preparation such as a Chinese wok and steamer, a Samoan hangi or an African tagine
- invite Elders, parents, family and community members to share experiences, stories, rituals, music and songs
- invite another child into a conversation when a child is sharing a personal experience using their first language, AAC, SAE approximations and/or SAE
- talk one-on-one with children and/or use photos or drawings to help children choose some familiar and some new play and other learning experiences
- display photos and record captions (in SAE and first language) to support all partners to share children's excitement about new learning
- work with partners to include relevant music, art, images, photographs and/or objects in everyday learning that reflect children's cultural heritages, e.g. viewing a Maori poi dance, experimenting with Chinese brush painting, exploring rhythms they can make using Indigenous musical instruments
- ask questions to discover links between children's emerging interests and ideas and their wider cultural, family and community experiences
- provide positive verbal prompts to help children take safe risks, experiment and “have a go”, e.g. try a puzzle, physical challenge or pretend writing
- talk out loud, modelling new activities and strategies and both how and when to get help, e.g. “We could ask a friend to hold the tube as we wrap the tape around.”
- ask questions to help children share something they can do or have learnt
- talk with children about personal attributes, while looking into a mirror
- play alongside children in new play situations and provide positive feedback on their attempts to interact with new resources, different peers and adults

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-

# Connectedness

---

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

- is building positive relationships with others
- shows increasing respect for diversity
- shows increasing respect for environments.

Related *EYLF* learning outcome: Children are connected with and contribute to their world.

---



*Connecting with others and sharing ideas*



*Caring for the environment*



*Exploring cultural diversity*

## Connectedness key focus: Building positive relationships with others

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

- **is building positive relationships with others**
- shows increasing respect for diversity
- shows increasing respect for environments.

Significant learnings:

- skills for connecting with and relating to others
- awareness of own and others' rights and responsibilities
- understandings about fairness

### Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- pride in their connections to familiar places, people, groups, language, communities, culture, shared pasts and futures
- ways to connect and engage with a variety of peers and people
- social skills for initiating interactions and contributing to play
- skills for cooperating (including sharing and turn-taking) and collaborating
- skills for resolving conflicts and problem solving in social contexts
- active engagement in group learning situations
- awareness of the reciprocal nature of rights and responsibilities
- positive ways to respond to others' efforts to interact, e.g. answering a friend's question, helping someone to join in, smiling and nodding to show you are interested
- desire to help others enjoy, join in, achieve their goals and manage tasks or situations
- awareness of fair and unfair behaviours in everyday situations.

### Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

### Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- model ways to share ideas and listen to others to initiate and continue play, and provide verbal prompts to help children apply strategies, e.g. "Explain to Callum why you are taking the dolls to the block area."
- model strategies to resolve conflict and support children to use the strategies in everyday situations, e.g. words or phrases to use, when to seek help from an adult
- teach children explicitly how to participate in different group learning experiences by stating and modelling expectations clearly and providing positive feedback when children attempt to engage appropriately in group learning experiences such as story reading, musical games and planning discussions
- introduce and join in turn-taking games to support children learning what it means to have "a turn" and let someone else have a turn when playing music or a card game
- discuss in everyday situations where and why people have rights or responsibilities, and what that might mean or look like, e.g. "How can we make it fair if both of you want a turn on a swing?"
- model ways to adjust behaviours and interactions to suit social situations or particular people, e.g. use first language when speaking to a community member
- model ways to challenge behaviours that may exclude some people, e.g. "If you play the game on top of the fort, how will Sarika join in? She still has her leg in plaster."

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-



# Connectedness key focus: Showing increasing respect for diversity

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

- is building positive relationships with others
- **shows increasing respect for diversity**
- shows increasing respect for environments.

Significant learnings:

- ways to respond to others with respect
- interest in their own and others' cultures and heritages
- exploring aspects of culture and similarities and differences among people
- awareness of bias and stereotyping

## Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- awareness of their own culture, e.g. language, practices, connections to people and place/s or country, heritage
- awareness of other cultures, e.g. languages, practices, connections to people and place/s or country, heritages
- understandings about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and their strong connection to place, language, histories and community
- active engagement with a range of people, groups and communities
- beginning appreciation of various aspects of diversity, including family structures, roles in communities, religions, practices, capabilities, talents and locations, e.g. urban, rural or remote
- ways to respect and value similarities and differences in people's feelings, needs, ideas and opinions
- ways to respond positively and show respect for diverse viewpoints, cultures, heritages, backgrounds, traditions, languages and ways of knowing and being
- early understandings about and willingness to question bias and stereotypes in play and everyday situations.

## Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

## Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- invite and support parents, family and community members to share and talk about the importance of artefacts, tools, places, stories, languages, dances and accounts from their own culture/s, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures and other cultures and heritages
- share photographs, images, maps, artworks, letters, postcards, etc. from people in other times and places; ask specific questions to promote children's curiosity and model positive ways to talk about similarities and differences they identify, e.g. ways people live now or have lived in the past, ways they share understandings about their world
- share contemporary images and texts about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that highlight the ways they are connected to places, histories, heritages and languages
- organise opportunities for children to participate in community arts experiences, learn from Elders and artists in the community, visit art galleries or interactive museum displays, or visit museum sites via the internet
- ask questions to support children to talk positively about similarities and differences between their own and others' families, e.g. share family photos and texts about families from different communities and cultural groups and discuss why it might be nice to live in a large extended family, in a family with just one parent, in a family on a remote property in Western Queensland or in a small village in Samoa
- model and reinforce children's efforts to listen and accept points of view, ideas or opinions that may be different from their own, e.g. "Cassie, you listened to Marian and helped her find a way to change the building," or "Do you agree, only the kindy group can be firefighters? What if the pre-kindy kids want to be firefighters too?"
- model ways to challenge representations of people that are based on stereotypical views, e.g. contest the statement that "only girls dance", ask questions about representations of people in texts that reinforce stereotypes, such as showing grandparents as inactive or girls as scared

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-

## Connectedness key focus: Showing increasing respect for environments

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

- is building positive relationships with others
- shows increasing respect for diversity
- **shows increasing respect for environments.**

Significant learnings:

- caring for and respecting environments
- ways to investigate and understand natural and built environments
- exploring interactions between people and environments

### Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- interest in natural, built and technological environments and change in these environments
- ways to care for and respect the people, objects and spaces in their home, community and kindergarten environments
- interest in ways to care for and respect plants and animals
- interest in the relationships among people, land, plants and animals
- awareness of positive and negative interactions between humans and environments
- awareness of ways to help sustain familiar environments
- awareness and valuing of Australia's environmental heritage.

### Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

### Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- organise and label materials and resources, and explain expectations clearly so that children can easily care for materials, spaces, tools and technologies used when playing
- model and explain ways to care for class pets, animals found in the playground and plants
- set up spaces in the room where children can:
  - observe animals, plants and natural objects in detail, e.g. observing plants, flowers, insects, shells and seed pods using magnifying glasses
  - represent thoughts and observations about them, e.g. observational drawings using a variety of art materials, such as oil pastels or watercolour paints
- observe, photograph and draw changes children see in the environment, e.g. as a shop is built nearby, as seeds grow
- model exploring the qualities of natural and human-made materials, e.g. mixing sand, gravel and water, changing water into ice, changing the texture of soap or clay using water, using sandpaper to shape and smooth wood
- share and discuss “news” related to the environment or get involved in projects that help care for local environments, e.g. discussions about an oil spill and its impact on birds and fish, clean up the playground for Clean-up Australia Day, ask a child about a family project to make a compost heap to recycle and re-use food scraps
- encourage children to share images or personal experiences of beautiful and special natural environments
- model and explain ways children can help to care for environments and save resources, e.g. turn taps off so water isn't wasted, put food in reusable containers instead of plastic bags
- encourage curiosity and help children to ask questions about their world, e.g. “Why do leaves become crunchy?”
- discuss rules that help protect environments and people in particular environments, e.g. stay on the path when bushwalking so you don't damage plants, swim between the flags at the beach, don't go swimming if there is a “crocodile” sign, throw rubbish — even small pieces — in bins

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-

# Wellbeing

A kindergarten child who has a strong sense of wellbeing:

- is building a sense of autonomy and wellbeing
- explores ways to show care and concern and interact positively with others
- explores ways to promote own and others' health and safety
- explores ways to promote physical wellbeing.

Related *EYLF* learning outcome: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.



*Developing physical skills*



*Enjoying a healthy snack*



*Interacting positively with others*



*Building autonomy and wellbeing*



# Wellbeing key focus: Building a sense of autonomy and wellbeing

A kindergarten child who has a strong sense of wellbeing:

- **is building a sense of autonomy and wellbeing**
- explores ways to show care and concern and interact positively with others
- explores ways to promote own and others' health and safety
- explores ways to promote physical wellbeing.

Significant learnings:

- delight in making decisions and choices (agency)
- courage and resilience to manage change and challenges
- ways to understand and regulate emotions

## Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- a sense of being able to make decisions and choices and willingness to do so (sense of agency)
- understandings about and ability to express their feelings
- participation in arts and aesthetic experiences as a form of self-expression and a way to celebrate
- strategies for self-regulating feelings and responses to people and situations
- enjoyment of solitude, quietness, reflection and relaxation
- a sense of being able to manage challenges, participate in new interactions and routines and try new experiences
- strategies for managing change and unexpected situations or occurrences and dealing with disappointments (resilience).

## Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

## Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- build up a bank of photographs of resources and spaces to help children make indoor and outdoor play choices and use materials flexibly, e.g. chairs, tables, large boxes, tubes, ladders, pieces of hosing, telephones, blocks, construction kits, fabric, dress-up clothes, art and collage materials
- set up art materials to encourage children to choose ways to use, re-use and combine materials, change and vary art materials, and ensure the materials have different sensory and aesthetic qualities, e.g. materials with a variety of textures, and tools that allow children to explore visual effects
- provide positive feedback and ideas to help manage change or an unexpected situation, e.g. "You watched Lucy try the new game, so you could see how to play it", "When there is a new teacher in the room, you are the expert. You can be a big help to them by showing them where things are", or "You got a big surprise when the bird flew in. It was a good idea to stay with a friend and keep still."
- introduce new materials or challenges and make it clear that it is all right to just "have a go": practise, experiment, try out ideas and ask for help
- play different types of music and provide props and materials, e.g. ribbons, fabric pieces, paint and paper, to prompt children to express who they are and how they feel "in the moment" through movement or visual arts experiences
- label and discuss feelings, and provide ideas for managing strong feelings, e.g. "You can say, 'Stop it. I don't like sand in my eyes'", or "You are feeling very sad. Let's ask a special friend to join in with us and play a game you like."
- explicitly introduce relaxation techniques, including deep breathing, tensing and relaxing parts of their body, visualising, feeling the calmness in their body and mind, and thinking quietly about something that makes them smile
- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-

# Wellbeing key focus: Exploring ways to show care and concern and interact positively with others

A kindergarten child who has a strong sense of wellbeing:

- is building a sense of autonomy and wellbeing
- **explores ways to show care and concern and interact positively with others**
- explores ways to promote own and others' health and safety
- explores ways to promote physical wellbeing.

Significant learnings:

- interest in and desire to interact with others
- considering and empathising with others

## Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- ways to show consideration and concern for others' feelings and needs
- ways to show empathy, help and care for others
- an awareness of others' interests, feelings and needs
- ways to enjoy and have fun with others
- interest in interacting with others in a variety of play, real-life, routine and group situations
- ways to relate positively with others, be a companion and behave in a friendly way
- ways to recognise and celebrate children's contributions
- ways to accept and give affirmations.

## Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

## Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- draw children's attention to opportunities to interact with others, e.g. "Sasha, you had fun playing with Harry and the felt board yesterday", "Dakshesh, Lucas is looking for someone to play the matching game you like."
- model and provide verbal prompts to support children to help others, e.g. "Jamie, please show Ragini where the paints are on the shelves", "I'll hold the gate open for you, Samir, and you can hold it for Ryan", "Thea knows some English words but you can also show her how to play the game."
- model and provide positive feedback when a child attempts to help or show concern for others, e.g. stops and places a hand on another child's shoulder when they have tripped, passes a friend a missing shoe, gets a cloth to help someone wipe up a spill, gets an adult if someone is hurt
- model and prompt children to use language to:
  - start a game, e.g. "Let's pretend I'm the Dad. Who will you be?"
  - enter play with others, e.g. "I can help. Here's some big blocks"
  - keep the play going, e.g. "Your turn, now?", "How about if we share?"
- encourage children to chat about themselves and share personal experiences, e.g. share and talk about photos and objects of interest, talk about similarities and differences between their experiences such as places they go, people in their family, foods they like to eat
- point out similarities and differences in people's feelings and ideas and identify positive ways to respond to others, e.g. "Giving Leon a big hug makes him feel worried. He might like it better if you stand near him, or just take his hand", "Janeeta has a different idea. We'll listen to her and then we'll talk about all the ideas."
- sit with children, e.g. at meal times or when playing with dough or sand, and encourage playful chat, e.g. making up jokes, commenting on what animals the clouds look like, sitting inside a tunnel and giggling, sharing a funny book
- talk about and describe what it looks like (actions, facial expressions), feels like (happy, fun), sounds like (words to use, voice tone) to be a friend in emerging situations, e.g. "What would it 'look like' to be a friend who shares the dough", "I'll help you say some words that make you 'sound like' a friend."
- model positive responses to others' ideas and achievements, e.g. give a thumbs-up or high five, and say, "Yeah! Let's do it!", accept suggestions with a smile and nod

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-

# Wellbeing key focus: Exploring ways to promote own and others' health and safety

A kindergarten child who has a strong sense of wellbeing:

- is building a sense of autonomy and wellbeing
- explores ways to show care and concern and interact positively with others
- **explores ways to promote own and others' health and safety**
- explores ways to promote physical wellbeing.

Significant learnings:

- ways to manage personal hygiene and self-care
- ways to stay healthy and safe

## Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- ways to keep themselves and others healthy, e.g. eating healthy foods, resting, choosing healthy activities, using a tissue to blow their nose, covering sneezes or coughs
- increasing independence in managing personal hygiene and self-care routines
- ways to keep themselves and others safe, e.g. following rules, looking and thinking before jumping, swinging or running.

### Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

## Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- work with parents and other partners to reinforce:
  - family health and safety routines, e.g. teeth cleaning, nose blowing
  - health and safety practices and community services or programs, e.g. stranger danger, road safety
- explain the purpose of safety rules, reinforce them and negotiate rules with children when new or potential safety issues arise
- explain the purpose of health-related routines, e.g. washing hands, toileting, using tongs to handle food, putting on sunscreen, teeth cleaning or rinsing, and provide visual, verbal and nonverbal prompts and reminders to help children follow routines, e.g. charts, signs, photos and augmentative communication symbols
- use spontaneous and planned learning opportunities to make explicit which foods are healthy, why they are important and why it is important to eat a balance of types of foods, e.g. when cooking and at meal times, read books together about healthy foods, talk about the vitamins and “energy” that come from particular foods, look at healthy and less healthy foods in junk mail catalogues
- use spontaneous and planned learning opportunities to make explicit a variety of activities that help to keep you healthy, e.g. playing energetic games in the backyard or in the park, going swimming, doing some gardening, getting enough sleep at night
- introduce simple physical games children can play with friends and family members at kindergarten and at home, e.g. bat and ball games, chasing games
- talk about and reinforce behaviours related to helping others meet or manage their health or safety needs, e.g. knowing not to bring or share particular foods, as some people have allergies, putting away construction sets with small pieces when a baby or toddler is nearby, reminding a friend to wash their hands
- talk with partners to understand home routines and practices

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-



# Wellbeing key focus: Exploring ways to promote physical wellbeing

A kindergarten child who has a strong sense of wellbeing:

- is building a sense of autonomy and wellbeing
- explores ways to show care and concern and interact positively with others
- explores ways to promote own and others' health and safety
- explores ways to promote physical wellbeing.

Significant learnings:

- control and strength for manipulating objects, tools and equipment
- large movement skills, movement control, coordination and strength
- confidence to engage in movement challenges

## Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- confidence in developing movement skills and managing movement challenges
- sensory skills and awareness, 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 in purposeful contexts, e.g. using scissors to cut collage materials, experimenting with drawing tools, manipulative and construction equipment
  - visual tracking in purposeful contexts, e.g. following a moving object, or tracking across an image with the eyes
- fundamental movement skills, including balancing, crawling, running, jumping, catching, hopping, throwing, galloping, skipping, leaping, kicking, striking and dodging
- non-locomotor skills, e.g. swaying, turning, twisting
- hand–eye, foot–eye coordination and ball skills.

## Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

## Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- vary the set-up of obstacle courses to purposefully develop specific movement skills or create challenges, and verbally prompt children to move in specific ways, e.g. jumping forward, sideways and off low objects; sliding on their stomachs or crawling along boards; stepping over beanbags or in/on objects; balancing along ropes, on cup stilts, boards, beams or stepping stones; climbing up or crawling across a ladder; rolling on mats
- teach a variety of games and ways to play with balls and beanbags of various sizes, e.g. throw, roll, kick or strike balls at or into targets (basket, wall target, hoop); toss and catch beanbags and balls; suspend a ball in a stocking and strike it with hands or short- or long-handled bats; manoeuvre a ball around obstacles with their foot or a hockey stick
- plan specific activities to build arm, hand and trunk strength and stability, e.g. pull on body weight or hang by arms from ropes, poles, swings or along boards or mats; squeeze and grip bats, sponges full of water, dough or clay; use a child-sized and weighted hammer; lift buckets and spades with sand or water; push a wheelbarrow, trolley or box
- introduce movement songs and games to broaden and practise specific movements, e.g. crawl, creep, gallop, tiptoe, sway, turn, spin, curl, roll
- purposefully vary materials and model new ways to use a range of fine-motor skills in such contexts as:
  - playing games, e.g. use a computer mouse to draw or move objects through a maze; press, pull, place and rotate magnetic, mosaic or peg board pieces; use a keyboard to type pretend "invitations"
  - creating artworks, e.g. snip, cut, shape, twist, rip, roll and join different materials; manipulate clay, dough and plasticine; use tools that require different hand movements and grips
  - cooking, e.g. beat, stir, squeeze, pinch, sprinkle, roll and cut; use graters, garlic crusher and eggflip to make dough pizzas for pretend play
  - playing musical instruments, e.g. shaking a tambourine, beating a triangle, drumming with hands or drumstick, striking a xylophone
- organise time, space and support so children can sustain active involvement in a variety of movement experiences, e.g. free dance, running games, or swinging by their arms for increasing lengths of time

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-



# Active learning

A kindergarten child who is a confident and involved learner:

- is building positive dispositions and approaches toward learning
- shows increasing confidence and involvement in learning
- engages in ways to be imaginative and creative
- explores tools, technologies and information and communication technologies (ICTs).

Related *EYLF* learning outcome: Children are confident and involved learners.



*Showing confidence and involvement in learning*



*Building positive dispositions toward learning*



*Engaging in imaginative play*



*Exploring using tools in everyday routines*

# Active learning key focus: Building positive dispositions and approaches toward learning

A kindergarten child who is a confident and involved learner:

- **is building positive dispositions and approaches toward learning**
- shows increasing confidence and involvement in learning
- engages in ways to be imaginative and creative
- explores tools, technologies and information and communication technologies (ICTs).

Significant learnings:

- enthusiasm for learning and curiosity
- problem solving and investigating
- applying and reflecting on learning

## Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- curiosity and wonder, creativity, enthusiasm, drive and motivation to learn
- awareness of their successes, useful strategies, skills for learning and when to use these in particular learning situations
- 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
- active investigation of scientific ideas, processes and language in everyday life
- exploration of relationships, including cause–effect, e.g. “What caused the sand castle to collapse?”, “What happened when you made the ramp higher?”
- active investigation of mathematical ideas, processes and language in everyday life related to shape and to comparing, changing, measuring and recording quantities
- awareness that they can learn by copying others, repeating and practising actions, behaviours and language
- strategies for making links between ideas and experiences and applying learning to new situations
- reflection by talking about and using feedback about thinking and learning.

## Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

## Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- select and ask questions that:
  - promote curiosity, e.g. “I wonder if/why/how/what/where ...?”, “What do you think about that?”, “What could be making that noise?”
  - foster careful observation, e.g. “What can you see/hear/feel?”
  - motivate inquiry e.g. “How can we help the gecko we found inside?”, “Do all balls bounce?”
- explicitly teach ways to plan, think and investigate, e.g. record questions, plans or theories on paper to review as the investigation continues or thinking changes
- work with small groups of children to develop a project, such as building a boat: discuss ideas, plan materials and space for working and documenting the project, ask questions to extend ideas and support problem solving, e.g. “What could you use to make the propeller?”, “How will people stay safe in your boat?”
- model and teach children to pose questions about things they are curious about and promote investigation, e.g. “How does it work?”, “Why did the sound stop?”
- talk about photos of play and ask specific questions to help children reflect on learning, e.g. “What made you laugh?”, “How did you manage to build the house so high?”, “Would you use that idea again?”, “How helpful was that website?”, “What happened when you mixed the colours?”, “Why did you choose straws to make the whiskers?”
- talk out loud about their thinking in ways that model being creative or finding new ways to approach materials, problems or experiences, e.g. “I am thinking that if we ... maybe we can ...”
- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-



# Active learning key focus: Increasing confidence and involvement in learning

A kindergarten child who is a confident and involved learner:

- is building positive dispositions and approaches toward learning
- **shows increasing confidence and involvement in learning** →
- engages in ways to be imaginative and creative
- explores tools, technologies and information and communication technologies (ICTs).

Significant learnings:

- confidence, interest and involvement in learning
- making choices and organising resources for learning
- ways to contribute to learning conversations

## Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- the ability to focus on important aspects of learning situations and sustain concentration
- confidence to actively engage in and contribute to a range of learning situations and investigations
- ways to plan, think about and organise resources needed for self-chosen learning (materials, space or people)
- ways to contribute to learning conversations
- ways to sustain involvement in play and learning
- confidence to become involved in learning conversations.

## Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

## Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- invite children to discuss and share learning and discoveries in group discussions and identify "experts" who peers can seek out for help, e.g. a child who knows how to fold a paper plane or do the new puzzle
- help children to consider options for play before starting play, e.g. recall plans for play made the previous day or in informal conversations as children arrived, and introduce teacher-initiated experiences or materials
- actively seek to learn words in children's first language or signed communication, to use to encourage and support individual children, e.g. how to communicate, "I will help you."
- provide specific feedback to children about the strategies that are helping them to work out a problem or manage a challenging task, and direct their attention to other aspects of the task or problem they may need to consider, e.g. "You've moved the character to the middle of the maze, but the treasure wasn't there. Can you go back through the maze or use a help screen?"
- identify, with partners, strategies to use to encourage children to try new experiences, try to solve problems for themselves and work together, e.g. provide clear verbal prompts on options to try, rather than taking over
- provoke exploration, discovery and inquiry by providing new and intriguing materials and resources, such as arts materials and tools and scientific resources, e.g. various bubble-making materials/mixtures, microscope, magnets, materials that float or sink

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-

# Active learning key focus: Engaging in ways to be imaginative and creative

A kindergarten child who is a confident and involved learner:

- is building positive dispositions and approaches toward learning
- shows increasing confidence and involvement in learning
- **engages in ways to be imaginative and creative** →
- explores tools, technologies and information and communication technologies (ICTs).

Significant learnings:

- a sense of wonder, imagination and creativity
- ways to creatively represent ideas, feelings and experiences

## Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- imagination and experimentation with possibilities
- appreciation of various ways of engaging with ideas, materials, processes and a range of media
- sensory exploration of the world, objects and materials indoors and outdoors
- the ability to generate ideas and solutions, innovate and invent
- exploration of and interest in multiple ways to create and represent with a variety of media materials, tools and processes
- exploration of and interest in multiple ways to create and represent visually, using sound, movement and language
- exploration of and interest in arts elements and principles and their use when creating and representing ideas, feelings and experiences
- exploration of and interest in representing and creating through imaginative, fantasy, symbolic and dramatic play
- exploration of and interest in cultural, traditional and contemporary music, visual arts, dance, drama and media
- engagement with ways to create and represent using ICTs and various media.

## Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

## Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- pose questions that encourage wonder and imagination, e.g. "I wonder what might happen if ...?", "Imagine if ...?", "How amazing would it be if ..."
- support children to select, display and respond to interesting images and objects, both collected and made, and artworks, by drawing attention to their sensory and aesthetic qualities
- prompt children to try many ways to use materials, media and tools, e.g. "What's another way to use the sponge with the paint?", "How could you use the fabric pieces in your dance/pretend play 'show'?"
- prompt children to consider possibilities for using objects, sounds, movements and language to symbolise ideas, e.g. fabric to represent a lake, or experiment with their voice to create sounds
- prompt children to move in different ways as you play different or changing rhythms on a tambourine, e.g. move different body parts, change speed, direction or level of movement
- use specific language to draw children's attention to aspects of colour, texture, shape or pattern as they paint, print, construct or sculpt
- ask challenging questions to prompt children to explore ways to use their voice, language, gestures, costumes and/or props related to roles they take in pretend games, e.g. "What words, type of voice or tools might the ambulance officer use?"
- support children to play with and share ideas about media in play contexts, e.g. ways to create and use digital images, ways to create a pretend play game based on a familiar children's TV program
- plan opportunities to explore different types of musical experiences indoors and outdoors, e.g. sing, chant, use instruments, compose music, respond to diverse types of music, exploring rhythm, beat, volume and pitch

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-

# Active learning key focus: Exploring tools, technologies and information and communication technologies (ICTs)

A kindergarten child who is a confident and involved learner:

- is building positive dispositions and approaches toward learning
- shows increasing confidence and involvement in learning
- engages in ways to be imaginative and creative
- **explores tools, technologies and information and communication technologies (ICTs).** →

Significant learnings:

- using tools and technologies in play and active learning
- using information and communication technologies for a range of purposes

## Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- interest in and understandings about everyday tools, e.g. utensils, pencils, hammers, levers, cogs, wheels, pumps, musical instruments, fishing tools
- interest in and understandings about everyday technologies, e.g. kitchen machines, audio/video devices, scales, scanners, mobile phones, digital cameras
- interest in and understandings about existing and emerging ICTs
- interest in sharing personal and cultural experiences with technologies and exploring emerging technologies
- skills and confidence to use a wide variety of tools, technologies and ICTs for a range of purposes, e.g. to support play, for enjoyment, to create, find out, communicate, share ideas and learning, inquire, investigate and solve problems.

## Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

## Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- ask specific questions to prompt children to use understandings about everyday tools and technologies in play, e.g. "How will you catch the fish?", "What tools could help us move the heavy bucket?"
- introduce specific tools and technologies that can help children to solve a problem or investigate an idea, e.g. a pulley for lifting toys, a torch to send "SOS" signals across a distance, a scanner to save and share a photo
- engage with children and learn together about ways to use emerging or new technologies, e.g. a new online tool, secure social networking site, compact personal technologies
- help children to use technologies for real personal and social purposes, e.g. access their family's holiday blog to share their experiences with friends, communicate with a parent via email or chat room about their kindy day
- introduce technologies to encourage children to imagine and be creative, e.g. software, musical instruments, different art and construction tools
- periodically change options and choices, so children use ICTs for a range of purposes, such as to:
  - entertain, e.g. provide links to music clips and online stories
  - create, e.g. use drawing software to create a menu and a map
  - play games, e.g. a number game, problem-solving game or thinking game
- prompt or suggest ways children can be "experts" and help peers to use ICTs and other technologies, or complete challenging levels of games together
- pose questions and support children to collaborate to research a topic online, e.g. access maps, artworks, information websites, such as a museum website
- support children to create images using a digital camera and arrange or combine their images creatively to represent experiences

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-





# Communicating

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.

Related *EYLF* learning outcome: Children are effective communicators.



*Talking and sharing ideas*



*Sharing familiar stories*



*Engaging with numeracy through play*



\* **Note:** Children communicate using first language, signed (alternative) or alternative augmentative communication (AAC) and Standard Australian English (SAE) as or when appropriate. Nonverbal children may substitute alternative or AAC for words. See also the professional development materials.

# Communicating key focus: Exploring and expanding ways to use language\*

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.

Significant learnings:

- spoken and nonverbal communication
- age-appropriate speech patterns, vocabulary and sentence structures
- using language for a range of purposes
- skills for listening and taking turns in conversations

## Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- clear communication\* of ideas, needs and feelings to familiar people using verbal and nonverbal elements of first language and SAE and/or signed language or AAC devices
- the ability to share and interpret meanings presented in a variety of ways, e.g. speaking, singing, moving, using gestures and facial expressions
- awareness of different ways to interact and communicate in particular social and cultural situations, e.g. ways to communicate with peers during a game or with a visiting Elder, using appropriate actions and medical words while pretending to be a doctor
- use of various types of sentences and sentence structures, e.g. to comment, ask a question, give directions, or explain a relationship
- skills for listening for different purposes and in different contexts
- skills for taking turns to talk and listen and engage in conversations
- developing vocabulary for describing what they see, hear, taste, smell, touch and feel
- developing vocabulary for describing imaginative experiences, past and present personal experiences and topics of personal interest
- developing vocabulary for exploring mathematical and scientific ideas
- age-appropriate articulation when speaking first language and SAE.

## Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

## Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- work with partners to help multilingual children identify when they are using first language and/or SAE approximations at home, in the community or in kindergarten situations
- promote the use of language (SAE and first language, signed or AAC) to communicate in everyday situations, e.g. labelling everyday objects and body parts, asking questions and seeking help
- select and introduce songs, rhymes, jingles and stories with new vocabulary and sentence structures to promote first language, SAE and/or use of signed or AAC devices, e.g. work with partners who speak the child's first language to identify songs that help develop first language as well as SAE)
- teach skills for communicating or making ideas clearer, e.g. adding gestures, changing words or language, acting out or miming
- pose questions and provide language to support emerging scientific investigations, e.g. "Why is the sand so hot today? What could have made it hot?"
- model appropriate language patterns and encourage children to repeat back or use the language in pretend play, e.g. "A salesperson says, 'Can I help you?' to the customer. If you are the customer, what would you say to the salesperson?"
- use new language in different contexts, e.g. read a story with positional language such as "over", "under", "on", and use the same words when climbing or in a transition game
- explain clearly what it looks like, sounds like and feels like to listen and take turns to talk, e.g. "To listen in a group, you stop moving, look at the speaker and listen with your brain turned on."
- teach children ways to show they want to speak and ways to respond to the previous speaker
- provide positive feedback about children's attempts to listen to and follow instructions, e.g. "Well done. I like the way you listened and thought about what to do. You washed your hands then sat at the table."
- pose questions to encourage children to use language for various purposes, such as explaining, describing and imagining, e.g. "How did you make your crocodile puppet?", "How does its skin feel?", "What might your crocodile say to my puppet?"

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

\* **Note:** Children communicate using first language, signed (alternative) or alternative augmentative communication (AAC) and Standard Australian English (SAE) as or when appropriate. Nonverbal children may substitute alternative or AAC for words. See also the professional development materials.

# Communicating key focus: Exploring and engaging with literacy in personally meaningful ways

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.

Significant learnings:

- positive engagement with a variety of print and multimedia texts and the arts
- exploring symbols and patterns in language
- exploring text purposes and meanings
- confidence and interest in exploring reading and writing behaviours

## Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- enjoyment of and interest in arts languages and exploration of ways to convey meaning through music, dance, drama, media and visual arts
- awareness of and interest in exploring symbol systems, e.g. auditory, visual, letter and number symbols, and ways symbols are used to convey meaning
- awareness of the literacies and texts used by children and families connected to their communities, cultures and heritages
- awareness of the purposes of texts, as they share and talk about a wide variety of print, visual, auditory and multimedia texts
- exploration of ways to use print and texts in play and real-life situations, e.g. to create a menu for pretend play or a booklet about their family
- awareness that spoken words can be written and that print conveys a stable meaning
- interest in exploring the relationships between oral, written and visual representations
- awareness of and interest in exploring sound–letter relationships, rhymes and patterns in language in contexts relevant to children
- awareness of and interest in exploring early reading behaviours and using concepts of print in contexts relevant to children
- interest in and ways to talk about sounds, letters, words, sentences and texts in contexts relevant to children
- the ability to make connections between meanings in texts and personal experiences
- interest in drawing, early writing, and dictating ideas.

### Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

## Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- introduce the language of dance by describing and prompting children to explore directions, levels, shapes and ways to use the space as they move to music, e.g. move in a circle, spiral, around the edges or through the middle
- invite parents and community members to share with children cultural songs and stories in home or traditional language, symbols and dances and provide SAE translations for SAE speakers
- collaborate and play with visual symbols and artworks to display, and ask questions to prompt children to “read” and creatively respond to these texts
- pose questions during dramatic play to focus children's attention on ways to use print and symbols meaningfully, e.g. “I wonder what time the shop opens?”, “How will the customers know what they can buy and how much to pay?”
- share (read or view) and enjoy quality picture and information books, images and multimedia texts and provide time for children to select, engage with and share these texts
- talk out loud about why a text was selected or how it can be used, e.g. “This book is by one of our favourite authors”, “This website about animals could help the ‘Vet’.”
- provide feedback and teach techniques to help children communicate their ideas more clearly, e.g. use words and create drawings, models or music
- talk about letters and their sounds in emerging situations and make links to a child's experiences/interests, e.g. “We need some salt. Salt starts with ‘s’ like your name.”
- draw attention to links between images and words when reading, e.g. “The written words tell us the dog is outside. What do the pictures tell us?”
- listen attentively as a child talks about visual ideas conveyed in a drawing or artwork
- scribe children's spoken words and explain that spoken words can be written down to be read later
- ask questions to help children connect ideas in texts with their personal experiences, e.g. “This story was about a zoo. Reece, didn't you go to the zoo on your holiday?”
- negotiate ways to document children's play, e.g. with photos, drawings or written comments
- talk out loud about the sounds and symbols needed to write a sign for a pretend game, and what children need to attend to when “reading” or using the signs, e.g. “Who has a name that starts with ‘D’? So whose lunch box could this be?”
- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-

# Communicating key focus: Exploring and engaging with numeracy in personally meaningful ways

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.**

Significant learnings:

- exploring number symbols and their purposes
- confidence and interest in counting and exploring patterns and relationships
- exploring mathematical thinking, concepts and language

## Knowledge, skills and dispositions

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- interest in exploring mathematical thinking and problem solving in daily situations, e.g. "I wonder how many children would weigh the same as a baby elephant", "How much sand do you need to fill the tray?"
- awareness of the numeracy connected to their family and community practices, cultures and heritages
- concepts and specific language for exploring:
  - the properties of shapes, e.g. corner, curve, straight, side, point
  - repeating patterns, e.g. long, short, long, short; red triangle, blue square, red triangle, blue square
  - position and direction, e.g. as they climb, dance or play a game
  - time and order of everyday events, e.g. last night, today, first, next, last, soon, later, morning, afternoon, lunch time
  - money and money exchange, e.g. to pay for items in a pretend shop
  - a whole and its parts, e.g. cutting a ball of dough into parts and then recreating the whole ball, putting together puzzle pieces
- concepts and specific language for exploring and describing the attributes of objects and collections, e.g. shape, size and weight
- concepts and specific language for comparing and ordering collections of objects by number, length, height, width, mass and volume, e.g. more, less, same, longer, wider, heavier, big, full, empty
- awareness of and interest in numbers in their environment and the meanings they carry, e.g. to tell about quantity, time or size
- interest in counting and recording numbers for play and real purposes
- skills for identifying and comparing the number of objects in small collections, e.g. match, point to and say number names in sequence.

### Family and community priorities

Teachers promote the following aspects of children's learning:

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
- 

## Intentional teaching ideas

For example, teachers:

- collaborate with parents and family members so children revisit mathematical concepts and use language in home and community contexts, e.g. when fishing, discuss directions to the fishing spot, look for patterns on shells and compare the size of fish
- make links between children's play and numeracy in real life, e.g. "Jessie, you used a coin to pay at our shop. What does Mum use to pay for things at the shop?"
- model and talk out loud about ways to record data for real purposes, e.g. record tally marks to show scores in a game, count "votes" on whether to play inside or outside first, record results from an experiment, such as which ball bounced more times/highest
- sing songs and play games to learn and revise:
  - counting sequences (forward and backward), e.g. sing and act out number songs
  - compare and recognise the number of objects in small collections
  - add and take away one or two, e.g. sing and act out number songs such as musical chairs (take away one chair)
  - play transition games, e.g. find three friends with red clothes, socks or long hair
- scaffold children's use of numbers in a variety of situations, e.g. cooking: measure ingredients, count eggs, position food on trays, cut into shapes; making a pretend cash register; comparing how many steps or how long it takes to get to the door or sandpit; counting how many swings, jumps or turns
- point out and describe patterns in the environment, e.g. paving, bricks or wet footprints, and patterns created by children, e.g. when painting or threading
- incidentally use language and pose questions to prompt children to count, order and compare, e.g. "How many buckets of sand will fill the cardboard tube?", "Which bucket is heavier/full/empty?", "Which bocce ball is closest to the marker", "Who has the most dough?", "Which name has less/more/the same number of letters?", "Which character did we meet in the story first/next/last?"
- provide resources and ask questions to prompt children to explore relationships, e.g. "What shapes/parts have you put together to make the car?", "What can you do to make the other side of the scales heavier?", "How can you make a pattern using the geoboard/mosaic kit/computer?"
- draw attention to and discuss patterns, shapes, spaces and repetition in paintings, constructions, dances or architecture

- 
- *Add points relevant to your context.*
-



# Appendixes

## Appendix 1: Intentional teaching practices

When early years educators, including 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 children's learning occurs in social contexts and make deliberate, well-planned decisions to support learning through children's 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 as they co-construct learning with children and support them to investigate and explore ideas. Through interactions they extend children's thinking, challenge their ideas and expand their interests. Teachers introduce ideas and make links to children's ideas in order to support children to discover new possibilities and develop and test hypotheses.

The following definitions, adapted from *Interpreting the Early Years Learning Framework: A guide for educators: Draft for trial*,<sup>17</sup> highlight some of the strategies that teachers use to facilitate learning.



### Challenging

Offering children opportunities to extend their skills and ideas in the context of secure relationships. Teachers gauge when to offer challenges and opportunities that will extend children's thinking through provocation and reflection.

### Collaborating

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

Supporting, particularly when children are making an effort, through making comments that motivate and encourage them to persist.

### Explaining

Making ideas and requests clear for children. This is useful at times when children want or need to understand a concept or idea, often about 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

Creating an environment where children are encouraged to use imagination and creativity to investigate, hypothesise and express themselves. Teachers 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 children and are respectful of children's ideas. Teachers use direct instruction when other strategies might not be appropriate. For example, teaching children about road safety on an outing requires teachers to be clear about their expectations for children, and to identify the safe practices needed in these types of situations.

### **Listening**

Encouraging children to lead conversations through listening deeply and thoughtfully to what they are saying. Through actively responding to children's contributions, teachers create opportunities for authentic and sustained conversational exchanges.

### **Making connections**

Assisting children to see relationships and incongruities. Teachers contribute to children's thinking by comparing and contrasting experiences and ideas.

### **Modelling**

Demonstrating a skill or how a task is done. Modelling should always be supported with opportunities for children to have a go at practising the skill themselves.

### **Negotiating**

Enabling children to have a go at solving problems and addressing complex issues. Teachers 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. See *Scaffolding*.

### **Providing for choice**

Offering opportunities for children to make choices. This involves 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**

Engaging children in a sensitive way in thinking and problem solving. Questions should be genuine and respectful, and not used to gather responses already known by teachers. Teachers should encourage children to ask questions of them and their own 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 engage in thinking that enables children to reflect on and build on prior learning.

### **Scaffolding**

Using knowledge of children's abilities. Teachers 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.

## Appendix 2: Guide to decision making for children with additional needs

This guide to decision making offers practical advice, suggestions and examples to support the strengths, needs and interests of children requiring additional support. It is a thinking tool and not a template to be completed.

Children's need for additional support may be temporary or required for a longer term. The guide will also help teachers and support personnel when working with children with suspected or confirmed disabilities.

When making decisions about how to provide additional support for children, teachers are guided by the principle of inclusiveness — high expectations and equity in educational opportunities for all children.

### *Teaching practices that support inclusion*

- Increasing the participation of children and young people in, and reducing their exclusion from, the cultures, activities and communities of local settings
- Restructuring the cultures, policies and practices in settings so that they are responsive to the diversity of children/young people in the locality
- Valuing equally, all children, young people, parents/carers and practitioners
- Viewing the differences between children as resources to support play, learning and participation rather than as problems to be overcome
- Acknowledging the right of children to good quality education and childcare in their locality.
- Making improvements for practitioners as well as for children
- Reducing barriers to play, learning and participation for all children not only those with impairments or those who are categorised as having special educational needs
- Learning from attempts to overcome barriers for children whose play, learning and/or participation is a focus of concern, to make changes that benefit children more widely
- Emphasising the development of community and values, as well as achievements
- Fostering mutually sustaining relationships between settings and communities
- Recognising that inclusion in early education and childcare are aspects of inclusion in society
- Putting inclusive values into action

Tony Booth, Mel Ainscow & Denise Kingston<sup>18</sup>

## Inclusive partnerships

### Interacting

Teachers:

- plan ways to regularly include parents and other partners in decision-making processes, drawing on their expectations, experiences, expertise and knowledge of the child's strengths and needs
- talk with all partners on a regular basis (informally and formally) to support their overall knowledge of the child, to ensure that decisions are based on the most current information available to support learning
- recognise the needs of families who have a child with additional support requirements, e.g. schedule time for regular conversations about the child's strengths and needs, use communication books and suggest kindergarten and community pathways that support children
- respond sensitively to the changing support families may require by planning and building flexibility into programs
- share with partners established patterns and routines and the language used to give instructions in various settings including kindergarten, to build consistency across settings
- incorporate co-teaching opportunities with other staff to enhance learning experiences
- match extra support personnel in programs to the learning experience, child or situation, e.g. familiar person, same gender, person with expertise in the area of support required
- explain positively, the adjustments required in the assessment for learning when sharing information with parents, families, and education systems.

### Monitoring and documenting learning and planning

Teachers:

- record intentional teaching strategies that have been tried and review and refine these with partners
- document what, where and with whom the child prefers to interact with most, and incorporate this into planning
- gather evidence of learning in play, real-life engagements and routines and transitions, using observations and interpretations from partners and evidence of learning at home and in other professional settings with therapists
- engage support personnel in discussions with teachers to support consistent judgments about children's learning and to refine plans for future learning.

### Reflection questions

- Does the program reflect families' expectations and priorities for children's learning, e.g. through planning, interactions and intentional teaching strategies?
- Is additional information from parents and/or support personnel needed?
- How can we help a child develop a sense of connectedness within the kindergarten group, while also targeting specific learning?
- Have we provided opportunities for casual and formal conversations about the effectiveness of the program, planning and implementation with professional partners?
- How effective and inclusive is the decision-making process?



# Intentional teaching practices

## Interacting

Teachers:

- model inclusive behaviours that build children's positive dispositions and interactions towards peers with disabilities, e.g. taking a visually impaired child by the hand to help them move across an open space
- ensure the child can interact with others using preferred communication strategies that enhance their abilities, e.g. communication boards, sign language
- encourage the child to initiate responses and do as much as possible before providing support or intervention.  
**Note:** Providing children with opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills is necessary to better understand what support is required to enhance learning
- explicitly teach language, behaviours and skills for appropriate interactions between children, and between adults and children
- use consistent language when giving instructions so that familiar and new learning is linked
- use concise instructions, e.g. "Stop now!" with an accompanying hand signal and allow time for the child to process information. Teach and repeat these instructions and cues in different contexts
- make explicit the meaning of specific language and use it consistently in different contexts, e.g. "squeeze the dough", "squeeze the sponge", "squeeze the tube of paint"
- develop specific strategies to enhance learning of skills, e.g. a visual-cuing device to remind a child of what to do, exchange cards to prompt turn-taking, smaller steps in instructions and chunked information

- promote the recall and use of prior knowledge, e.g. through the use of verbal, visual and tactile cues
- invite the child to revisit learning through a variety of experiences and to talk about what happened to gain insights about the learning that has occurred
- articulate and document explicit learning focuses and teaching strategies, e.g. identify, use, repeat and reinforce steps across learning experiences.

## Monitoring and documenting learning and planning

Teachers:

- identify when scaffolding may be required, how it may be provided and the levels of scaffolding required to enhance learning
- monitor levels of child engagement in learning experiences and provide adjustments when required
- use digital equipment to record observations, to support the recall of events and to encourage communication
- monitor and document the child's learning progress and adjust planned intentional teaching practices as necessary
- provide specific support and remove potential barriers to a child's ability to demonstrate learning, e.g. if gathering observations to demonstrate learning for a child with information processing challenges, chunk and pace the conversation, and provide extended pause and response time
- document any adjustments required to enhance the child's demonstration of learning, e.g. the type and level of support.

## Reflection questions

- Do all educators (teachers, assistants, support personnel) use consistent strategies for modelling?
- Do children demonstrate the inclusive practices modelled by adults in their interactions with peers with suspected or diagnosed disabilities?
- Do all educators use strategies aligned with the adjustments that best enhance children's learning?
- Are children making progress in their learning?
- How are children involved in planning and reflecting on learning?
- How can the evidence gathered about the program be used to inform teaching practices?

# Inclusive learning environments

Judgments made about children's learning inform decisions about ways to cater for each child's strengths, needs and interests in the learning environment or experience. In practice, this involves making ongoing modifications and adjustments to the environments.

## Physical environment

Teachers:

- create flexible learning environments to enhance engagement in learning and interactions, e.g. use of quiet and active spaces, retreat time and spaces where children have opportunities to privately self-regulate emotions
- use a variety of materials and skills to enhance learning in different contexts, e.g. practise jumping skills during a transition game, on a jouncing board outdoors and in a movement game (transferring skills)
- use knowledge of a child's preferred play areas and build on these to effectively enhance learning, e.g. add new materials to the preferred play area to create a new challenge and orchestrate social opportunities in this space
- identify environmental features (human-made or natural) that children respond positively towards, and incorporate these frequently when planning the learning environment. Also provide toys, books and games that encourage a child to engage in non-preferred areas
- plan ways to manage the child's responses to new or changing environments for learning, e.g. build continuity of materials and experiences between the home, kindergarten setting and other service environments
- use evidence gathered about learning to make decisions about adjustments to the environment, e.g. it may be necessary to adjust seating arrangements or the height of a table or chair to better support a child using materials to promote the development of fine-motor skills.

## Social environment

Teachers:

- ensure that there are many and varied opportunities for a child to demonstrate knowledge (verbally or nonverbally) and understanding (in a range of contexts), e.g. in play, real-life engagements, and routines and transitions, representing understanding through the arts
- encourage the child to use their preferred ways to demonstrate what they know and can do
- incorporate opportunities for small group and one-to-one instruction to enhance learning and learning behaviours
- plan explicitly for teaching and simplify everyday routines by establishing and communicating procedural steps, e.g. break up into parts; transitions for washing hands, toileting, lunch time and rest times
- consistently use selected strategies in all learning experiences, e.g. to engage an easily distracted child
- set up and teach skills for different social situations, using peer support, within similar and different age groups
- model and teach explicitly how to make choices and encourage the child to make play choices, e.g. initially reduce the number of choices
- integrate ICTs into the daily program to enhance communication, and the demonstration and assessment of learning.

## Temporal environment

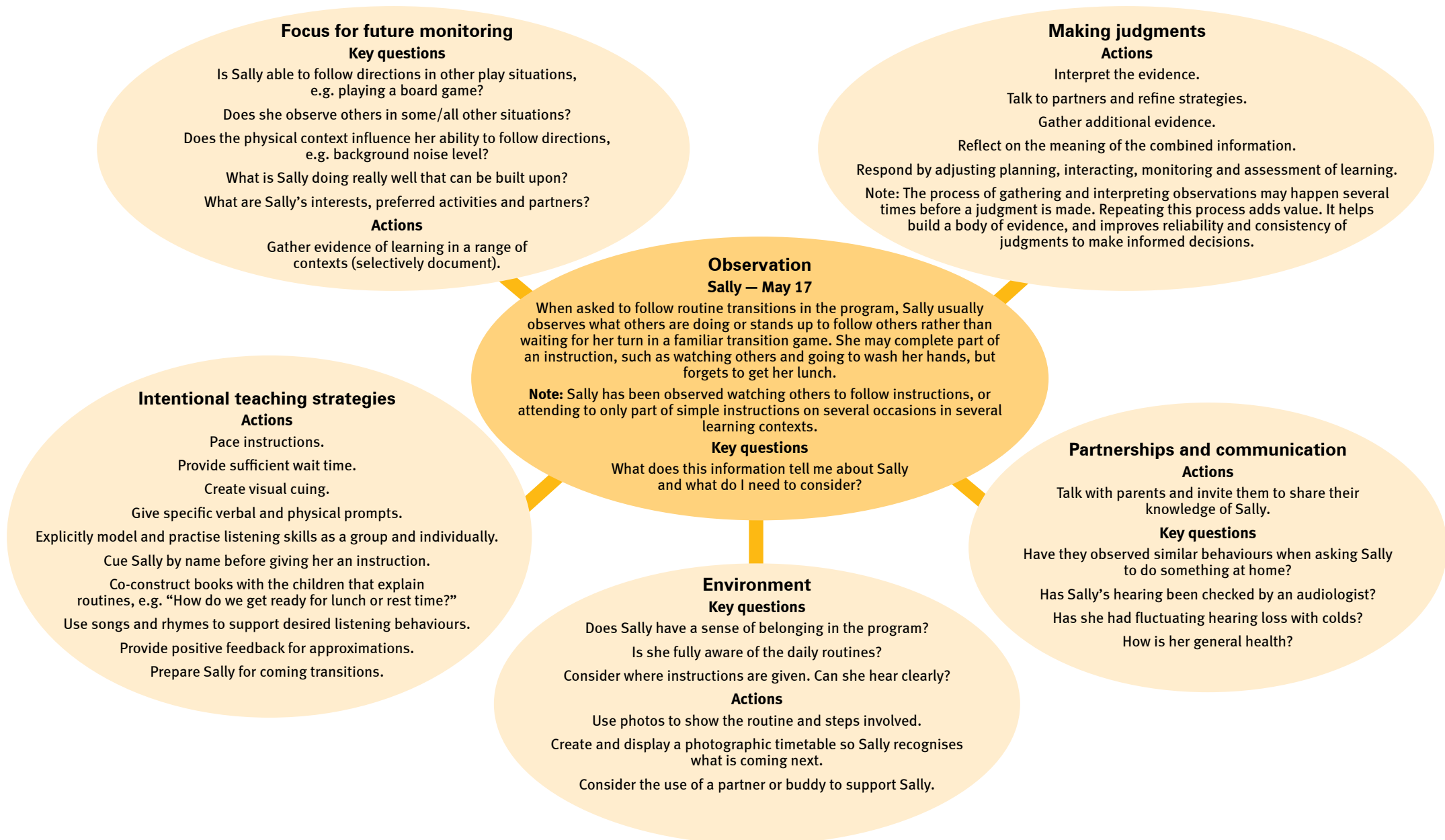
Teachers:

- provide additional time and opportunities for a child to demonstrate knowledge and skills, e.g. recognise and respond sensitively to general levels of tiredness or medical needs
- adjust timing of experiences, e.g. organise a turn early in a game to minimise a child's frustrations.

### Reflection questions

- How can we promote or enhance children's learning more effectively?
- What might we need to change in the learning environment to enhance learning?
- How can the learning evident in one context be supported to develop in another, e.g. can communication strategies used in a small group be extended into dramatic play?
- What opportunities do we create for children to demonstrate their learning and where is this evident?
- What resources need to be employed to enhance learning?
- How many different ways are available for a child to demonstrate what they know?

## Appendix 3: A teacher's mind map of a child's learning



## Appendix 4: Examples of transition statement templates

### Example template 1

**Note:** This template is designed for A3 paper size.

**Transition statement**

*Insert centre logo here*

**Child's name:**  
Date of birth:  
Early childhood service name:  
Attendance history/pattern:  
Contact person:

**Child's interests**  
*Type here*

**Information to assist with transition**  
*Type here*

**Identity**  
*Type here*

**Communicating**  
*Type here*

**Connectedness**  
*Type here*

**Active learning**  
*Type here*

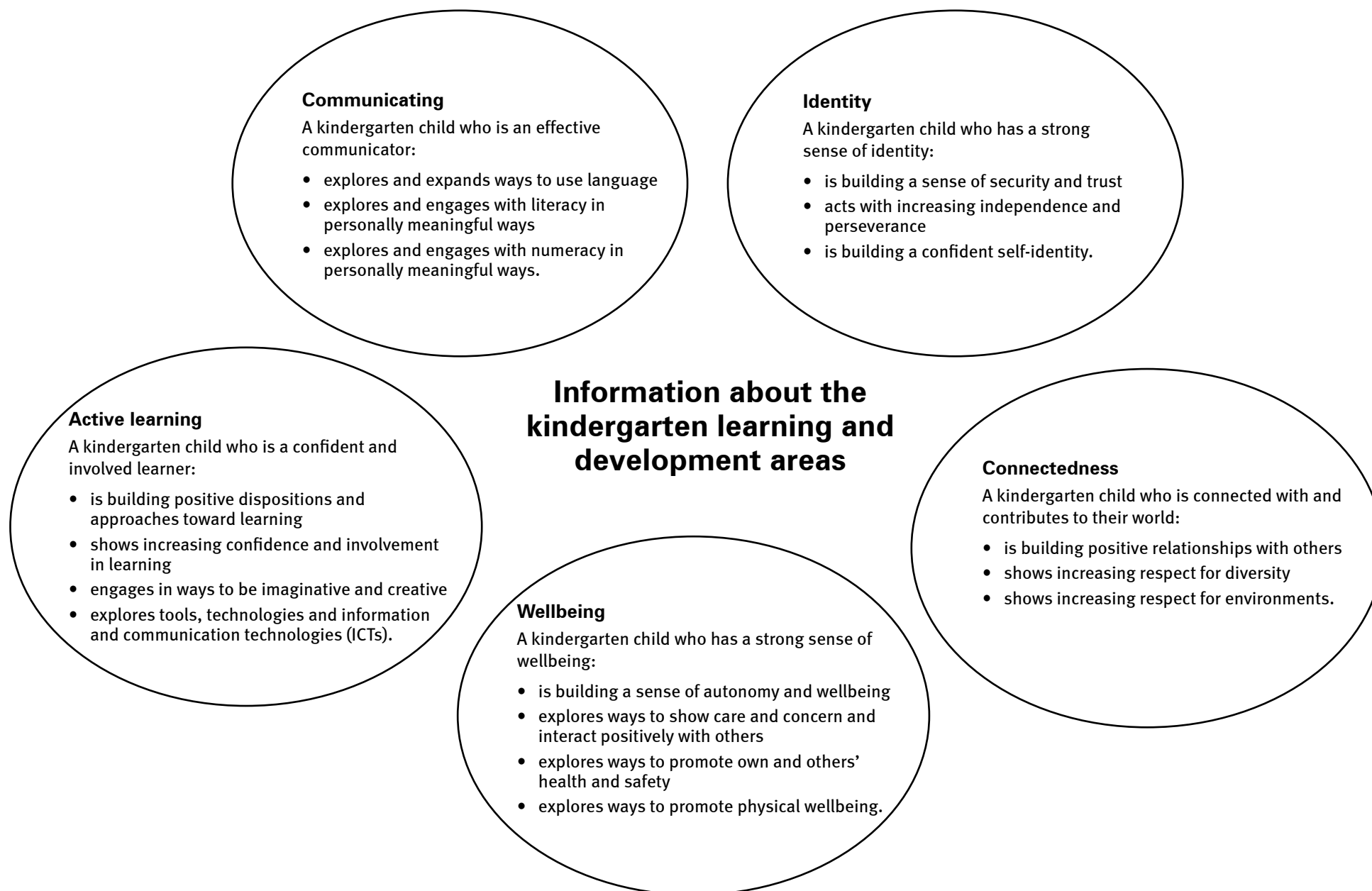
**Please include any additional information about further support that may be required for this child.**  
*Type here*

**Wellbeing**  
*e.g Isaak happily makes choices when organising familiar play situations. He shares resources, accepts others' ideas for play and suggests ways to share, without prompting. When asked, Isaak can suggest ways to stay safe in new situations. He uses a variety of fine-motor equipment for familiar and new purposes.*

**Insert child's photo**

Teacher signature:  
Parent/carer signature:  
Date completed:





## Family information

**Child's name:**  
Date of birth:

**What is your child excited about and looking forward to about starting school?**  
*Type here*

**Is there any additional information you would like to provide about your child?**  
*Type here*

**What might help your child settle into school?**  
*Type here*

**My child's strengths are ...**  
*Type here*

**My child's interests are ...**  
*Type here*

**Parent/carer signature:**  
**Relationship to child:**

## Child's page

At kindy I like to ...

I'm really good at ...



My name is:

.....

Sometimes I need help to ...

When I go to school I want to ...

**Note:** Children may draw pictures. Adults may help scribe responses.

## Example template 2

### Transition statement Teacher information

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of contact person completing this form: \_\_\_\_\_ Date completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Early childhood service name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's attendance history: *(e.g. number of days per week, number of years)* \_\_\_\_\_

Description of program delivery: *(e.g. sessional, full time, half day)* \_\_\_\_\_

#### Child's strengths, motivations and interests

*e.g. Siahna:*

- *enjoys creating new imaginative play games*
- *has well-developed ball skills*
- *is interested in experimenting with art materials and tools*
- *is kind, caring and willing to help others.*

#### Suggestions to help the child settle into school

*Type here*



## Identity

<p>A kindergarten child who has a strong sense of identity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is building a sense of security and trust</li><li>• acts with increasing independence and perseverance</li><li>• is building a confident self-identity.</li></ul>	<p>Type here</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
---	--

## Connectedness

<p>A kindergarten child who is connected with and contributes to their world:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is building positive relationships with others</li><li>• shows increasing respect for diversity</li><li>• shows increasing respect for environments.</li></ul>	<p>Type here</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
--	--

## Wellbeing

<p>A kindergarten child who has a strong sense of wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is building a sense of autonomy and wellbeing</li><li>• explores ways to show care and concern and interact positively with others</li><li>• explores ways to promote own and others' health and safety</li><li>• explores ways to promote physical wellbeing.</li></ul>	<p>Type here</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
---	--

## Active learning

<p>A kindergarten child who is a confident and involved learner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is building positive dispositions and approaches toward learning</li><li>• shows increasing confidence and involvement in learning</li><li>• engages in ways to be imaginative and creative</li><li>• explores tools, technologies and information and communication technologies (ICTs).</li></ul>	<p>Type here</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
--	--

**Communicating**

<p>A kindergarten child who is an effective communicator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• explores and expands ways to use language</li><li>• explores and engages with literacy in personally meaningful ways</li><li>• explores and engages with numeracy in personally meaningful ways.</li></ul>	<p>Type here</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
--	--

**Please include any additional information about further support that may be required for this child**

<p>Type here</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
--

Teacher signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/carers signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date completed: \_\_\_\_\_

## Transition statement

### Family information

Name of family member completing this form: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of family member completing this form: \_\_\_\_\_

Date completed: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Information that will support your child's transition to school

*For example:*

- *How does your child feel about starting school?*
- *What would your child like to know about the school they will be attending?*
- *What would your child like their new teacher to know about them?*
- *What is your child excited about and looking forward to about starting school?*
- *How do you think your child will settle into school?*
- *What might help your child to settle into school?*
- *Is there any additional information you would like to provide about your child?*

Child’s summary of kindergarten experiences

**Note:** Children may draw pictures to respond to these questions. Adults may help scribe responses.



My name is:

.....

At kindy I really like ...	I think I am really good at ...	Sometimes I might need help to ...
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# Glossary

## Aboriginal English

The term “Aboriginal English” has been used to refer to a range of different language varieties spoken by Aboriginal people in Queensland and throughout Australia, including different creoles as well as other non-standard varieties and dialects. A single meaning of the term “Aboriginal English” should therefore never be assumed in the Queensland context due to its many possible meanings.<sup>19</sup>

## Agency

Being able to make choices and decisions, to influence events and to have an impact on one’s world.<sup>20</sup>

## Assessment for learning

Involves interpreting documented evidence, gathered over time and making judgments about a child’s learning. These judgments assist teachers to recognise and celebrate children’s learning; identify their strengths, interests, ways of learning and relating; identify barriers to their learning; provide appropriate support and inform future decisions about learning and teaching.

## Alternative augmentative communication

Augmentative communication is a method of communication that *enhances* conventional forms of speech and writing. An alternative communication method *replaces* conventional forms of speech and writing, e.g. signed communication. Alternative augmentative communication (AAC) includes both electronic and non-electronic communication devices that help people to represent language concepts. Non-electronic (manual) communication boards often display pictures, photographs, graphics, abstract symbols, or printed words. Electronic devices synthesise common spoken phrases or produce written text.

## Community partners

See *Partners*.

## Connectedness

When “one experiences the self as part of others and that others are part of the self this is learnt through reciprocity, obligation, shared experiences, coexistence, cooperation and social memory.”<sup>21</sup>

## 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.<sup>22</sup>

## Curriculum

All the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in the environment designed to foster children’s learning and development.<sup>23</sup>

## 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.

## Family partners

See *Partners*.

## First language

Usually refers to the language spoken in an individual’s home environment or family context, e.g. Aboriginal

English, a creole, a community language, a language of another country, Australian sign language (Auslan).

## Group climate

Sum of shared general attitudes and feelings, and quality of interactions within a group of people.

## Inclusion

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.<sup>24</sup>

## Indigenous ways of knowing, being and learning

Evident in “our languages, art, imagery, technology, traditions and ceremonies, land management practices, social organisation and social control ... Understanding that we are part of the world as much as it is part of us, existing within a network of relations ... Our knowledge is learned and shared across time by “listening, sensing, viewing, reviewing, reading, watching, waiting, observing, exchanging, sharing, conceptualising, assessing, modelling, engaging, applying.”<sup>25</sup>

## Intentional teaching

Involves educators being deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions. Intentional teaching is an active process and a way of relating to children that embraces and builds on their strengths.<sup>26</sup> See Appendix 1 for information about and examples of intentional teaching practices.

### **Learning conversation**

A mutually respectful communication between two or more people that extends knowledge, skills or dispositions.

### **Learning stories**

Narratives about children's learning experiences that include information about children's interests, skills and dispositions toward learning. Narratives include details about the people, places, ideas and objects children encounter as they explore interests. Learning stories are often used to make learning visible to children and their families, providing information that informs teacher planning and curriculum decision making.

### **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 by taking photographs, and audio or video recordings of children's learning.

### **Partners**

**Community partners** includes members of the local community, volunteers and Elders.

**Family partners** includes children, parents, carers, kinship carers, and family members.

**Professional partners** includes colleagues and inter-agency support personnel, such as early years educators (other teachers, group leaders, assistants and directors); administrative officers; licensees; special needs, health and social workers; and therapists and psychologists 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 *Partners*.

### **Pedagogy**

Professional teaching and learning practices that shape teachers' actions, decisions, thinking and ways of relating.

### **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.

### **Professional partners**

See *Partners*.

### **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, musical experiences 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.

### **Sustained shared thinking**

An episode in which two or more individuals "work together" in an intellectual way to solve a problem, clarify a concept, evaluate activities, extend a narrative etc. Both parties must contribute to the thinking and it must develop and extend.<sup>27</sup>

### **Temporal environments**

The temporal environment refers to the way time is used to support learning. Young children require a balance of a predictable sequence of events in their day and a program that is flexible enough to respond to "in-the-moment" spontaneous learning opportunities that arise.

### **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, e.g. from home to kindergarten; between kindergarten and long day-care services, or family day care; and from the Kindergarten Year to the Preparatory Year.

# Notes

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