

**Draft Guide to the National
Quality Standard
Education and care services –
Centre-based and family day
care
Phase two**

**National Quality Standard
for Early Childhood Education and
Care and School Age Care**

Please note: This document is a draft only, developed for the purposes of the current phase of the assessment and rating process (phase two). It will be reviewed and refined based on the outcomes of phase two and also to ensure it aligns with national legislation, and regulations prior to finalisation.

This *Draft Guide to the National Quality Standard* is produced for discussion purposes only. It is not intended to be, and does not represent, a finalised statement of the policy of the Commonwealth of Australia, and does not constitute professional advice for any particular purpose. Because the circumstances of readers may vary greatly, this material is not intended to provide specific guidance for particular circumstances and it should not be relied on as a basis for any decision to take action or not take action on any matter which it covers.

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About the *Guide to the National Quality Standard*

The *Guide to the National Quality Standard* has been prepared to support education and care services that have agreed to participate in assessment and rating against the *National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care* as part of phase two of the development of the assessment and rating process.

This *Guide to the National Quality Standard* forms part of a suite of documents which includes the *Self Assessment and Quality Improvement Planning Process*, the *Early Years Learning Framework*, and the draft *My Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care in Australia*.

The purpose of this *Guide* is to assist services to complete the *Self Assessment and Quality Improvement Planning Process* by evaluating their current practices and to identify which practices they can, or should, improve.

The *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* provides objectives and guiding principles to establish the national quality framework for education and care services. It will replace current licensing and regulation processes in each state and territory and will incorporate an Act and Regulations to support the introduction of the *National Quality Standard* and the new ratings system. The Act was passed in Victoria in October 2010. Work is underway to develop the national regulations for consultation with the sector from December 2010 to March 2011. The legislation (including the Act and Regulations) will take effect from 1 January 2012. A copy of the Act is available at

[http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/f932b66241ecf1b7ca256e9200e23be/B73164FE5DA2112DCA2577BA0014D9ED/\\$FILE/10-069a.pdf](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/f932b66241ecf1b7ca256e9200e23be/B73164FE5DA2112DCA2577BA0014D9ED/$FILE/10-069a.pdf).

In making decisions about operating education and care services and working to achieve the *National Quality Standard* and improve quality at the service, the guiding principles of the national quality framework apply. These principles are that:

- The rights and best interests of the child are paramount
- Children are successful, competent and capable learners
- Equity, inclusion and diversity underpin the framework
- Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued
- The role of parents and families is respected and supported
- Best practice is expected in the provision of education and care services.

The *National Quality Standard* comprises quality areas, standards and elements. There are seven quality areas in the *National Quality Standard*.

The quality areas are:

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Leadership and service management.

Each individual quality area contains a number of standards which are high level outcome statements. The *National Quality Standard* contains 23 standards with between two and six standards for each quality area. Under each standard sits elements.

The *Guide to the National Quality Standard* outlines each of the seven quality areas in the *National Quality Standard* and includes:

- An introductory statement for each quality area, providing the context and rationale for the standard
- A description of each standard and an explanation about how it contributes to quality education and care for children
- Details of responsibilities for each standard
- Reflective questions for the service to consider when working towards each standard
- A guide to practice for each element which describes how the element might be put into practice at the service and how the element will be assessed. This consists of guidance applicable to all service types and children of all ages, followed by any specific guidance identified for the service type or age of the children.
- Suggestions for further reading that may support approved providers', educators' and coordinators' understanding of the quality area.

How to use the *Guide to the National Quality Standard*

Standards

Please read the introductory statement for each quality area and standard to clarify your understanding about its intent and context. These introductions outline the importance of each standard in a quality education and care service. Each standard outlines the requirements of the approved provider and other persons involved in service delivery.

Elements

Each standard has a number of elements of quality practice. For each element examples of practice are provided which a service is likely to adopt in order to meet the element and how the element will be assessed. These examples are not exhaustive. Each education and care service is unique and the ways in which the elements and standards are met will be determined by the service context, including the service environment, the needs, interests and abilities of the children attending the service, and the needs of families and the wider community.

You may determine that your service is able to meet the elements and standards in ways other than those included in the examples. During the assessment process you will need to demonstrate that your service's alternative approach achieves the same outcomes. Whilst the assessment process will determine whether each element is met or not met, it is likely that the assessor will be able to make decisions about a number of elements from an observation or conversation.

The tables for each element provide an overview of the requirements of the approved provider. They also detail what the element would look like in everyday practice and the way the element will be assessed. The examples include:

- **observable practice (the assessor will observe...)** – what children, families, educators and staff would be doing. For example, engaging in caring, friendly and respectful interactions. It is recognised that the assessor may not be able to observe all the standards and elements at the time of the assessment
- **practices that can be described by the approved provider, nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and staff (the assessor will discuss...)** – the approved provider, nominated supervisor, educators (including family day care educators), coordinators and staff are able to discuss and clearly explain why and how particular practices occur at the service
- **sight supporting documentation (the assessor will sight...)** – the approved provider, nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and staff are able to provide documentation

as evidence to support their particular practices at the service. For example: policies and procedures; meeting minutes; safety checklists; staff and family handbooks; newsletters; feedback forms and/or communications books; planning documentation; photos, collections of children's work, documentation of children's experiences and learning.

Reflective questions

Each standard is accompanied by a series of reflective questions that will assist approved providers, nominated supervisors, educators, coordinators and staff to consider what happens at the service and why. These questions have also been designed to encourage approved providers, nominated supervisors, educators, coordinators and staff to identify and critically reflect on the effectiveness of their current practices, and to consider how these might be changed or improved.

Ratings system

The introduction of the *National Quality Standard* will be accompanied by a quality rating system that reflects a national approach to the assessment and reporting of the quality of education and care services across the variety of service settings. The rating system will provide information to parents about the quality of services across all seven quality areas and overall.

The rating system has the following five levels:

Unsatisfactory indicates that a service is not meeting the *National Quality Standard* and the regulator is working closely with the service to immediately improve its quality, otherwise the service's approval to operate will be withdrawn.

Foundation indicates that a service is working towards meeting the *National Quality Standard*.

National Quality Standard indicates that a service is meeting the *National Quality Standard*.

Advanced indicates that a service is exceeding the *National Quality Standard*.

Excellent indicates that a service demonstrates excellence and is recognised as a sector leader.

Note on terminology

Children is the term used within this document to refer to each baby, toddler, three to five year old and school age child both as an individual and a member of a group in the education and care setting, unless otherwise stated. It is inclusive of children from all social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds and of their learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographic locations.

The *National Quality Standard* specifically uses the term 'educator' to define a person who works directly with children and is included in the 'educator-to-child' ratio.

The term 'coordinator' refers to a person employed or engaged by an approved provider of a family day care service to monitor and support family day care educators or are part of the family day care service. The term 'coordinator' includes: coordinator, child development officer, child care services officer, field officer/worker, manager, director, team leader, play session/group leader and would include the nominated supervisor for the service and any certified supervisors.

The term 'nominated supervisor' refers to a person appointed by the approved provider as a person in day to day charge of an approved education and care service. It is an offence to under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* to operate a service when children are educated or cared for without the approved provider (or a person in management and control); the nominated supervisor or a certified supervisor present.

The term 'certified supervisor' refers to a person who has been granted a certified supervisor approval and is eligible to be placed in day to day charge of an approved education and care service.

The term 'parent' in relation to a child includes a guardian of the child; and a person who has parental responsibility for the child under a decision or order of a court.

The *National Quality Standard* also uses the term 'staff' to refer to staff members in an education and care service and means any individual (other than a nominated supervisor or volunteer) employed, appointed or engaged to work in or as part of an education and care service, whether as a family day care co-ordinator, educator or otherwise. This term would include the cook, administrator, gardener, housekeeper or cleaner.

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Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice

This quality area of the *National Quality Standard* focuses on an educational program and practice that engages, stimulates and enhances children’s learning and development.

Introduction

Critical reflection and careful planning increase the value of children’s time in education and care by ensuring the educational program and practice responds to children’s interests and scaffolds their learning. Planning is also important in ensuring accountability to families and children, management, funding and regulatory bodies.

A learning framework assists stakeholders to think more deeply about the service’s approach to learning, development and care, and the way in which this guides everyday practice and development of the program. Beliefs about children and the value placed by service stakeholders on play, relationships, collaborative decision making and respect for diversity will be reflected in the sorts of opportunities that are provided for children.

Planning, assessment and evaluation are ongoing processes that underpin the educational program and involve educators in thinking about what is offered and why. Planning involves observing, gathering and interpreting information about children to inform the preparation of environments and experiences that engage and are meaningful for them. It also involves providing families with many genuine opportunities to contribute to the development of educational goals and priorities for their child. Reflecting on and documenting children’s experiences and learning forms the basis of future planning.

Written plans and evaluations underpin practice with children and families and enhance the accountability and professionalism of the service. Documenting children’s experiences and their responses to the environment makes children’s learning visible to children, educators and families and promotes shared learning and collaboration.

Under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* approved providers and nominated supervisors must ensure that a program is delivered to all children being educated and cared for by the service that:

- a) is based on an approved learning framework; and
- b) is delivered in a manner that accords with the approved learning framework; and
- c) is based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child; and
- d) is designed to take into account the individual differences of each child.

The nationally approved learning frameworks include:

Early Years Learning Framework

The aim of the *Early Years Learning Framework* is to extend and enrich children’s learning from birth to five years and through the transition to school. It was developed to assist services to provide young children with opportunities to maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success in learning.

Draft My Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care in Australia

This document aims to extend and enrich the wellbeing and development of school age children in education and care settings. The draft *My Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care in Australia (My Time, Our Place)* acknowledges time and place as children engage in a range of play and leisure experiences that allow them to feel happy, safe and relaxed, interact with friends, practice social skills, solve problems, try new activities and learn life skills. This Framework, which is

strongly linked to the *Early Years Learning Framework*, extends the principles, practices and outcomes to accommodate the contexts and age range of the children and young people who attend school age care settings.

Principles, Practice and Learning Outcomes

The *Early Years Learning Framework* and the draft *My Time, Our Place* put children's learning at the core and comprise three inter-related elements: Principles, Practice and Learning Outcomes. All three elements are fundamental to early and middle childhood pedagogy and curriculum decision-making. The frameworks support a model of curriculum decision-making as an ongoing cycle. This involves educators drawing on their professional knowledge, including their in-depth knowledge of each child. Working in partnership with families, educators use the Learning Outcomes to guide their planning for children's learning. In order to engage children actively in learning, educators identify children's strengths and interests, choose appropriate teaching strategies and design the learning environment. Educators carefully assess learning to inform further planning.

Quality Area 1 provides a strong focus on enhancing children's learning and development through the pedagogical practices of educators. The *Early Years Learning Framework* and the draft *My Time, Our Place* outline practices which nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators can use to support and promote children's learning. Pedagogical principles can be incorporated into program delivery to promote children's learning by: adopting holistic practices; being responsive to children; planning and implementing learning through play; intentional teaching; creating positive learning environments; valuing cultural and social contexts and providing continuity of learning experiences and assessment for practice (see pages 14-18 *Early Years Learning Framework* and pages 10 -19 of the draft *My Time, Our Place*).

The Educators Guide to the *Early Years Learning Framework* provides support to nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators to develop a greater level of expertise in delivering programs which are able to enhance learning and developmental outcomes for each child.

The Learning Outcomes sections in the *Early Years Learning Framework* and the draft *My Time, Our Place* demonstrate how the three elements of the Frameworks: Principles, Practices and Learning Outcomes combine to guide curriculum decision-making and assessment to promote children's learning. These sections provide comprehensive examples of how nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators can promote children's learning across the five Learning Outcomes.

Standard 1.1 The *Early Years Learning Framework* (or other approved learning framework) informs the development of a program for each child that enhances their learning and development.

What is this standard about?

Nominated supervisors and educators using a learning framework that brings together ideas, philosophies and approaches to guide their everyday practice. The learning framework guides interactions with children, families and colleagues, and informs the experiences that are planned for children and the teaching and learning that occurs.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

It enables an education and care service's approved provider, educators, families and community to share a common understanding of, and support for, education and care practice for quality teaching and learning.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 1.1?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- Ensure that a program is delivered to all children being educated and cared for by the service that:
 - a) is based on an approved learning framework; and
 - b) is delivered in a manner that accords with the approved learning framework; and
 - c) is based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child; and
 - d) is designed to take into account the individual differences of each child.
- Relevant information about the program and their child's participation in the program is shared with parents.
- The program is planned, documented and evaluated.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 1.1

- How do we currently make decisions about children's daily experiences and routines and who is involved in making these decisions?
- How can we improve the ways in which we work in partnership with families and engage children in making decision about their own learning?
- How do we build our knowledge and understanding of the learning framework that we use in our service to ensure enhanced learning outcomes for all children?
- How do we learn about each child's experiences, and the priorities that families have for their child's learning and experiences?
- How do we learn about and build on children's everyday experiences at home and in their community?

Additional questions for services with babies and toddlers

- How do we ensure all babies and toddlers develop a sense of belonging in our service?
- How do we ensure enhanced learning outcomes are a priority for all age groups?
- How do we communicate the importance of learning outcomes for babies and toddlers with their families?
- How do we apply our knowledge of learning and development and the learning framework to this age group?

Additional questions for services with school age children

- How do the range of meaningful leisure opportunities we provide enhance all children's learning?
- How do we use our knowledge of children's individual and group background and skills to inform program development?

Additional questions for family day care services

- How do we incorporate the learning outcomes into the everyday activities children experience in the home?
- What other activities can be incorporated into our program to ensure a range of learning opportunities for all children?

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What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 1.1.1: The *Early Years Learning Framework* (or other approved learning framework) guides curriculum decision making and enables each child's learning in the five outcomes:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity
2. Children are connected and contribute to their world
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
4. Children are confident and involved learners
5. Children are effective communicators.

A learning framework is an important tool for helping educators to work with children and families to achieve the best learning and developmental outcomes for children.

There are many ways to use a learning framework to guide curriculum decision making.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed:

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- that the principles and practice of the learning framework are evident including responsiveness, communication and interactions with children
- educators and children displaying behaviours and engaging in activities consistent with the evidence for the five outcomes as described in the *Early Years Learning Framework* including:
 - 1) educators provide opportunities for children to develop confidence and autonomy
 - 2) children demonstrate respect for each other
 - 3) children are supported to develop an awareness of their own health and wellbeing
 - 4) children are engaged in and access a range of learning opportunities
 - 5) children are supported to access and develop a range of communication devices
- implementation of the framework that may include examples of:
 - children being curious and enthusiastic participants in their learning
 - children using play to investigate, imagine and explore ideas
 - children following and extending their own interests with enthusiasm, energy and concentration
 - children initiating and contributing to play experiences emerging from their own ideas
 - children applying a wide variety of thinking strategies to engage with situations and solve problems, and adapt these strategies to new situations
 - children sensing and responding to a feeling of belonging
 - children initiating and joining in play
 - children exploring aspects of identity through role play
 - children being open to new challenges and discoveries
 - children expressing a wide range of emotions, thoughts and views constructively
 - children expressing an opinion in matters that affect them
 - children making choices and problem solving to meet their needs in particular contexts
 - children asserting their capabilities and independence while demonstrating increasing awareness of the needs and rights of others
 - children expressing wonder and interest in their environments
 - children persisting even when they find a task difficult and seeing the satisfaction of achievement
 - nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators promoting children's sense of belonging, connectedness and wellbeing
 - nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators ensuring all children experience pride and

How the service will be assessed:

- confidence in their achievements
- educators engaging in sustained shared communication with children about ideas and experiences and extend their vocabulary
- nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators describing to families and others how the learning framework relates to practice and decision making at the service
- educators supporting children's communication by, for example:
 - o engaging children in singing and chanting rhymes, jingles and songs and engaging children in play with words and sounds
 - o supporting children to convey and construct messages with purpose and confidence, building on home/family and community literacies
 - o ensuring children actively use, engage with and share the enjoyment of language and texts in a range of ways
 - o providing opportunities for children to express ideas and make meaning using a range of media
 - o supporting children to be independent communicators who initiate Standard Australian English and home language conversations and demonstrate the ability to meet listeners' needs
 - o providing a literacy enriched environment including displaying print in home languages and Standard Australian English
- educators providing opportunities for involvement in experiences that support the investigation of ideas, complex concepts and thinking, reasoning and hypothesising by, for example:
 - o talking explicitly about concepts such as rhyme, letters and sounds when sharing texts with children and promoting children's use of mathematical language
 - o providing children with a wide range of everyday materials that they can use to create patterns and to sort, categorise, order and compare
 - o engaging children in discussions about symbol systems such as letters, numbers, time, money and musical notation
 - o supporting children to create and use representation to organise, record and communicate mathematical ideas and concepts
 - o supporting children to contribute constructively to mathematical discussions and arguments
 - o modelling mathematical and scientific language and language associated with the arts
 - o using every day events as a basis for children's learning about nature and science.

2. Discuss

- how the learning framework is used to guide everyday practice, including:
 - relationships with children
 - guiding behaviour
 - program planning
 - setting up environments
 - choosing resources
 - teaching strategies
- how the learning framework is used to guide the planning processes used in the service to develop and document a program for each child
- whether the philosophy or principles of the service align with those described in the learning framework.

3. Sight

- the service's statement of philosophy or principles and planning procedures reflecting the core elements of the learning framework
- documentation demonstrating that the five learning outcomes provide a focus for the experiences planned for individual and groups of children and are evident in documentation of children's learning
- documentation for families describing how the learning framework is used to achieve learning and

How the service will be assessed:

developmental outcomes for their child.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS

How the service will be assessed:

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- that the principles and practice of the learning framework are evident in the service's responsiveness, communication and interactions with babies and toddlers, by;
 - supporting babies and toddlers early attempts to initiate interactions and conversations
 - acknowledging and responding sensitively to children's cues and signals
 - supporting children's efforts, assisting and encouraging as appropriate
 - initiating one-to-one interactions with children, particularly babies and toddlers during daily routines
- implementation of the framework may include examples such as children:
 - reaching out and communicating for comfort, assistance and companionship
 - understanding different ways of contributing through play and projects
 - being playful and responding positively to others, reaching out for company and friendship.

2. Discuss

- how the service communicates learning outcomes for babies and toddlers with families.

3. Sight

- documentation reflecting how the principles and practice of the learning framework are addressed for babies and toddlers.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

How the service will be assessed:

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- that the principles of the Act and the practice of the draft *My Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care* are evident in the service's responsiveness, communication and interactions with all children.

2. Discuss

- strategies used by the service to ensure all children have a sense of belonging in the service including both regular and occasional attendees
- strategies applied to ensure the needs of the different children attending on different days are reflected in the program delivery.

3. Sight

- documentation demonstrating that the program reflects the age, interests and skill level of the children attending the program.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed:

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- that the principles and practice of the framework/s are evident in the service's responsiveness, communication and interactions with all children by:
 - incorporating learning experiences into everyday activities occurring in the home
 - providing a range of resources and materials for individual and small group experiences
 - initiating conversation with children about cultural diversity, language, similarities, feelings, equality and caring for the environment
 - providing children with open-ended materials to play with and extending their play to enhance the learning outcomes.

2. Discuss

- how activities outside of the home are incorporated to provide a range of experiences for the children, for example, visits to the local community, playgroup, library, museums or playgrounds.

3. Sight

- documentation regarding the range of activities provided or involved in such as playgroups, preschool programs or routine outings and excursions.

Element 1.1.2 Curriculum decision making is informed by the context, setting and cultural diversity of the families and the community.

The diversity in family life means that children experience *belonging, being and becoming* in many different ways. They bring their diverse experiences, perspectives, expectations, knowledge and skills to their learning (*Early Years Learning Framework, 2009, p.9*).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed:

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- that the service's practices reflect:
 - the uniqueness of the community in which the service is located
 - the experiences of the people at the service
 - different approaches to and priorities for children's learning, development and care
- educators' familiarity with each child's life, experiences and learning outside the service
- planned experiences that uphold children's rights to have their cultures and identities acknowledged and valued
- educators using children's real-life experiences to engage children in learning opportunities
- educators, coordinators and children demonstrating a positive attitude towards diversity and Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage
- nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators providing opportunities for children to broaden their understanding of the world in which they live.

2. Discuss

- educators' and coordinators' understanding of how planning for each child builds on their learning outside the service
- the opportunities available to the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators to talk with families about their cultural traditions, customs and beliefs
- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators take into account the complexity of children's and families' lives when making decisions about the experiences planned for children
- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators are supported to discuss and challenge their own understanding, beliefs and knowledge, including their own theoretical perspectives about children's learning and development.

3. Sight

- information from families included in documentation used to plan for each child
- planning documentation that demonstrates deep understanding of each child, their family and community context.

Standard 1.2 The program for each child takes into account their strengths, capabilities, culture, interests and experiences.

What is this standard about?

Nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators developing the program based on their sound knowledge of each child so that the experiences, interactions and routines each child engages in are relevant to them, respectful of their background and recognise and build on their current interests and abilities.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

Children learn best when the experiences they have are meaningful to them and are focussed on the here and now. Because children are continually learning new skills and gaining new insights into their world, nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators need to continually assess and evaluate teaching and learning to update their knowledge of individual children regularly and to plan new and follow up experiences that are relevant to the child in their current context.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 1.2?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- Ensure that a program is delivered to all children being educated and cared for by the service that:
 - a) is based on an approved learning framework; and
 - b) is delivered in a manner that accords with the approved learning framework; and
 - c) is based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child; and
 - d) is designed to take into account the individual differences of each child.
- The program is planned, documented, implemented and evaluated.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 1.2

- How do we get to know about each child and their strengths, capabilities, interests and abilities?
- How do we currently document and plan for all children's learning?
- How do we make sure that experiences and routines are child, rather than adult, focused?
- How do we support every child's participation in the program?
- How do we demonstrate in the program that we value children's ideas, thinking and interests?
- What do we do to critically reflect on and evaluate the program, how is this documented and how are our evaluations used to improve outcomes for children?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 1.2.1 Each child's current knowledge, ideas, culture and interests provide the foundation for the program.

Viewing children as active participants and decision makers opens up possibilities for educators to move beyond pre-conceived expectations about what children can do and learn. This requires educators to respect and work with each child's unique qualities and abilities (*Early Years Learning Framework, 2009, p. 9*).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed:

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children initiating and contributing to play experiences emerging from their own ideas
- children accessing a variety of open ended resources and materials
- children's facial and vocal responses, and sustained concentration indicating their deep involvement in experiences that are rich and meaningful to them
- children attending and giving cultural cues that they are listening to and understanding what is said to them
- children developing strong foundations in both the culture and language/s of their family and of the broader community without compromising their cultural identities
- children pursuing their own ideas and interests to their satisfaction
- children repeating, revisiting and adding to the projects they have initiated
- children participating in a variety of rich and meaningful inquiry-based experiences
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators demonstrating flexibility in program delivery to incorporate children's ideas, culture and interest to ensure the experiences are relevant and engaging
- educators building upon culturally valued child rearing practices and approaches to learning
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators observing, listening and talking with children for sustained periods of time, paying close attention to what they are saying, thinking and doing
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators empowering children to make choices and guide their own play
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators providing time and space for children to engage in both individual and collaborative projects
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators allowing children enough time to do things for themselves
- large blocks of uninterrupted time during which children are exploring ideas and theories using imagination, creativity and play
- the times when children are expected to do the same thing at the same time are minimised.

2. Discuss

- how educators complement their own observations of children with information provided by children and their families and build on the knowledge, languages and understanding that children bring to the service.

3. Sight

- examples of how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators plan holistic programs that are responsive to children's lives, interests and learning styles and which promote children's physical, personal, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing as well as the cognitive aspects of learning
- evidence that children's family, culture and community are reflected in the service environment.

Element 1.2.2 Every child is supported to participate in the program.

Inclusion involves taking into account all children's social, cultural and linguistic diversity (including learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographic location) in curriculum decision making processes. The intent is to ensure that all children's experiences are recognised and valued. The intent is also to ensure that all children have equitable access to resources and participation, and opportunities to demonstrate their learning and to value difference (*Early Years Learning Framework, 2009, p. 24*).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed:

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children using their home language to construct meaning
- children experiencing and sharing personal successes in learning and initiating opportunities for new learning in their home languages or Standard Australian English
- children sharing aspects of their culture with other children and educators
- children being acknowledged as competent and capable and being encouraged to do many things independently
- all children, regardless of background, age, gender or ability, fully participating as valued members of the group
- children using verbal, non-verbal and home languages to engage in enjoyable interactions with educators and peers
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators acknowledging each child's uniqueness in positive ways
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators supporting children's efforts, assisting and encouraging as appropriate
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators consistently aware of and responsive to children who may require additional support, assistance or attention
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators modelling inclusive practice and using language that reflects their commitment to equity
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators actively supporting the maintenance of home language and culture
- educators noticing and listening carefully to children's concerns and discussing diverse perspectives on issues of inclusion and exclusion and fair and unfair behaviour
- aspects of the environment or program that have been adapted or changed to minimise barriers to participation.

2. Discuss

- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators challenge non-inclusive language and behaviours and support children to develop an awareness of, and positive approaches to, others
- opportunities the service provides for children to participate in experiences that increase their awareness and appreciation of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and multicultural heritage
- how educators support children to explore different identities and points of view through play and everyday experiences
- examples of children noticing and reacting in positive ways to similarities and differences among people.

3. Sight

- evidence that resource people and other professionals are consulted to support the inclusion of children with additional needs
- evidence that the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators seek information and support from families and other professionals working with children to assist them to respond appropriately to children's behaviours

How the service will be assessed:

- documentation that goals identified by paediatricians, child welfare workers, early childhood intervention services, psychologists or other therapists are evident in plans developed by educators for individual children.

Revised draft - Phase two

Element 1.2.3 Each child's learning and development is assessed as part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluating children's learning.

Assessment of children's learning refers to the process of gathering and analysing information as evidence about what children know, can do and understand. It is part of a cycle that includes planning, documenting and evaluating children's learning.

The five learning outcomes in the *Early Years Learning Framework* and the draft *My Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care in Australia* provide educators with key reference points against which children's progress can be identified, documented and communicated to families (*Early Years Learning Framework*, 2009, p.17; *My Time, Our Place* p. 18).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed:

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children's representation of their learning and work documented and displayed in sensitive and respectful ways
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators using the *Early Years Learning Framework* and/or the draft *My Time, Our Place*, together with their knowledge of the children's current learning and development, to implement and reflect on programming
- educators observing and recording children's learning and behaviour to inform their educational planning
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators using written plans as the basis for evaluating the program.

2. Discuss

- evidence that information contained in children's documentation is gathered in a variety of ways
- how educators analyse the information that is gathered about individuals and groups of children to make judgements about each child's progress towards specific learning outcomes
- the effectiveness of the processes used to capture and record information about children's strengths, interests, relationships and learning over a period of time.

3. Sight

- evidence that children's ideas and points of view are heard and respected in planning for and assessing learning experiences
- evidence that written programming and evaluation is ongoing and is inclusive of each child, including those who attend on a part-time or casual basis
- information about planned experiences recorded in a way that children and families can appreciate and understand and that is displayed for them to view and make comment.

Element 1.2.4 Critical reflection and evaluation of children’s learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, is used as a primary source of information for planning and to improve the effectiveness of the program and teaching strategies.

A lively culture of professional enquiry is established when educators and those with whom they work are all involved in an ongoing cycle of review through which current practices are examined, outcomes reviewed and new ideas generated. In such a climate, issues relating to curriculum quality, equity and children’s wellbeing can be raised and debated (*Early Years Learning Framework, 2009, p.13*).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed:

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children revisiting and discussing with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators, and each other, the experiences, projects and excursions they have been involved in
- educators discussing what is happening throughout the day with the children, their colleagues and families
- educators working with children to document their experiences and learning
- educators using a variety of methods such as diary jottings, children’s comments and conversations, photographs and examples of children’s work to assist their reflection on children’s experiences, thinking and learning
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators considering ways in which children’s interests and ideas can be scaffolded to enhance their learning and development.

2. Discuss

- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators record their reflections in the service’s program
- how critical reflection, assessment and evaluation are ongoing processes in the service
- the opportunities available for educators to reflect on the events of each day, what happened and why
- how children’s comments about the effectiveness of the program are recorded and considered as part of the evaluation process.

3. Sight

- documentation that shows evidence of critical reflection and clearly identifies:
 - children’s learning and their developing ideas and skills
 - examples of children’s spontaneous play
 - the effectiveness of teaching strategies
 - changes that may be needed in the environment.
- documentation such as photographs, samples of children’s work and their words being used to create records that are meaningful for children, and can be shared with their families.

Further Reading

Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (2009), *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Policy_Agenda/Quality/Documents/Final%20EYLF%20Framework%20Report%20-%20WEB.pdf

Early Childhood Australia Resource Theme on the Early Years Learning Framework, from http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/resource_themes/eylf_early_years_learning_framework.html

Goodfellow, Joy, *The Early Years Learning Framework: Getting started Early Childhood Australia Research in Practice Series*, http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/pdf/rips/RIP0904_sample.pdf

Gowrie Australia (2010), *Assessment in the Early Years: A resource from Gowrie Australia*.

Revised draft - Phase two

Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety

This quality area of the *National Quality Standard* focuses on safeguarding and promoting children's health and safety.

Introduction

Under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* the approved provider and other persons have responsibility for supporting the health, protection, safety and wellbeing of all children. In exercising their responsibilities under the Act these persons must take reasonable care to protect children from foreseeable risk of harm, injury and infection.

All children have the right to experience quality care in an environment which provides for their health and safety. This should be complemented by a focus on promoting each child's emotional wellbeing and providing support for each child's growing confidence and independence. Fundamental to ensuring children's wellbeing is to ensure that the routines, activities and experiences support children's individual requirements for health, nutrition, sleep, rest and relaxation.

Learning about healthy lifestyles, including nutrition, personal hygiene, physical fitness, emotions, and social relationships is integral to children's wellbeing and self-confidence. As children become more independent, they can take greater responsibility for their own health, hygiene, and personal care and become aware of their own and others' safety and wellbeing. This is particularly relevant for school age children attending education and care services.

The key factors which promote children's health, safety and wellbeing in services include:

- maintaining effective supervision of children
- monitoring and minimising hazards and safety risks in the environment
- managing illness and injuries effectively
- implementing effective hygiene practices
- meeting children's nutrition requirements and promoting healthy food choices
- providing for individual children's health and rest/sleep requirements
- encouraging and supporting childhood immunisation
- promoting children's physical activity
- understanding and meeting obligations under state or territory child protection legislation.

Under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*:

- The approved provider, the nominated supervisor and the family day care educator of an education and care service must ensure that all children being educated and cared for by the service are adequately supervised at all times that the children are in the care of that service.
- The approved provider, nominated supervisor and family day care educator must ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect a child being educated or cared for by the service from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.

Standard 2.1: Each child's health is promoted.

What is this standard about?

The service supporting all aspects of children's health, with a focus on ensuring that their individual health and wellbeing requirements are met and supporting children to learn about healthy food, drink and lifestyle choices.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

Being healthy, well-rested and free of illness assists children to be able to participate happily and successfully in the learning environment. Physical wellbeing contributes to children's ability to concentrate, cooperate and learn.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 2.1?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- Authorisation to administer medication (including prescription, over the counter and homeopathic medications) is obtained and documented. In an emergency, authorisation may be given verbally by a parent or medical practitioner.
- Medication must be within its use by date and in its original packaging. The dosage to be administered must be checked by a second adult (unless this is not possible). Prescription medication must bear the child's name.
- Procedures are in place to manage children with medical conditions and children who have been diagnosed as being at risk of anaphylaxis.
- Heating and cooling equipment is provided to maintain a comfortable temperature for children.
- Current health and hygiene practices are used within the service.
- Children with infectious diseases are removed from the service when it is necessary to protect the health and safety of other children.
- Parents of children enrolled at the service are notified of any case of infectious illness at the service.
- A suitably equipped first aid kit is readily available at the service.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 2.1

- How do we find out about individual children's health requirements and routines?
- How do we ensure that the educators, coordinators and staff who need to be aware of and know how to manage children's specific health requirements are informed about these?
- How do we keep up to date with current, authoritative information about the management of specific health needs and anaphylaxis?
- How do we keep informed about current food safety and hygiene practices?
- How do we ensure that the service adopts best and safest practice in relation to the administration of medication for children?
- How do we ensure that all educators consistently implement hygienic food safety practices?
- How do we keep up to date with current information about child and adult immunisation?
- How do we ensure that families are informed about and follow the service's policy and guidelines for the exclusion of ill children?
- How do we communicate with families if there is an outbreak of an infectious illness?
- What arrangements do we have in place to regularly review and update our child health related policies and procedures?

Additional questions for services with children birth to five years old

- How do we arrange routine times to ensure that children are able to follow their individual routines, including arrangements for children who do not need or wish to sleep or rest when other children do?
- How do we communicate with families about children’s routine experiences such as sleeping and toileting patterns while at the service?

Additional questions for services with school age children

- What arrangements do we need to make for older children to be able to administer their own medication, under adult supervision?

Revised draft - Phase two

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 2.1.1 Each child’s health needs are supported.

It is important that the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators are aware of the health requirements of all children and that there are effective processes for educators to support and monitor these. Children can also have specific health requirements, and these often change over time and as children develop. The nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators need to work closely with children, families and, where relevant, schools and health care professionals to promote healthy lifestyles and ensure they understand and meet children’s specific health requirements.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

<p>How the service will be assessed</p> <p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <p>1. Observe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ educators and nominated supervisors discussing health and safety issues with children and involving them in developing guidelines to keep the environment safe for all ▪ educators and nominated supervisors communicating with families about concerns or queries regarding children’s health requirements ▪ educators implementing appropriate practices when administering medication, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - checking the written authorisation from the parent or guardian - checking that the medication does not exceed its use-by date and is supplied in its original packaging - checking that prescribed medication displays the child’s name. <p>2. Discuss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ how information about the child’s individual health requirements is communicated to all people who will work with a child in the service ▪ how any concerns or questions about a child’s health needs are conveyed to their family ▪ how confidentiality in relation to children’s individual health needs is maintained ▪ what arrangements are in place for the service to consult with relevant authorities to ensure that information about health, safety and child protection is current. <p>3. Sight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ written authorisation for the administration of medication, including prescription, over the counter and homeopathic medications ▪ individual health management plans (developed and reviewed in consultation with families, medical professionals and/or alternative therapy providers) for children with a specific medical condition or who have been diagnosed as being at risk of anaphylaxis or asthma. The plans should include evidence that the information received from families, medical professionals and/or alternative therapy providers has been used to develop or review the child’s individual health management plan ▪ a written process for the administration of medication for children that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - authorisation from a parent/guardian to administer the medication - name of the medication being administered - details of the time and dosage of the medication administered - signature of the person who administered the medication.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

<p>How the service will be assessed</p> <p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <p>2. Discuss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ arrangements for negotiating individual procedures for the administration of medication with

How the service will be assessed
families and children <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ how information about the child’s individual health requirements, concerns or questions are communicated with the school.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR CENTRE-BASED SERVICES

How the service will be assessed
Assessors will, for example: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Observe<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ educators implementing appropriate practices when administering medication, including having another educator check the dosage of medication and witness the administration of medication.3. Sight<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ a written process for the administration of medication for children that includes the signature of the person who administered the medication, and the signature of the witness.

Revised draft - Phase two

Element 2.1.2 Each child's comfort is provided for and there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.

Children's and families' requirements for children's comfort and welfare in relation to daily routines such as rest, sleep, dressing and toileting/nappy changing will vary due to a range of factors. Issues that may influence a child's individual requirements for these include the child and families' socio-cultural background, their personal preferences and the routines and activities that are in place at home.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- educators providing a range of active and restful experiences and supporting children to make appropriate decisions regarding participation
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators discussing sun safety with children, and implementing appropriate measures to protect children from overexposure to the sun
- physical spaces being made available for children to engage in rest and quiet experiences.

2. Discuss

- the service's approach to sleep, rest and sun protection and how this information is shared with families.

3. Sight

- evidence that information about the service's approach to sun protection is shared with families.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE UNDER SCHOOL AGE

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- educators and nominated supervisors supporting children to:
 - communicate their needs for comfort and assistance
 - recognise and communicate their bodily needs
 - demonstrate a sense of belonging and comfort in their environment
 - show increasing independence and competence in personal hygiene, care and safety for themselves and others
- children's and families' individual clothing needs and preferences being met to promote children's comfort, safety and protection, within the scope of the service's requirements for children's health and safety
- children being supplied with clean, appropriate spare clothes as they require them
- sleep and rest practices that are consistent with contemporary views about children's health, safety and welfare and meet children's individual sleep needs
- educators ensuring that sleeping infants are closely monitored, and that all sleeping children are within hearing range and regularly observed
- children who do not require sleep or rest having opportunities to engage in appropriate quiet play activities
- toileting and nappy changing facilities that are accessible, safe, clean, comfortable
- relaxed, positive nappy changing and toileting routines that are adapted to meet individual children's routines
- children being supported sensitively and positively when they are learning to use the toilet
- children's needs for privacy during toileting and/or dressing and undressing times being respected.

How the service will be assessed

2. Discuss

- how educators find out about children’s and families individual clothing needs and preferences and how they reach agreement with parents to balance individual needs with the practices of the service
- how educators negotiate sleep and rest routines and practices with families to reach agreement on how these will occur for each child at the service
- how educators work with families to support children’s toilet learning.

3. Sight

- evidence that families are provided with daily information about their child’s sleep and rest patterns and nappy change/toileting patterns.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children accessing comfortable spaces away from the main activity areas for relaxation and quiet activity.

2. Discuss

- privacy arrangements for children’s toileting and personal hygiene requirements
- how educators negotiate arrangements for relaxation and ‘down time’ with children.

3. Sight

- planning that reflects children’s input into the rules and routines of the service that relate to the comfort of individuals and the group.

Element 2.1.3 Effective hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.

Maintaining high standards of hygiene is essential in preventing the spread of infectious diseases and ensuring good health. Effective hygiene practices assists significantly in reducing the likelihood of children becoming ill due to cross infection or as a result of exposure to materials, surfaces, body fluids or other substances that may cause infection or illness.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed
Assessors will, for example: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Observe<ul style="list-style-type: none">health and hygiene practices that reflect current research, 'best practice' and advice from relevant health authoritiesthe nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators implementing the service's health and safety policy and procedures consistentlythe nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators actively supporting children to learn hygiene practicesthe cleanliness of the service being consistently maintained, particularly in bathroom, eating and food preparation areas.2. Discuss<ul style="list-style-type: none">with educators how service cleanliness is consistently maintained.3. Sight<ul style="list-style-type: none">health and safety policy and proceduresevidence that families are provided with information and support to follow the service's hygiene procedures.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE UNDER SCHOOL AGE

How the service will be assessed
Assessors will, for example: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Observe<ul style="list-style-type: none">educators, coordinators and children implementing appropriate hygiene practices in relation to hand washing, toileting, nappy changing and cleaning of equipmenttoileting and nappy changing facilities that are safe, clean, comfortable.2. Discuss<ul style="list-style-type: none">the maintenance of a regular regime of washing children's toys and equipment.3. Sight<ul style="list-style-type: none">written procedures and schedule for maintaining a regular regime of washing children's toys and equipment.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR CENTRE-BASED SERVICES

How the service will be assessed
Assessors will, for example: <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Sight<ul style="list-style-type: none">nappy changing and toileting procedures displayed in toilet and nappy changing areasinformation about correct hand washing procedures displayed in relevant areas of the service, such as bathrooms, nappy change areas and food preparation areas.

Element 2.1.4 Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness, in accordance with recognised guidelines.

Spending time in education and care services or other facilities and being exposed to a large number of children for some time provides an opportunity for infectious diseases to be spread. It is not possible to prevent the spread of all infections and illnesses within education and care services. However, a lot of illnesses from infectious disease can be prevented (Staying Healthy in Child Care, 2005, p.iii).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- educators, coordinators and staff maintaining a hygienic environment for children
- children consuming food and drinks in a hygienic manner
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators discussing health and safety issues with children and involving them in developing guidelines to keep the environment safe for all
- educators consistently implementing the service's health and safety policy and procedures for food safety and handling
- safe and hygienic storage, handling, preparation and serving of all food and drinks consumed by children, including foods brought from home
- educators observing and responding to signs of illness and injury in children
- educators observing the symptoms of children's illnesses and injuries and systematically recording and sharing this information with families (and medical professionals where required).

2. Discuss

- how information about recognised health and safety guidelines is sourced and used to inform policies and practices
- how the service's health and safety policy addresses child and staff immunisation and infectious diseases
- how the service's guidelines for the exclusion of ill children and educators is consistently implemented
- how the service implements its procedure for notifying families of illness or injuries that affect children while in education and care
- how families are advised of cases of infectious illnesses in the service, and provided with information about the nature of the illness, incubation and infectious periods and the service's exclusion requirements for the illness
- how the service responds to a serious accident or health related emergency involving a child.

3. Sight

- records of educators' first aid qualifications
- at least one suitably equipped first aid kit readily available in the service
- current records of children's immunisation status, including a written process for obtaining and updating information from families about children's current immunisation status
- a written process for observing, responding to and recording signs of illness and injury in children and notifying families of illness or injuries that affect children while in education and care
- a written process for notifying families of cases of infectious illnesses in the service
- a written guideline for the exclusion of ill children that is consistent with current information from a relevant recognised authority
- information that has been provided to educators and families about child and adult immunisation recommendations.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR CENTRE-BASED SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

3. Sight

- records of educators' first aid qualifications, and staff rosters to demonstrate that a first-aid qualified educator is on duty at all times

Revised draft - Phase two

Standard 2.2 Healthy eating and physical activity are embedded in the program for children.

What is this standard about?

The service ensuring that children's nutritional and physical health needs are met and that learning about healthy lifestyles underpins everyday routines and experiences.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

A strong sense of wellbeing, which is promoted by good nutrition and an active lifestyle, provides children with the confidence, energy and optimism which maximise their learning potential.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 2.2?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- Food and beverages are nutritious, regularly offered, varied and adequate in quantity.
- Ensure that a program is delivered to all children being educated and cared for by the service that:
 - a) is based on an approved learning framework; and
 - b) is delivered in a manner that accords with the approved learning framework; and
 - c) is based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child; and
 - d) is designed to take into account the individual differences of each child.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 2.2

- How do we ensure food and drink is nutritious, and appropriate to the age of each child?
- How are children encouraged to make healthy food choices?
- How do we plan to meet the individual nutrition requirements of children, including managing their likes, dislikes and any cultural or other requirements that families may have in relation to children's eating?
- How do we incorporate discussions and activities about healthy eating and caring for their bodies into children's everyday experiences?
- How do we ensure the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators are familiar with current guidelines about healthy eating and physical activity?
- How do we ensure the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators understand and implement procedures relating to food handling, transportation and storage?
- How do we encourage children to problem solve in relation to physical challenges in the environment?
- How do we plan the program to ensure there is a balance between planned and spontaneous active play, as well as a balance between passive and active experiences?
- How do we set up the environment and resources to encourage children to engage in physical play?
- How do we encourage child-initiated or child-directed play and recreational experiences?

Additional questions for services with babies and toddlers

- How do we encourage and support breastfeeding in the service?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 2.2.1 Healthy eating is promoted and food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate to the age of the child.

Good nutrition is essential to healthy living and enables children to be active participants in play. Education and care settings provide many opportunities for children to experience a range of healthy foods and to learn about food choices from educators and other children (Early Years Learning Framework, 2009, p.30).

Good nutrition is essential to healthy living and enables children to be active participants in play and leisure. School age care settings may provide opportunities for children to experience a range of healthy foods and to learn about food choices from educators and other children (Draft *My Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care*, 2010, p. 30).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

<p>How the service will be assessed</p> <p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <p>1. Observe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ educators engaging children in experiences, conversations and routines that promote healthy lifestyles and good nutrition ▪ children showing an increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles and good nutrition ▪ the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators modelling, reinforcing and implementing healthy eating and nutrition practices with children ▪ children having ready access to (and being regularly offered) water throughout the day ▪ children eating food that is consistent with advice provided by families about their child’s dietary requirement, likes/dislikes and any cultural or other requirements families have regarding their child’s nutrition ▪ children being encouraged to eat healthy food, without being required to eat food they don’t like or to eat more than they want ▪ children being provided with food at times other than routine meal and snack times when they have not eaten at the usual routine time or are hungry ▪ the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators never using food to reward or punish children ▪ educators following the service’s procedures for the safe storage and heating of food and drink. <p>2. Discuss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ how the service meets the needs of children with special dietary requirements ▪ how the service consults with families to learn about children’s individual needs and likes/dislikes in relation to food, and any culturally appropriate food needs. <p>3. Sight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ written procedures for the safe storage and heating of food and drink.
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ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH CHILDREN UNDER SCHOOL AGE

<p>How the service will be assessed</p> <p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <p>1. Observe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ children being provided with food that is consistent with the <i>Australian Government Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings</i> ▪ the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators sitting with children and modelling healthy eating habits ▪ toddlers being supported by educators to feed themselves independently ▪ babies being fed individually by educators ▪ educators following the service’s procedures for the safe storage and heating of food and drink,
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How the service will be assessed
including breast milk.
2. Discuss
<ul style="list-style-type: none">educators following the service’s procedures for the safe storage and heating of food and drink, including breast milkhow the service supports families’ choices regarding breast and bottle feedingsupport for families who choose to breastfeed their child while they are at the service.
3. Sight
<ul style="list-style-type: none">evidence that families are provided with daily information about their child’s food and drinkwritten menus (where the service is responsible for providing food) detailing the foods provided for children that are consistent with the <i>Australian Government Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings</i>written procedures for the safe storage and heating of food and drink, including breast milk.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

How the service will be assessed
Assessors will, for example:
1. Observe
<ul style="list-style-type: none">children being provided with food that is consistent with the <i>Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia</i>.

Element 2.2.2 Physical activity is promoted through planned and spontaneous experiences and is appropriate to the age of the child.

It is important to encourage physical activity in early childhood for two reasons. Firstly, children under the age of five who are very active are more likely to stay active throughout childhood, and early development of good habits may form a foundation for later years. Secondly, regular physical activity during early childhood can impact on immediate and long term health outcomes. (*Get up & Grow - Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood* Director/Coordinator Book, 200), p. 55)

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children helping to set up and plan for physical play activities and equipment
- children having opportunities to use their problem solving skills to extend their physical abilities
- children showing enthusiasm for participating in physical play and negotiating play spaces to ensure the safety and wellbeing of themselves and others
- children encouraged to use their sensory capabilities and dispositions with increasing integration, skill and purpose to explore and respond to their world
- educators consistently implementing physical activities as part of the program for all children
- indoor and outdoor areas set up in ways to promote safe physical play and activity for children of different age groups and capabilities
- children having frequent opportunities to engage in outdoor play
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators becoming involved in and enjoying children's physical activity
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators encouraging and providing appropriate support to children to participate in new or unfamiliar physical experiences
- educators accepting each child's level of participation in physical activities according to the child's abilities and comfort level with the activity.

2. Discuss

- how the service maintains a balance between spontaneous and planned physical activity, and passive and active experiences, for all children.

3. Sight

- the planned program to consider how it incorporates physical activity, including a balance of quiet /passive play times and times for more energetic outdoor play, that meets the capabilities of the children involved
- evidence that information is communicated to families about the importance of physical activity to children's health and development.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH CHILDREN UNDER SCHOOL AGE

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- support for children to engage in increasingly complex sensory-motor skills and movement patterns
- provision of safe areas for babies to practise rolling over, sitting, crawling, standing and walking
- support for toddlers to develop coordinated movement through planned experiences such as action songs, dancing, throwing and kicking balls
- opportunities for children to combine gross and fine motor movement and balance to achieve increasingly complex patterns of activity including dance, creative movement and drama
- opportunities for children to demonstrate spatial awareness and orient themselves, moving around

How the service will be assessed

and through their environments confidently and safely

- children responding through movement to traditional and contemporary music, dance and storytelling
- children and educators talking about how their bodies work and the importance of physical activity to people's health and wellbeing.

Revised draft - Phase two

Standard 2.3 Each child is protected.

What is this standard about?

The service ensuring that all aspects of children's safety are protected.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

Children have a fundamental right to be protected and kept safe while they are in the care of educators in education and care services. Children who are unsafe are at risk of having their physical health and wellbeing negatively impacted, which in turn can negatively affect children's experiences, learning and wellbeing in the present and throughout their future lives.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 2.3?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- Children are adequately supervised at all times that children are on the premises where the service operates or in the care of the service.
- A risk assessment is undertaken to determine the staffing levels required for the safe conduct of excursions.
- A comfortable and safe environment is provided for children.
- Cleaning materials, disinfectants, flammable, poisonous and other dangerous substances, tools and toiletries are inaccessible to children.
- Collection of children must be by a parent or authorised nominee and a record of children's arrival and departure is kept at the service, with the signature of the person responsible for verifying the accuracy of the record or the person collecting the child.
- Children may only be taken outside the premises by an educator, nominated supervisor, coordinator or an authorised nominee.
- Written authorisation is required for a child to be taken outside the premises (except in an emergency situation).
- Parents are provided with information regarding excursions (designation, mode of transport, educator-to-child ratios, number of adults in attendance) and their written approval is obtained and documented.
- All excursions must be subject to a risk assessment prior to being undertaken and information provided to parents.
- Emergency procedures are developed and practised regularly.
- Every adult working with children understands and meets their obligations under the relevant state or territory child protection legislation.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 2.3

- How do we identify potential supervision risks in the service?
- How do we plan to ensure that all areas used by children are effectively supervised, including when children are participating in high risk activities?
- How do we plan to manage supervision of small groups of children who may need to be in a different space from the main group, such as children who sleep for longer periods than others, children who take longer to finish meal times, or children who want to engage in quiet, solo activities away from other groups of children?
- How do we identify, assess and manage hazards and potential risks for children such as potentially dangerous products, plants, objects and animals at the service and how often do we do this?
- How do we ensure children are alerted to safety issues and encouraged to develop the skills to assess and minimise risks to their own safety?

- How do we ensure that all equipment and materials used in the service meet with relevant safety standards, including bedding and sun protection resources and equipment?
- How do we maintain an awareness of the people who have contact with children at the service and/or who collect children from the service?
- How do we conduct risk assessments for potential excursions and plan for children’s safety during excursions?
- How do we identify which emergency procedures and specific action plans are required for our service, and how often do we practice these?
- How do we ensure that child protection policies and procedures are implemented accurately and consistently by all educators?
- How do we keep up to date with current legislation in our state or territory in relation to child protection?
- What arrangements do we have in place to regularly review and update our policies and procedures?

Revised draft - Phase two

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 2.3.1 Children are adequately supervised at all times.

Supervision is a key aspect of ensuring that children’s safety is protected in the service environment. Educators and coordinators need to be alert to, and aware of, the potential for accidents and injury throughout the service, not just within their immediate area.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed
<p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <p>1. Observe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ children being supervised in all areas of the service, by being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times ▪ children being unable to access unsupervised or unsafe areas in the service ▪ educators supervising children closely when they are in a situation that presents a higher risk of injury, for example, on a nappy change table or on an excursion near a road or water ▪ educators adjusting their levels of supervision depending on the area of the service and the skills, age mix, dynamics and size of the group of children they are supervising ▪ equipment, furniture and activities arranged to ensure effective supervision, whilst also allowing children to access private and quiet spaces. <p>2. Discuss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ how educators inform new and/or relief educators of the service’s supervision arrangements and what they are required to do in relation to supervising children ▪ how educators ensure that supervision arrangements are flexible to allow supervision of individuals or small groups of children, such as children who require a longer time than others to eat or sleep. <p>3. Sight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ evidence of planning for excursions that includes a risk assessment and considers supervision implications.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH CHILDREN UNDER SCHOOL AGE

How the service will be assessed
<p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <p>1. Observe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ children being effectively supervised at all times, including during sleep, rest and transition routines ▪ educators attending to babies and toddlers at all times when they are eating or drinking.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR CENTRE-BASED SERVICES

How the service will be assessed
<p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <p>1. Observe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ educators exchanging information about supervision with colleagues to ensure there are no areas that are being accessed by children that are unsupervised. <p>3. Sight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the written supervision plan for outdoor and indoor areas, including supervision of nappy change, toileting, meal and sleep routines.

Element 2.3.2 Reasonable steps are taken to identify and manage risks, and every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from hazards and harm.

Children have a right to be protected from the possible or potential hazards and dangers posed by products, plants, objects, animals and people in the immediate and wider environment.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- consistent implementation of safety checks and monitoring the maintenance of buildings and equipment and the general environment
- educators removing any identified hazard immediately, or securing the area to prevent children from accessing the hazard
- educators talking with children about safety issues
- toys and equipment made available to children only in areas where they may be used safely
- educators consistently implementing the service's health and safety policy and procedures regarding the use and storage of dangerous products
- children unable to access potentially hazardous items such as medications, detergents, cleaning products and garden chemicals, and such items are clearly labelled at all times
- simple warning signs where potentially dangerous products are stored
- poisonous or hazardous plants identified and removed, or not accessible to children
- hot drinks and hot food being made and consumed away from areas that are accessible to children
- the service's outdoor areas include shaded areas that meet the recommendations of relevant recognised authorities
- children unable to access double adaptors, power boards, electrical cords (or electrical cords secured so that children cannot pull or move them)
- climbing equipment, swings and large pieces of furniture have stable bases and/or are securely anchored
- climbing equipment, swings and other large pieces of equipment are located over areas with soft fall surfaces recommended by recognised safety authorities
- educators following the service's procedures for releasing children and ensuring they are released only to authorised individuals
- educators and staff monitoring every person who enters and leaves the service premises at all times
- children only taken outside the service premises by an educator or coordinator
- close supervision of children at all times when they have access to animals
- animals kept separate to, and apart from, the areas used by children unless involved in a specific activity that is directly supervised by educators.

2. Discuss

- how daily safety checks of buildings, equipment and the general environment are conducted and how action is taken as a result of the checks.

3. Sight

- written procedure for conducting daily safety checks and identifying and undertaking maintenance of buildings and equipment
- completed daily safety checks of buildings, equipment and the general environment
- records of pest/vermin inspections and/or eradications
- written procedure for releasing children from the service and ensuring they are released only to authorised individuals
- record of children's arrivals and departures, with the signature of the person responsible for verifying the accuracy of the record or the person collecting the child
- a written process to monitor who enters and leaves the service premises at all times
- evidence of a written risk assessment undertaken prior to conducting the excursion and informing

How the service will be assessed
families of the excursion
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ evidence of detailed information provided to families regarding excursions including destination, mode of transport, educator-to-child ratios, and the number of adults in attendance▪ written authorisation for children to be taken outside the service premises, including for excursions (except during emergency situations).

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH CHILDREN UNDER SCHOOL AGE

How the service will be assessed
Assessors will, for example:
1. Observe
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ cots, other bedding equipment and accessories that meet Australian standards and requirements for safe sleep practices▪ fresh linen and sheeting for each child using cots or mattresses▪ secure, protective caps placed in all unused power points that are accessible to children.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

How the service will be assessed
Assessors will, for example:
1. Observe
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ transport is suitable and safe for all children and safety restraints are fitted in accordance with Australian standards▪ anchorage points for car seats and restraints are inspected annually by an authorised fitting station or equivalent authority.
3. Sight
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ certification from authorised fitting station.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed
Assessors will, for example:
1. Observe
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ transport is suitable and safe for all children and safety restraints are fitted in accordance with Australian standards▪ anchorage points for car seats and restraints are inspected annually by an authorised fitting station or equivalent authority.
3. Sight
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ certification from authorised fitting station.

Element 2.3.3 Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.

Planning to manage incidents and emergencies assists services to protect both adults and children, to maintain a safe environment and to meet requirements of relevant Occupational Health and Safety legislation. Having a clear plan for the management of emergency situations assists educators to handle these calmly and effectively, reducing the risk of further harm or damage.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

Assessors are unlikely to observe practice in relation to this element during a site visit.

2. Discuss

- how the service communicates information to families about the service's emergency procedures and plans to manage incidents
- how the service discusses and practices emergency drills with children.

3. Sight

- procedures for managing incidents and emergencies
- emergency procedures displayed prominently throughout the premises
- emergency telephone numbers displayed near telephones
- educators having ready access to an operating telephone or other similar means of communication
- records of emergency drills, and evaluations of these
- a current, portable record of children's emergency contacts that can be carried by educators in case of emergencies and/or evacuations
- written plans to manage emergencies that may be likely to affect the service (e.g. a plan for a bushfire in a bushfire prone area)
- written plans to manage an emergency that may be likely to affect individuals at the service (e.g. management of an asthma attack, anaphylactic reaction or an epileptic fit)
- written communication with families about the service's emergency procedures and plans to manage incidents.

Element 2.3.4 Action is taken to respond to every child at risk of abuse and/or neglect.

Every educator has an obligation, both legal and ethical, to act to protect any child who is at risk of abuse and/or neglect.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators consistently implementing the service's procedures for child protection
- educators listening to, and responding to, families' comments about their day-to-day observations of their child and the events occurring in their lives
- educators remaining vigilant about observing and responding to signs or indicators of child abuse and/or neglect.

2. Discuss

- whether the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators are aware of the current policy and procedures for child protection, including legislative responsibilities in States and Territories where these apply.

3. Sight

- child protection policy and procedures
- evidence of information provided to families about the service's practices in relation to child protection
- evidence that information about child protection procedures and expectations is provided to educators, volunteers and students
- written documentation related to any specific child protection issues
- evidence that educators work collaboratively with other authorities and/or professionals to support children who have specific protection needs
- a current list of local community resources that can provide information and support for children, families, the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators in relation to children at risk of abuse and/or neglect.

Further reading

Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (2009), *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Policy_Agenda/Quality/Documents/Final%20EYLF%20Framework%20Report%20-%20WEB.pdf

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (2009), *Get up & Grow - Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood Director/Coordinator Book*, <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-gug-directorscoord>

National Health and Medical Research Council (2003), *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*, http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/file/publications/synopses/n34.pdf

National Health and Medical Research Council (2005), *Staying Healthy in Child Care* (4th edition), http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/file/publications/synopses/ch43.pdf

Oberklaid, F (2004), *Health in Early Childhood Settings*. Castle Hill, NSW: Pademelon Press

Quality Area 3: Physical environment

This quality area of the *National Quality Standard* focuses on the physical environment and ensuring that it is safe, suitable and provides a rich and diverse range of experiences which promote children's learning and development.

Introduction

The physical environment plays a critical role in keeping children safe, reducing the risk of accidents and injury, contributing to their wellbeing, happiness, creativity and developing independence and determining the quality of children's learning and experiences.

To maximise children's engagement and positive, inclusive relationships, approved providers, nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators need to carefully consider physical layout and resources in the environment, including:

- the location of the service
- the amount of space
- access between indoor and outdoor environments
- arrangement of rooms
- the availability of a variety of furniture, equipment and resources
- air quality
- lighting and access to natural light.

The way in which the environment is designed, equipped and organised determines the way space and resources are used by children. A secure and predictable environment with adequate space and appropriate facilities and resources enables children to choose what they will do and take increasing responsibility for their own health, hygiene and personal care. Environments also support positive relationships when space is arranged so that small groups of children can play and talk without undue distraction from children engaged in other activities.

Carefully chosen resources and materials, adequate in number, contribute to each child's sense of belonging and challenge them to explore new possibilities. They also have a part to play in fostering children's knowledge of and connections with the natural environment.

Wherever possible, children need opportunities to be outdoors as much as indoors. This can be achieved with a well designed integrated indoor/outdoor environment where both environments are available at the same time.

Physical learning environments are characterised by both indoor and outdoor learning spaces that:

- are flexible
- are welcoming and accessible
- reflect the diversity of families within the local community and the broader community
- facilitate convenient access between indoor and outdoor areas as well as convenient access to toilet (including nappy change, if applicable) and hand washing facilities
- offer a range of activities and experiences
- are environmentally sustainable
- allow for grouping children in ways that:
 - minimise the risk of injury
 - minimise conflict between children
 - reduce prolonged exposure to excess noise, and
 - promote children's learning and development.

Indoor environments are characterised by open spaces that provide children with opportunities to work on self-chosen and negotiated activities, both quiet and active learning situations, routines and small-group and whole-group experiences. These spaces:

- support children’s emerging interests and allow them to demonstrate their innate creativity and curiosity
- reflect children’s different cultures, interests, abilities and learning styles
- recognise children as active learners and decision makers.

Outdoor environments are characterised by both active and quiet zones that comprise a balance of fixed and moveable equipment, open space to engage in physical activities, and spaces that promote investigation and enjoyment of the natural environment. These spaces are dynamic and flexible and:

- provide opportunities for unique play and learning
- complement and extend the indoor activities and learning experiences
- offer children opportunities to be active, messy and noisy, and play on a large scale.

Under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*, the granting of a service approval may be refused if the Regulatory Authority is satisfied that the service, if permitted to operate would constitute an unacceptable risk to the safety, health or wellbeing of children who would be educated or cared for by the service. That assessment includes considering the service premises. Further details regarding assessment of centre-based services and family day care residences or venues will be detailed in Regulations.

Some elements of this standard will be assessed when an approved provider seeks a service approval. A service will need to continue to comply with any requirements provided for in the Act and Regulations regarding the physical environment.

Standard 3.1: The design and location of the premises is appropriate for the operation of a service.

What is this standard about?

The location of the service and the amount, arrangement and use of indoor and outdoor space.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

The physical environment impacts on the behaviours and interactions of both children and adults. Sufficient physical space and careful arrangement of the environment allows children to access different areas, move between spaces, explore, experiment, create and express themselves without disturbing other children. By creating environments that work for children, educators are able to spend valuable time interacting with children.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 3.1?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- Relevant national, state and territory and local government requirements are complied with, including:
 - the *Building Code of Australia*
 - food safety standards (for kitchens and food preparation areas).
- Rooms provide a balance of natural and artificial lighting, good ventilation and fresh air.
- Space is organised to encourage choice and to facilitate active engagement with the environment.
- Each child to have access to furniture, materials and equipment suitable for the educational program.
- A comfortable and safe environment is provided for children.
- Cleaning materials, disinfectants, flammable, poisonous and other dangerous substances, tools and toiletries are inaccessible to children.
- Children have access to furniture, materials and equipment suitable for the educational program and for their range of abilities.
- Outdoor space is designed to afford children opportunities to explore and experience the natural environment.

Additional requirements for centre-based services

- A minimum of 3.25 sq m of unencumbered floor space to be provided for each child. This may include verandas in some services, with the approval of the regulator.
- A minimum of 7 sq m of useable outdoor play space to be provided for each child. This may include verandas in some services, with the approval of regulator.
- Outdoor space to be enclosed by a fence or barrier that prevents a child (from birth to school age) from going through, over or under.
- Specified shaded outdoor play space to be provided.
- Space to be allocated for administrative functions, private conversations and parent consultation.
- Separate indoor space to be provided for children under the age of two years.
- Toilet and washing facilities are available to children and must be accessible and convenient from both indoor and outdoor spaces.

Additional requirements for family day care services

- a documented risk assessment of the physical environment.

Note: Services that are unable to comply with particular facilities requirements are able apply to the Regulatory Authority to be considered for a service waiver or temporary waiver from those requirements.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 3.1

- What are the strengths of the environment? What barriers do we need to overcome?
- How does the physical environment contribute positively to children's learning and provide opportunities for sustained shared thinking and collaborative learning?
- How does the physical environment contribute positively to children's developing autonomy and independence?
- What elements and features in the physical environment support the creation of a welcoming environment where all children and families are respected and actively encouraged to collaborate with educators about curriculum decisions?
- What messages are given to children through the environment, materials and resources (and how they are cared for and maintained) about what is valued at the service?
- How do we ensure that indoor and outdoor areas can accommodate a variety of uses?
- In what ways is there an interaction between the indoor and outdoor environments at the service?

Additional questions for family day care services

- How do we ensure the environment offers a rich and diverse range of learning experiences while maintaining a warm, homely environment for children?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 3.1.1 Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources are suitable for their purpose.

It is important for services (including family day care homes) to have sufficient space, equipment and facilities to meet the needs, and ensure the health and safety, of children, educators and families. Age-appropriate furniture and equipment assists in minimising accidents and supports children's learning, growing independence, confidence and self-esteem.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- the premises for any possible risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children
- the physical environment that is safe and includes adequate space for children to work, play and talk together in small groups
- children engaging in a variety of experiences and activities in both the indoor and outdoor environments
- children having access to:
 - furniture, materials and equipment adequate in number and suitable for the educational program
 - enough toys, equipment and resources to minimise disputes between children over their use
- children grouped in ways that minimise the risk of injury and conflict, reduce prolonged exposure to excess noise and promote children's learning and development
- appropriately sized and equipped indoor and outdoor spaces
- fencing that provides an adequate barrier
- shaded outdoor play space
- adequate and accessible toilet and hand washing facilities (that, in centre based services are accessible from indoor and outdoor areas)
- a balance of natural and artificial lighting, good ventilation and fresh air
- space allocated for administrative functions, private conversations and consultation with parents and staff respite (in centre based services)
- appropriate areas for food preparation and storage
- quiet areas for resting or sleep.

2. Discuss

- the arrangements the service has for appropriate laundering (either on or off the premises).

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- nappy change and related facilities for services with children under 3 years of age
- separate indoor space to be provided for children under the age of two years (for centre-based services).

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR CENTRE-BASED SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

2. Discuss

- where relevant, how the impact of any building modifications and/or the installation of new furniture, storage areas and fixed equipment on the unencumbered space available at the service has been considered.

3. Sight

- where relevant, a management plan to protect the safety of children, families and educators while major work is being undertaken at the service
- the service's approach to grouping of children.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

2. Discuss

- how educators balance their family members need for privacy and providing sufficient space for the children being educated and cared for.

3. Sight

- a documented risk assessment of the physical environment.

Element 3.1.2 Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained

Every child has the right to be safe. In education and care services the safety of the buildings, furniture and equipment impacts directly on the safety of children, educators, coordinators, nominated supervisors and others. Safety precautions also contribute towards ensuring that as many accidents as possible are prevented.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

<p>How the service will be assessed</p>
<p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <p>1. Observe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ premises, furniture and equipment that are safe, clean and well maintained ▪ educators consistently conducting safety checks and monitoring the maintenance of buildings and equipment, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - conducting daily safety checks of all areas, equipment and furniture available to children - immediately removing or isolating any hazards identified and reporting them to the provider, nominated supervisor or if applicable the coordinator - taking immediate action to reduce risks to children’s safety - placing climbing equipment, swings and other large pieces of equipment securely on appropriate surfaces ▪ educators following safety advice from recognised authorities and manufacturers when arranging equipment, furniture and experiences ▪ educators ensuring that the areas used by children are regularly cleaned. <p>2. Discuss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ with educators, coordinators and staff the schedules for cleaning all toys and equipment used by children ▪ with educators, coordinators and staff the procedures for undertaking maintenance of buildings and equipment at the service.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR CENTRE-BASED SERVICES

<p>How the service will be assessed</p>
<p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <p>3. Sight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ documented procedures and schedules relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - safety checks - maintenance of buildings and premises, furniture and equipment - cleaning of buildings and premises, furniture and equipment - adhering to manufacturers advice in the use and cleaning of furniture and equipment - reporting and/or removing any identified hazards.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

<p>How the service will be assessed</p>
<p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <p>3. Sight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ documented risk assessments of the physical environment.

Element 3.1.3 Outdoor spaces include natural elements and materials which allow for multiple uses

Outdoor learning spaces offer a vast array of possibilities not available indoors. Spaces with plants, trees, edible gardens, sand, rocks, mud and water invite open ended interactions, spontaneity, risk taking, exploration, discovery and connection with nature (*Early Years Learning Framework*, 2009, p15-16). Choosing equipment and materials that can be used in multiple ways allows the environment to be regularly and readily rearranged or adjusted to provide additional interest, variety and challenge.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed
<p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <p>1. Observe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ children manipulating materials and resources to investigate, take apart, assemble, invent and construct▪ children being supported and encouraged to use materials and equipment in creative and imaginative ways▪ children accessing areas with natural features such as, for example, plants, trees, edible gardens, sand, rocks, mud, water▪ materials and equipment in the outdoor environment which children can explore and use freely in their play that:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- offer a range of challenges and experiences- are flexible and can be rearranged or adjusted to provide additional interest, variety and challenge- stimulate children’s curiosity- include natural elements such as, for example, plants, trees, edible gardens, sand, rocks, mud, and water- provide many sensory experiences- invite children to explore, discover and experiment- provide opportunities for children, including babies and toddlers, to make a connection with nature▪ the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators being creative in their use of equipment and materials to stimulate children’s interest and curiosity. <p>2. Discuss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators the strategies used to ensure suggestions made by children and families and /or others in relation to the outdoor environment are welcomed and considered. <p>3. Sight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ evidence that the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators invite suggestions and ideas from children, families and others about ways that natural elements and multi use materials can be incorporated in existing play spaces.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR CENTRE-BASED SERVICES

How the service will be assessed
<p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <p>3. Sight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ evidence that the outdoor environment is regularly rearranged or adjusted to provide additional interest, variety and challenge▪ plans of outdoor areas.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed
Assessors will, for example: 3. Sight: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ evidence that strategies are in place to ensure children have access to outdoor environments, in homes without direct access to outdoor environments (e.g. high rise units).

Revised draft - Phase two

Element 3.1.4 Facilities are designed or adapted to ensure access and participation by every child in the service and to allow flexible use, and interaction between indoor and outdoor space

Environments that support learning are vibrant and flexible spaces that are responsive to the interests and abilities of each child. They cater for different learning capacities and learning styles (*Early Years Learning Framework, 2009, p. 15*).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed
<p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <p>1. Observe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ children actively engaged in a range of indoor and outdoor activities and experiences▪ children being supported and encouraged to participate in activities and experiences▪ children enjoying moments of solitude▪ facilities designed or adapted to ensure access and participation by every child in the service including adaptive equipment to support the inclusion of children with additional needs▪ facilities that are welcoming to children and families from a range of cultural backgrounds▪ facilities that enable access for all children, educators, coordinators, staff, parents and interested others▪ facilities that enable interaction and convenient access between indoor and outdoor spaces, including toileting (and nappy changing, if applicable) and hand washing facilities▪ indoor and outdoor spaces that are organised in ways that ensure:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- every child can participate in all daily experiences- children are not always dependent on adults to do things for them- small groups of children can work together on their own projects- children are supported to create their own games and experiences- the time that infants and toddlers spend in high chairs, cots, play pens, and strollers is minimised▪ the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators creating welcoming environments that help all children to build trust and confidence in the service and maintain a connection with their family and community▪ educators engaging children in constructing their own play settings and creating indoor and outdoor environments which stimulate and reflect children's interests▪ the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators creating and continually adapting the indoor and outdoor environments to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- meet the needs and interest of all groups of children- facilitate the inclusion of children with additional needs- match the developing abilities and interests of all children- ensure that all children have positive experiences when children of different ages are cared for together▪ the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators working to maintain a relaxed and happy environment by using positive and effective strategies to modify inappropriate noise levels and activities▪ educators involving children in making and maintaining aesthetically pleasing environments. <p>2. Discuss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators the strategies the service has for working collaboratively with family members, specialists and/or resource agencies to plan for the inclusion of children with additional needs▪ with educators how they involve children in discussions about the use of space and resources. <p>3. Sight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ the service's approach to access and participation as documented in the statement of philosophy or principles

How the service will be assessed

- documented learning programs which indicate that the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators work collaboratively with family members, specialists and /or resource agencies to:
 - plan for the inclusion of children with additional needs
 - access adaptive equipment to support the inclusion of children with additional needs facilitate access for support services required while the child is at the service.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- comfortable and protected areas both indoors and outdoors where babies can:
 - rest, roll, sit, crawl and stand, alone or with others
 - safely explore their environment with their mouths, hands and bodies
 - be cuddled or held by an adult.

Standard 3.2: The environment is inclusive, promotes competence, independent exploration and learning through play.

What is this standard about?

Creating inviting, inclusive environments that support children's exploration, creativity and learning.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

The arrangement and provisions in the physical environment create the context for children's learning and relationships. A flexible learning environment supports the holistic way children learn. Physical activity enhances brain development, coordination and social skills as well as motor skills and helps children to build confidence in their own abilities and learn to enjoy being active. Exploration of the natural environment helps children to develop an appreciation of the natural world, an awareness of the impact of human activity on the environment and to begin to think of ways in which they can contribute to a sustainable future.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 3.2?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- Relevant national, state and territory and local government requirements are complied with, including the *Building Code of Australia*.
- Rooms provide a balance of natural and artificial lighting, good ventilation and fresh air.
- Space is organised to encourage choice and to facilitate active engagement with the environment.
- Each child to have access to furniture, materials and equipment suitable for the educational program.
- Resources, materials and equipment are sufficient in number.

Additional requirements for centre-based services

- A minimum of 3.25 sq m of unencumbered floor space to be provided for each child. This may include verandas in some services, with the approval of the regulator.
- A minimum of 7 sq m of useable outdoor play space to be provided for each child. This may include verandas in some services, with the approval of regulator.
- Outdoor space to be enclosed by a fence or barrier that prevents a child (from birth to school age) from going through, over or under.
- Separate indoor space to be provided for children under the age of two years.
- Outdoor space designed to afford children opportunities to explore and experience the natural environment.
- Specified shaded outdoor play space to be provided.
- Toilet and washing facilities available to children must be accessible from both indoor and outdoor spaces.

Note: *Services that are unable to comply with particular facilities requirements are able apply to the Regulatory Authority to be considered for a service waiver or temporary waiver from those requirements.*

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 3.2

- How do the environment and resources support children's interests and abilities?
- What opportunities do we provide for children to be involved in planning and setting up the environment?

- How do we foster children’s capacity to understand and respect the natural environment and the interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land?
- How is the environment equipped and organised to cater for all levels of capabilities?
- How can we organise our physical environment to encourage children to explore, solve problems, create, construct and develop environmental awareness?
- How can we organise environments and spaces in ways that allow children opportunities to play, on their own as well as promote small and large group interactions and meaningful play and leisure?
- How can we provide opportunities for older children to undertake more complex physical activities particularly in the outdoor environment?
- What elements and features in the physical environment invite open-ended interactions, spontaneity, risk-taking, exploration, discovery, connection with nature and what additional resources can be introduced to provoke interest and more complex and increasingly abstract thinking?
- How do we balance the need for order and the messiness that happens when children play and explore?
- How are the backgrounds and cultures of families and the wider community reflected in the environment?
- What are our ‘rules’ about where resources and materials may be used? Do these rules support or hinder children’s creativity and learning?
- How do we highlight our responsibilities for a sustainable future and promote children’s understanding about their responsibility to care for the environment?
- How do we regularly evaluate the effectiveness of learning environments and draw the links to the intended learning outcomes?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 3.2.1 Outdoor and indoor spaces are designed and organised to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.

Indoor and outdoor environments offer significantly different yet complementary experiences and should be given equal focus and attention. Well designed indoor and outdoor environments can support the diverse interests, preferences and learning styles of all children in the service. Flexible arrangements of furniture and equipment together with open-ended materials encourage children to become flexible thinkers and investigators.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- outdoor and indoor spaces that offer both built and natural features and structures
- outdoor and indoor spaces that include learning or interest areas that are defined to assist children to function autonomously
- clear pathways that direct children and adults around rather than through areas being used by other children
- spaces organised to ensure that routine activities (such as toileting, nappy changing, eating and sleeping) promote positive interactions and learning experiences
- comfortable and well ventilated areas for sleeping and resting
- safe shelving and storage areas from which children can access equipment and resources that are age and capability appropriate
- children engaging in both outdoor and indoor activities and experiences
- children initiating their own experiences using equipment and resources they can access independently
- children engaging in mealtimes and other routine experiences that are pleasant and comfortable occasions with opportunities for relaxed conversations with adults and other children
- children supported to appreciate and care for natural and constructed environments
- children exploring relationships with living and non-living things and observing, noticing and responding to change
- children supported to manipulate equipment and manage tools with increasing competence and skill
- children encouraged to use their senses to explore natural and built environments
- opportunities for children to confidently explore and engage with social and physical environments through relationships and play
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators structuring the environment so that it:
 - is inviting and comfortable
 - encourages a free flow of activity throughout the day
 - facilitates positive interactions between children, educators and families
 - is regularly re-organised to continually engage children in quality experiences in both built and natural environments
 - is flexible in the arrangements of furniture and equipment and includes open-ended materials to encourage children to become flexible thinkers, problem solvers and investigators
 - is flexible to allow children to move resources and equipment to extend learning opportunities
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators planning learning environments with appropriate levels of challenge where children are encouraged to explore, experiment and

How the service will be assessed

take appropriate risks in their learning

- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators using outdoor environments not only as places for children to release energy and engage in physical activity but also for exploration, problem solving and creative expression
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators discussing safety and correct use of equipment and the environment with children and, where appropriate, involving children in setting safety rules
- educators arranging eating and resting/sleeping areas to promote positive interactions
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators ensuring the environment is sufficiently ordered and predictable to support constructive learning and engagement
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators modelling respect, care and appreciation for the natural environment.

2. Discuss

- with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators the strategies used in the service to ensure every child has opportunities to engage in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.

3. Sight

- Documented learning programs which:
 - pay equal attention to planning outdoor and indoor environments and provide a range of choices for children
 - incorporate opportunities for children to:
 - be active, messy and noisy
 - withdraw to a quiet area
 - participate in large(r) and small group activities
 - indicate that outdoor and indoor spaces are regularly re organised to continually engage children and promote their learning and development.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- environments for school age children that provide access to opportunities for play and leisure activities in which they experience fun, enjoyment, mastery and success.

Element 3.2.2 Resources, materials and equipment are sufficient in number and organised in ways that ensure appropriate and effective implementation of the program.

Nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators value children's play. They use a range of strategies to support learning including the design of learning environments that encourage children to explore, solve problems, create and construct (adapted from the *Early Years Learning Framework*, 2009, p.15).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children participating in a variety of rich and meaningful, inquiry-based experiences
- children supported to take on challenges and try new things
- children using a range of equipment and resources to engage in energetic experiences that help them develop movement, coordination, balance, flexibility and strength
- children using a range of real, commercial, natural, recycled and simple homemade materials to support their learning in a range of ways, for example:
 - express meaning using visual arts, dance, drama and music
 - explore mathematical concepts
 - represent their thinking
 - experiment with different technologies
 - sort, categorise, order and compare collections of materials
 - use their imagination and make up their own games
 - be involved in completing day to day tasks such as preparing and cooking food, caring for living things, and being involved in the care of the environment
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators enhancing child initiated experiences by providing additional resources and, where appropriate, participating in and extending their play
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators choosing and using with children resources, materials and equipment that support:
 - children's sense of belonging
 - children's relationships
 - children's learning
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators providing sufficient time and resources for children to initiate and become actively involved in experiences
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators introducing appropriate tools, technologies and media to enhance children's learning
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators demonstrating the potential of resources for children and suggesting new and different ways to use them
- resources, materials and equipment that are sufficient in variety and number to:
 - meet the range of interests, ages and abilities of children
 - avoid overcrowding and ensure that children do not have to wait for long periods to participate
 - minimise disputes over resources, materials and equipment
- resources, materials and equipment that are inclusive and reflect the lives of the children in the service, their families and the cultural diversity of the broader community
- resources materials and equipment organised in ways that ensure appropriate and effective implementation of the program.

2. Discuss

- with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators the strategies used to engage

How the service will be assessed

with families and children to ensure their views are considered and incorporated in the selection and organisation of materials, equipment and resources at the service.

3. Sight:

- documented learning programs which demonstrate linkages between the arrangement and choice of resources, materials and equipment and the learning outcomes for children.

Revised draft - Phase two

Further reading

Curtis, D. & Carter, M (2003), *Designs for living and learning: Transforming early childhood environments*, Redleaf Press, Minnesota.

Greenman, J (2005), *Caring spaces, learning places: Children's environments that work*, Exchange Press, Redmond.

Elliott, S (2008) *The outdoor playspace naturally: For children birth to five years*, Pademelon Press, Sydney.

Walsh, P (1991) *Early childhood playgrounds: planning an outside learning environment*, Pademelon Press, Castle Hill.

Revised draft - Phase two

Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements

This quality area in the *National Quality Standard* focuses on the provision of qualified and experienced educators, coordinators and nominated and certified supervisors who are able to develop warm, respectful relationships with children, create safe and predictable environments and encourage children's active engagement in the learning program.

Introduction

It is the role of the approved provider, nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators to establish effective and ethical practices in the service. A sound philosophy guides decision making, including decisions about the appropriate number of suitably qualified and experienced educators, coordinators and staff at the service.

Clear policies and procedures ensure there are common expectations about how things are done at the service and promote consistent practice. An agreed code of conduct/code of ethics that applies to management, coordinators, educators and staff clearly explains the responsibilities of all parties in relation to one another and to the children and their families using the service.

Consistent and committed nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators support good quality standards and continuity of care for children. Effective, transparent and equitable recruitment processes ensure the service attracts and retains educators, coordinators and other staff who can best meet the needs of children and their families. Updating and maintaining educators' knowledge is a joint responsibility of educators, coordinators, the nominated supervisor and the approved provider and includes a range of professional development strategies that challenge and extend current thinking.

An education and care service operates most effectively when there is open communication and information is shared. Effective communication and problem solving between the adults in the service also models successful working relationships for children. Teamwork and collaboration, where others' viewpoints are respected and contributions are acknowledged, are fundamental to the development of trusting relationships. Diversity within the team in terms of skills, experiences and backgrounds enhances the team and ultimately leads to more effective and responsive programs for children.

Standard 4.1: Staffing arrangements enhance children’s learning and development and ensure their safety and wellbeing.

What is this standard about?

Having sufficient educators, coordinators and staff available at all times that children are educated and cared for by the service to deliver quality education and care programs and to respond to and promote children’s physical, social, and emotional wellbeing.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

Responsive learning relationships are strengthened as educators and children learn together. Educators are more likely to be responsive, purposeful and thoughtful when staffing arrangements at the service allow them to direct their full attention to their work with children and they do not have to attend simultaneously to other tasks (Adapted from the *Early Years Learning Framework*, 2009, pp. 14-15).

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 4.1?

Under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (S169):

- Approved providers and the nominated supervisor of an education and care service must ensure:
 - that, whenever children are being educated and cared for by the service, the relevant number of educators educating and caring for the children is no less than the number prescribed for this purpose.
 - that each educator educating and caring for children for the service meets the qualification requirements relevant to the educator's role as prescribed by the national regulations.
- **A family day care educator** must ensure that the number of children being educated and cared for by the family day care educator at any one time is no more than the number prescribed for this purpose.
- **The approved provider of a family day care service** must ensure that at all times one or more qualified persons are employed or engaged as family day care co-ordinators of the family day care service:
 - (a) to assist with the operation of the family day care service; and
 - (b) to support, monitor and train the family day care educators of that service.

A person is a qualified person if the person has the qualifications prescribed by the national regulations.

- **The approved provider of a family day care service** must ensure that, at all times that a family day care educator is educating and caring for a child as part of the service, one of the following persons is available to provide support to the family day care educator:
 - (a) the approved provider, if the approved provider is an individual, or a person with management or control of the family day care service, in any other case;
 - (b) the nominated supervisor of the service;
 - (c) a certified supervisor who has been placed in day to day charge of the family day care service in accordance with the national regulations.

The requirement to be available to provide support to a family day care educator includes being available to be contacted by telephone to provide advice and assistance to the family day care educator.

- Section 165 of the Act: Offence to inadequately supervise children also interacts with the staffing arrangement requirements.

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- Staffing arrangements support children undertaking activities as part of a group that is of appropriate age and composition and promotes relationships with peers and educators
- Undertake a risk assessment to determine the staffing levels required for the safe conduct of excursions.

Additional requirements for centre-based services

- At least one educator with a prescribed first aid competency/qualification is present while children are at the service.
- Educators under the age of 18:
 - may be counted in the educator-to-child ratios
 - are not permitted to work alone in the service
 - must be supervised by an adult with a Diploma qualification or above (or be actively engaged and working towards the qualification)

Additional requirements for family day care services

- All educators hold a prescribed first aid competency/qualification.
- All educators must be 18 years of age or older.

Note: Services that are unable to comply with staffing arrangement requirements are able to apply to the regulator to be considered for a 'temporary or service waiver' from those requirements.

Questions to guide reflection on the centre-based service's practice for standard 4.1

- How do our staffing arrangements support children's arrival and departure each day?
- How do our staffing arrangements enable children to develop secure attachments to educators?
- How do our staffing arrangements facilitate effective daily communication between educators and families about each child?
- How are our families informed about staffing changes that will affect their child?
- How do we communicate with each other and with families when there are shift changes, when positions are shared and when there are casual or relief staff in the service?

Questions to guide reflection for family day care services practice for standard 4.1

- How do we ensure that families are able to access alternate care when their usual educator is unavailable at short notice?
- What arrangements are in place to ensure that our coordination unit can support educators and families when children are in care overnight and at weekends?
- How do we communicate with educators and with families when there is a change of coordinator in the service?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 4.1.1 Educator-to-child ratios (including qualification requirements) are maintained at all times.

The *National Quality Standard* sets educator-to-child ratios to ensure the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children whilst attending the service.

The presence of adequate numbers of qualified and experienced educators has been consistently linked with quality interactions and positive learning experiences for children. Carefully planned rosters ensure that educators are always available to respond to children, and support continuity of care and adequate supervision at all times children are in the service and on excursions.

The *National Quality Standard* also sets qualification requirements for coordinators in family day care services. Qualified and experienced coordinators train, support and monitor educators in their education and care role with children.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- educator-to-child ratios maintained throughout the day, including during educators' meal breaks and administration and/or programming time
- children being greeted and farewelled by familiar educators
- educators with groups of children of mixed age and capability ensuring that each child has a positive experience and health, safety and learning are not compromised.

2. Discuss

- the provision of non-contact time that enables educators in centre-based services to undertake tasks such as:
 - programming
 - meeting with parents
 - networking with relevant organisations such as other education and care services and local schools
- the strategies in place to ensure a regular pool of relief educators is available.

3. Sight

- rosters for nominated supervisors, certified supervisors, educators, coordinators and staff
- records of educator qualifications
- attendance records
- evidence that, in determining the appropriate numbers of additional educators and other adults needed to safely conduct an excursion, educators consider as part of their risk assessment:
 - the ages of the children
 - the particular needs of each child
 - the venue including features such as bodies of water that may require additional supervision
 - the activities the children will be engaged in
 - transport arrangements
 - provision of shade and toilet facilities
 - educators' and children's familiarity with the venue.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE APPLICABLE FOR SERVICES WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- infants and toddlers bonding and developing secure attachments with a primary educator.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE APPLICABLE FOR CENTRE-BASED SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- sufficient numbers of educators rostered at the beginning and end of the day to:
 - facilitate effective communication with families
 - ensure children are adequately supervised, engaged in activities and cared for while rooms are set up or packed away.

2. Discuss

- the strategies that are in place to facilitate communication between educators regarding what has happened earlier in the day
- how the service arranges rosters to support continuity of care and positive transitions between home and the service.

3. Sight

- records of educators' first aid qualifications and staff rosters to demonstrate that a first-aid qualified educator is on duty at all times.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE APPLICABLE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

2. Discuss

- the service's approach to placing children with individual educators
- how the allocation of coordinators to individual educators support children's learning and wellbeing
- the processes in place to assist families to access alternate care when their usual educator is unavailable.

3. Sight

- records of coordinator qualifications
- records that demonstrate that all educators hold a prescribed first aid competency/qualification.

DRAFT WITHOUT PREJUDICE

Draft Guide to the National Quality Standard

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES – Centre-based and family day care – Phase two

**FOR 1 JANUARY 2012, TABLE OF EDUCATOR-TO-CHILD RATIOS AND QUALIFICATION
REQUIREMENTS BY STATE AND TERRITORY TO BE INSERTED HERE and MIXED AGE GROUPS
RATIO AND READY RECKONER**

Revised draft - Phase two

Standard 4.2: Educators, Coordinators and Staff have the skills and knowledge to support children's learning, health, safety and wellbeing.

What is this standard about?

Nominated supervisors, educators, coordinators and staff have a comprehensive understanding of early childhood and/or middle childhood theory and practice and issues related to children's learning, health, safety and wellbeing and continually build on their knowledge to add value to the experiences of children and families using the service.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

Nominated supervisors, educators, coordinators and staff make professional judgements that are central to children's learning and their health, safety and wellbeing. These judgements bring together a sound knowledge and understanding of best practice gained through appropriate training and research with practical experience in working with children and their families.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 4.2?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- Ensure that a program is delivered to all children being educated and cared for by the service that:
 - is based on an approved learning framework; and
 - is delivered in a manner that accords with the approved learning framework; and
 - is based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child; and
 - is designed to take into account the individual differences of each child.
- Individual development plans are documented and implemented for all educators, coordinators and staff.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 4.2

- How do we ensure that nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators are knowledgeable about the *Early Years Learning Framework*, the draft *My Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care in Australia* and any other approved frameworks, the Australian Government's Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings and other resources that may inform the service's policies and practices?
- What does cultural competence mean in relation to our practice?
- How might our own culture, beliefs and values advantage some children and families, yet disadvantage others?
- How are cultural artefacts and celebrations included in our service in a way that is not tokenistic?
- What added challenges might families who have a child with additional needs face?
- What opportunities exist for individual and teams of the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators to critically examine children's experiences at our service?
- How do we support new educators, coordinators and staff to understand their roles and responsibilities and the service's expectations in relation to their performance?
- How do management, educators, coordinators and staff acknowledge each other's efforts, contributions and achievements?
- What opportunities do we provide for educators, coordinators and staff to meet with a supervisor or educational leader to reflect on their performance and plan for professional development?
- How do we ensure that educators who work alone in a centre-based or family day care service are adequately supported?

Additional questions for family day care services

- How do we ensure members of the educator’s family, and other adults who reside in the family home, understand the service’s expectations for providing an education and care service in a home-based setting?

Revised draft - Phase two

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 4.2.1 Educators, Coordinators and Staff demonstrate the awareness, attitudes, knowledge and skills required to provide an environment where diversity and difference are acknowledged, valued and respected.

The nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators who are culturally competent respect multiple cultural ways of knowing, seeing and living, celebrate the benefits of diversity and have the ability to understand and honour differences (Adapted from The *Early Years Learning Framework*, 2009, p.16).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- from their behaviour and interactions with children and families, that educators, coordinators and staff have a positive attitude towards diversity and difference
- children demonstrating a sense of belonging and comfort in their environment
- planned experiences that broaden children's perspectives and encourage an appreciation of diversity and difference
- practices and routines that honour the histories, cultures, languages, traditions, child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of families using the service:
 - routines are similar to those used in each child's home
 - there is cultural variety in the food provided at the service and in mealtime routines
 - familiar songs and simple phrases in children's home language are used throughout the program
 - images in posters, displays and children's books show a balanced contemporary view of Australians
 - materials and resources reflect the lives of the children using the service, their families and the local and wider community
 - special occasions are celebrated in ways that recognise, respect and strengthen children's appreciation of diversity and difference.

2. Discuss

- how educators, coordinators and staff reflect on their own responses to diversity and difference
- the ways in which educators, coordinators and staff learn more about the histories, cultures, languages, traditions, child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of families using the service
- how educators, coordinators and staff take action to redress discrimination and prejudice within the service.

3. Sight

- the service's approach to equity and inclusion as documented in the statement of philosophy or principles, and enrolment and induction information
- evidence that the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators draw on the diverse knowledge, experiences and views of their colleagues in reviewing the experiences planned for children and their teaching strategies to ensure that all children have opportunities to achieve learning outcomes
- evidence that the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators engage in professional development that builds awareness of their own cultural beliefs and values and increases their cultural competence.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE APPLICABLE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

2. Discuss

- how nominated supervisors and coordinators communicate the service's expectations about the role of educators' families in delivering a family day care service.

Revised draft - Phase two

Element 4.2.2 Educators and Coordinators are focused, active and reflective in planning and delivering the program to each child.

Nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators are deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions. Reflective practice is a form of ongoing learning that involves engaging with questions of philosophy, ethics and practice (Adapted from *The Early Years Learning Framework*, 2009, p. 13 and p. 15).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators taking an active role in leading and facilitating children’s experiences by:
 - engaging in and extending children’s play
 - providing additional resources
 - modelling and demonstrating
 - engaging in shared conversations with children to extend their thinking and problem solving
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators adapting learning and development opportunities to enable participation by children with additional needs
- educators closely observing children, documenting their observations and using them to critically reflect on the effectiveness of their planning and teaching strategies
- educators showing genuine interest in and appreciation for the experiences initiated by children
- group sizes that facilitate positive interactions:
 - children engaging in one to one interactions with a familiar educator or coordinator
 - the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators responding positively to children’s efforts to gain their attention
 - the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators being patient and consistently attentive to all children.

2. Discuss

- the ongoing process the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators have for reviewing current practice and reflecting on what might change or be improved
- educators’ and coordinators’ understanding of intentional teaching.

3. Sight

- evidence of critical thinking and reflection to assess and understand the impact of practice
- evidence that team meetings include discussion and debate about practices across the service
- evidence of planned adaptations for children who have atypical development.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- group sizes that facilitate positive interactions and enable the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators to hold and interact playfully with infants and toddlers
- educators following individualised routines for babies and toddlers.

Element 4.2.3 The performance of Educators, Coordinators and Staff is evaluated and individual development plans are in place to support performance improvement.

A quality program relies upon nominated supervisors, certified supervisors, educators and coordinators having a thorough knowledge of current early childhood and/or middle childhood theory and practice. The approved provider, the nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators, families and children benefit when there are processes for the nominated supervisor, staff members and volunteers across the education and care service to regularly review and develop plans to update their knowledge, skills and practices in light of current research and practice, and according to their specific areas of interest or areas requiring further development.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- the performance of each educator, coordinator and staff member being monitored regularly by the educational leader and/or nominated supervisor.

2. Discuss

- how the service's performance review system contributes to planning for learning and further development
- how the effort, contribution and achievement of educators, coordinators and staff is acknowledged and celebrated
- processes to ensure each educator, coordinator and staff member receives ongoing feedback about their performance
- processes to ensure that concerns about an individual's performance are addressed promptly and professionally.

3. Sight

- documented position descriptions for educators, coordinators and staff members that:
 - clearly outline the responsibilities of the position
 - clearly explain the approved provider's expectations
 - are used as the basis for monitoring and reviewing educators', coordinators' and staff performance
- evidence of participation by educators, coordinators and staff in professional development activities to update their knowledge and skills
- evidence that performance reviews for all educators, coordinators and staff are conducted at the conclusion of the probationary period and at least annually and include a process for reviewing and updating individual's professional development plans based on an evaluation of their professional strengths, interests and goals.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE APPLICABLE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

2. Discuss

- how the service manages situations where the educator's family members are adversely influencing the quality of education and care being provided
- the systems in place to ensure that educator's performance is monitored where distance precludes regular home visits
- the opportunities for educators to provide feedback about the effectiveness of the support provided by the coordination unit.

How the service will be assessed

3. Sight

- home visit records
- policies and procedures about conducting visits in educator's homes.

Revised draft - Phase two

Standard 4.3: Educators, Coordinators and Staff are respectful and ethical.

What is this standard about?

Nominated supervisors, staff members and volunteers developing constructive relationships with each other that are based on the principles of mutual respect, equity and fairness.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

Unresolved and poorly managed conflict between the adults in the service affects morale and draws their focus away from the children. Constructive relationships among nominated supervisors, staff members and volunteers help to prevent conflict and misunderstanding. The positive and calm atmosphere that is created when the adults around them communicate effectively, allows children to develop positive attachments with nominated supervisors, educators, coordinators and their peers.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 4.3?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- The service has a statement of philosophy or principles that outlines the service's philosophy.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 4.3

- How do we ensure that different views, beliefs and values are reflected in our statement of philosophy or principles?
- What beliefs about relationships among management, educators, coordinators and staff are included in our statement of philosophy or principles? Is this a true reflection of what happens in daily practice?
- How do we promote professionalism, confidentiality and ethical conduct?
- What strategies have we developed to ensure information is shared between management, educators, coordinators and staff?
- What opportunities do we provide for educators, coordinators and staff to have conversations and discussions to further develop their skills, or to improve practice and relationships? How do we ensure that everyone's voice is heard and considered?
- What makes our service a good place to work?
- How effective are the processes we have implemented to resolve any ethical issues that may arise?
- How regularly do we review the code of conduct/code of ethics and ensure that our practices and policies align with the code?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 4.3.1 Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.

A code of conduct or code of ethics that is agreed to by the approved provider, nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and staff outlines the ethical principles and professional standards that guide decision making and practice in an education and care service. The code applies to all parties and clearly explains their responsibilities in relation to one another and to the families and children using the service.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- the nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and staff modelling care, empathy and respect for children, colleagues and families
- the nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and staff adhering to the service's code of conduct/code of ethics in their practice, interactions and relationships
- the nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and staff taking responsibility for keeping informed about and complying with:
 - the *National Quality Standard*
 - mandatory reporting responsibilities (where applicable)
 - occupational health and safety guidelines
 - privacy legislation
 - service policies and the Statement of Philosophy or Principles.

2. Discuss

- evidence that all educators, coordinators and staff having access to copies of:
 - the *National Quality Standard*, Regulations and *Guide to the National Quality Standard*
 - *The Early Years Learning Framework*
 - *Educators' Guide to the Early Years Learning Framework*
 - *Draft My Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care in Australia*
 - the service's statement of philosophy or principles
 - service policies and procedures including a grievance procedure
- the processes the service has in place to assist nominated supervisors and staff members to resolve differences
- how nominated supervisors and staff members use the code of conduct/code of ethics as a resource for professional conversations about day to day practice at the service.

3. Sight

- the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics (2006) or a code of conduct developed by the service which is displayed and made available to families
- a handbook for new and existing educators, coordinators and staff that includes:
 - the Statement of philosophy or principles
 - the code of conduct/code of ethics
 - the position description.

Element 4.3.2 Actions are aligned with the statement of principles under which the service operates.

A written statement that outlines the service’s philosophy, aims and commitment to quality outcomes for children, and reflects the principles outlined in the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and the *Early Years Learning Framework* and/or the draft *My Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care in Australia*, guides everything that happens at the service. It underpins the decisions, policies and the daily practices of the nominated supervisor and staff members and assists in planning, implementing and evaluating quality experiences for children.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- the approved provider, the nominated supervisor and staff members treating children, families and each other with consideration, respect, impartiality and fairness
- the nominated supervisor and staff members practice and decisions promoting positive outcomes for children and are aligned with the service’s Statement of philosophy or principles
- evidence that the service has a commitment to reflective practice and continuous improvement.

2. Discuss

- with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators how the Statement of philosophy or principles relates to their everyday practice.

3. Sight

- the service’s Statement of philosophy or principles.

Element 4.3.3 Educators, Coordinators and Staff work collaboratively and affirm, challenge, support and learn from each other to further develop their skills, to improve practice and relationships.

Strong links between the approved provider, educational leader, educators, coordinators and staff help them to work as a team to achieve the goals set for the service and to strive for continuing improvement. Educators, coordinators and staff consult with each other, share information, discuss new ideas or concerns and work together to solve any problems that arise.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- specific information about children’s and families needs and experiences being passed on by educators or coordinators to other educators who will be working with the child
- tasks and responsibilities being shared by educators, coordinators and staff
- educators, coordinators and staff offering assistance to each other
- educators, coordinators and staff acting promptly to support other team members in difficult situations
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators inviting feedback from their colleagues about their practice
- the nominated supervisor and staff members demonstrating a strong drive to learn more regardless of their experience and current knowledge and skills.

2. Discuss

- the service’s approach to using the particular strengths, talents and interests of individual educators, coordinators and staff
- whether the service has regular team meetings
- whether more experienced educators and coordinators or the nominated supervisor mentor and support their colleagues by sharing their expertise, modelling best practice, providing feedback and leading discussions in team meetings
- how new information, innovative ideas and approaches are gathered and shared.

3. Sight

- evidence of the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators engaging with their colleagues to reflect on practice, explore new possibilities and plan for children’s experiences.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE APPLICABLE FOR CENTRE-BASED SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

3. Discuss

- the whether the service has regular room meetings.

Element 4.3.4 Interactions convey mutual respect, equity and recognition of each other's strengths and skills.

Communication between the approved provider, nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and staff is respectful, professional and guided by the service's code of conduct/code of ethics. Educators, coordinators and staff respect and value the different backgrounds, contributions and perspectives of their colleagues and this is evident in their interactions with each other.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- positive working relationships in the service and an atmosphere of trust and openness
- educators, coordinators and staff:
 - use calm, friendly voices with each other
 - respect each other's feelings
 - are sensitive and courteous to each other
 - express themselves clearly and listen to each other
 - model appropriate conflict resolution language and behaviour
 - feel confident in expressing their ideas and feelings
 - feel comfortable respectfully disagreeing with their colleagues
 - welcome diverse views and perspectives
 - resolve differences promptly
- new educators and coordinators being supported by other team members during their orientation and induction
- efforts to make casual and relief educators, coordinators and staff feel welcome and included as part of the team
- students placed in the service being made to feel welcome and supported by educators to complete tasks assigned by the university or training institution.

2. Discuss

- whether management, the nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and staff are open to change and new possibilities
- how the service's grievance procedure is used.

3. Sight

- the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics (2006) or a code of conduct developed by the service.

Further reading

Early Childhood Australia (2006), *The Code of Ethics*, Canberra.

Barblett, L., Hydon, C. & Kennedy, A (2008), *The Code of Ethics: A guide for everyday practice*, Early Childhood Australia, Canberra.

Jorde Bloom, P (2005), *Blueprint for action: Achieving center-based change through staff development* (2nd edition), New Horizons, Illinois.

Newman, R. (2006) *Training outside school hours care staff: before school, after school and vacation care* (Aus edition adapted by Marli Traill), Pademelon Press, Castle Hill, NSW

Seligson, M. & Stahl, P. (2004). *Bringing yourself to work*. Teachers College Press, New York.

Revised draft - Phase two

Quality Area 5: Relationships with children

This quality area of the *National Quality Standard* focuses on relationships with children being responsive, respectful and promoting children's sense of security and belonging. Relationships of this kind free children to explore the environment and engage in play and learning.

Introduction

All children need to know that others care about them, know them well and are interested in what they do, think and feel. Developing responsive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships with children promotes their wellbeing, self-esteem and sense of security. Having supportive relationships with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators enables children to develop confidence in their ability to express themselves, work through differences, learn new things and take calculated risks.

The nominated supervisor's, educators' and coordinators' interactions with children convey to them that they are valued as competent and capable individuals. Educators are actively engaged in children's learning and share decision making with them. They also use their everyday interactions with children during play, routines and ongoing projects to stimulate their thinking and to enrich their learning.

Positive and responsive one-to-one interactions with babies and toddlers are important to both their current wellbeing and their future development. Having secure relationships with educators encourages babies and toddlers to thrive, and provides them with a secure base for exploration and learning. As children grow and develop they continue to rely on secure, trusting and respectful relationships with the adults in their lives.

Relationships with peers take on increasing importance for older children, and educators sensitively monitor, support and guide children's interactions with others as they explore their own identity and develop more complex social skills and relationships. Nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators support children as they begin to empathise with others, to appreciate their connectedness and interdependence as learners and to value collaboration and team work.

From birth children begin to explore how the social world works. Exploring and learning to manage feelings, behaviour, rights and responsibilities is a complex process. Nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators take a positive approach to guiding children's behaviour that is ultimately aimed at empowering children to regulate their own behaviour and to develop the skills to negotiate and resolve conflicts or disagreements with others. Nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators develop guidance strategies that demonstrate respect and understanding of individual children when they strive to recognise and understand why each child may behave in a certain way, or why a behaviour may occur in particular circumstances or at specific times of the day.

A positive approach to guiding behaviour builds children's confidence and self-esteem and is based on the development of caring, equitable and responsive relationships between educators and children.

Standard 5.1 Respectful and equitable relationships are developed and maintained with each child.

What is this standard about?

Nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators cultivating relationships with all children that are respectful and responsive to each child's strengths, interests, capabilities and backgrounds, and that support each child to develop to their full potential.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

Constructive, everyday interactions and shared learning opportunities form the basis of the relationships nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators build with each child. These relationships provide a solid foundation from which to guide and support children as they develop the self-confidence and skills to manage their own behaviour, make decisions and relate positively and effectively with others.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 5.1?

Under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (S166) an approved provider, nominated supervisor, staff member or volunteer must ensure:

- that no child being educated and cared for by the service is subjected to:
 - a) any form of corporal punishment; or
 - b) any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances
- a family day care educator must not subject any child being educated and cared for by the educator as part of a family day care service to:
 - a) any form of corporal punishment; or
 - b) any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances.

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- The service has a written policy on positive guidance of child behaviour that reflects current practice.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 5.1

- How do we ensure that we communicate and interact individually with all children in the group?
- How do we tailor our interactions and communications for individual children?
- How do we cater to the specific communication requirements of children who have additional needs?
- What strategies and techniques do we use to extend and build upon children's comments and conversations?
- How do we use conversations and interactions with children to make routine times enjoyable and meaningful learning opportunities?
- How do we engage in children's play? What roles do we play?
- How do we ensure that we engage all children of all ages, capabilities, genders and backgrounds in respectful interactions?

Additional questions for services with babies and toddlers

- How do we build close, secure relationships with babies and toddlers?
- How do we learn about babies' and young children's non-verbal cues and communication strategies?

Additional questions for services with school age children

- How do we support children to establish and maintain friendships?
- How do we involve children in establishing the rules for respectful group interactions?

Additional questions for family day care services

- How do we ensure that educators respond to their own children and to the children they are educating and caring for in a fair and consistent way?

Revised draft - Phase two

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 5.1.1 Interactions with each child are warm, responsive and build trusting relationships.

Nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators who give priority to nurturing relationships and providing children with consistent emotional support can assist children to develop the skills and understandings they need to interact positively with others (Adapted from the *Early Years Learning Framework*, 2009, p.12).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- an atmosphere that is generally relaxed and happy
- children experiencing equitable, friendly and genuine interactions with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators showing genuine interest, understanding and respect for all children
- educators supporting children's secure attachment through consistent and warm nurturing relationships
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators consistently responding positively to all children who require their attention
- relaxed, unhurried meal times during which educators sit, and talk with children
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators being attuned and responding sensitively and appropriately to all children's efforts to communicate
- educators engaging children in many conversations throughout the day or session
- educators having interactions and conversations with each child that clearly reflect information received from families about their child
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators recognising and respecting children's desire not to engage in conversations or interactions at particular times or for certain reasons.

2. Discuss

- the ways in which information is gathered from families about their child to help build positive relationships with children
- how the service's Statement of philosophy or principles guides educators' and coordinators' interactions with children.

3. Sight

- the Statement of philosophy or principles
- evidence of planned and spontaneous activities and routines that includes times for children to engage in individual and small group experiences with the support and guidance of educators
- examples of information gathered from families about their child
- examples of information gathered from other professionals or support agencies that work with children, including those who have additional needs, and those from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children being supported to build secure attachments with one and then more familiar educators
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators comforting children who cry or show other signs of distress

How the service will be assessed

- predictable personal care routines that are rich and enjoyable experiences for babies and toddlers
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators engaging in enjoyable interactions with babies as they make and play with sounds
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators responding sensitively to children's gestures, babbling and crying
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators listening to and responding to children's approximations of words
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators engaging children in playful interactions about things the child finds interesting and amusing.

2. Discuss

- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators learn about babies' and toddlers' non verbal cues and communication strategies
- how daily tasks and routines are managed to maximise opportunities to build trusting relationships between educators and children.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children initiating conversations with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators about their experiences inside and outside the service
- children expressing ideas and feelings and sharing humour with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators engaging in sustained conversations with individual children about things that interest them (the child)
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators encouraging children to communicate their own ideas and express an opinion about matters that affect them.

2. Discuss

- how educators find out about how children are feeling and what they are thinking
- how educators ensure that all children have equal opportunities to engage in one to one and small group conversations with educators
- how experiences and routines are organised to provide opportunities for meaningful conversations between children, educators, coordinators and nominated supervisors
- how the program supports children and educators to develop and maintain trusting relationships.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children experiencing friendly and genuine interactions with members of the educator's family
- coordinators supporting educators' relationships with children during home visits and playgroups by sharing their expertise and professional experience.

2. Discuss

- how home visits and playgroups are used to support educators' relationships with children
- how the service ensures that educators' personal and family arrangements support positive relationships with children.

How the service will be assessed

3. Sight

- guidelines about the role of educators' families in the provision of family day care
- home visit records
- documentation in relation to playgroup that shows evidence of planning to support children's relationships.

Revised draft - Phase two

Element 5.1.2 Every child is able to engage with Educators in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning.

Nominated supervisor's, educators' and coordinators' practices and the relationships they form with children and families have a significant effect on children's involvement and success in learning (Adapted from the *Early Years Learning Framework*, 2009, p.9).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- all children being engaged by the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators in spontaneous, two-way conversations and interactions about what is happening around them
- children being encouraged by the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators to try new things, do things for themselves and to solve problems
- children supported to initiate interactions and conversations with trusted educators who help them to express and explore their feelings and ideas
- children supported to develop trust and confidence in their ability to take on new challenges and try new things
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators using techniques such as sign language and other resources and tools to support the inclusion of children with additional needs
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators participating in children's play and using children's cues to guide their level and type of involvement
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators responding positively and respectfully to children's comments, questions and requests for assistance.

2. Discuss

- the ways in which children's cues are used to guide the level and type of adult involvement in children's play
- how children are encouraged to share their stories and ideas
- the ways in which the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators seek and use information from everyday observations of and interactions with children to extend children's thinking and learning.

3. Sight

- plans for the inclusion of children with additional needs
- evidence of planned and spontaneous activities and routines for children that includes times for children to engage in experiences of their own choosing with the support and guidance of educators
- documentation of children's learning that shows evidence of their developing ideas and skills
- written plans for individual and groups of children.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- educators describing objects and events and talking with babies and toddlers about routine activities as they occur during the day
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators responding to babies and toddlers when they practice and play with language by repeating the words, sounds and gestures that

How the service will be assessed

children use

- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators encouraging give-and-take communication by adding to interactions initiated by toddlers.

2. Discuss

- how educators support babies' and toddlers' attempts to anticipate, explore and understand the learning environment
- how educators support young children's language development, the maintenance of home languages and learning English as a second language.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children reflecting and talking with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators about why things happened and what can be learnt from these experiences
- educators collaborating with children and modelling reasoning, predicting and reflective processes and language
- educators supporting children to construct multiple solutions to problems and use different ways of thinking.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Discuss

- how everyday experiences within the educator's home are used to support children's learning
- how home visits and playgroups are used to enhance and support the professional skills and abilities of educators in planning to enhance children's learning and relationships.

2. Sight

- documentation in relation to playgroup that shows evidence of planning to support the acquisition of skills for life and learning.

Standard 5.2 Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults.

What is this standard about?

Nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators providing children with opportunities and support to develop effective relationships with others that are equitable, inclusive and cooperative.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

Developing effective relationships with others is a key aspect of children's social development and sound relationships also provide a base for children's learning. Positive relationships provide them with the confidence and agency to explore and learn about their world. As their relationships become more complex and far-reaching, children's interactions and conversations with others also help them to extend their knowledge, thinking and ability to apply what they already know in new and unfamiliar contexts.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 5.2?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- The service has a written policy on positive guidance of child behaviour that reflects current practice.
- The use of physical force and restraint; physical, verbal or emotional punishment and practices that demean, humiliate, frighten or threaten a child is prohibited.
- Ensure that a program is delivered to all children being educated and cared for by the service that:
 - a) is based on an approved learning framework; and
 - b) is delivered in a manner that accords with the approved learning framework; and
 - c) is based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child; and
 - d) is designed to take into account the individual differences of each child.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 5.2

- How do we ensure that all children are given opportunities to interact with peers and adults at the service?
- How is a culture of respect, equity and fairness encouraged in the service, and how is this communicated to educators, children and families?
- How is the program and routine arranged to ensure adequate time for children to engage in projects and play experiences of their own choosing, with a variety of peers and adults?
- How do we model positive, respectful relationships with others to children?
- How do we ensure that the physical environment is conducive to the development and maintenance of children's interpersonal relationships?
- How do we enable children to use their own agency and capabilities to form and maintain positive relationships with others?

Additional questions for service with school age children

- How do we support children's understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation?

Additional questions for family day care services

- How do we foster positive relationships between members of the educator's family and the children being educated and cared for?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 5.2.1 Every child is supported to work with, learn from and help others through collaborative learning opportunities.

When nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators create environments in which children experience mutually enjoyable, caring and respectful relationships with people and the environment, children respond accordingly. When children participate collaboratively in everyday routines, events and experiences, and have opportunities to contribute to decisions, they learn to live interdependently (Adapted from the *Early Years Learning Framework*, 2009, p.25).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children undertaking activities as part of a group that is an appropriate size and composition for their learning and development
- children engaging in and contributing to shared play experiences, working collaboratively and responding to ideas and suggestions from others
- children being able to revisit group projects and play over extended periods of time
- children being supported to display awareness of and respect for others' perspectives and to practice inclusive ways of achieving co-existence
- children encouraged to engage in enjoyable interactions using verbal and non-verbal language
- children establishing and maintaining respectful, trusting relationships with other children and the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators
- children supported to participate in reciprocal relationships with their peers, sharing humour, happiness and satisfaction
- children having opportunities to interact with others to explore ideas and concepts, clarify and challenge thinking, solve problems and contribute to group outcomes
- children encouraged to seek out and accept new challenges, make discoveries and celebrate their own efforts and achievements and those of others
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators participating in children's group play and projects and supporting children to be responsible for and to share decision-making within the group
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators encouraging and supporting children's conversations with each other during play and learning experiences
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators modelling explicit communication strategies to support children to initiate interactions and join in play and social experiences in ways that sustain productive relationships with other children
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators drawing children's attention to issues of fairness relevant to them both in the service and community.

2. Discuss

- the ways in which the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators support inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds and capabilities in collaborative play, projects and experiences with others
- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators learn about children's shared interests and use these as a basis to promote collaborative learning opportunities
- the ways in which the service facilitates children being able to revisit group projects over extended periods of time.

3. Sight

- the program of activities and routines for children that includes regular opportunities for children to engage in collaborative experiences and in social play
- evidence of children's shared interests and participation in collaborative learning projects and

How the service will be assessed

experiences.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- babies and toddlers having opportunities to be playful and respond positively to others, reaching out for company and friendship
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators supporting children to understand the beginnings of social behaviour
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators creating spaces for small groups of children
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators remaining available to support babies' and toddlers' interactions with each other
- the nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators assisting and supporting babies' and toddlers' when they are having difficulty understanding or communicating with each other
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators providing enough resources and materials so that several children can engage simultaneously in the same activity.

2. Discuss

- how the development of children is taken into account when supporting babies' and toddlers' interactions
- how the program supports babies and toddlers to play and interact positively with each other
- how staffing and grouping arrangements within a centre based service support positive relationships between younger children.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children spending a large proportion of their time with their peers
- children engaged in collaborative projects that involve research, planning, problem solving and shared decision making
- educators and coordinators acknowledging children's complex relationships and sensitively intervening in ways that promote social inclusion
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators providing opportunities for children to assume leadership roles and direct play experiences with their peers
- educators creating opportunities for peer scaffolding
- educators promoting a sense of community within the school age care setting.

2. Discuss

- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators provide children with opportunities to plan, develop and take on leadership roles in activities and projects
- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators support and promote children's interpersonal relationships
- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators encourage children to consider and take responsibility for the consequences of their actions
- the opportunities provided for children to negotiate and collaborate with peers, the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators
- how the program supports the development of children's awareness of equity and inclusion.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children engaged in playgroup experiences that support them to establish and maintain relationships with children of various ages, genders, cultures and capabilities.

2. Discuss

- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators provide opportunities for children to experience a variety of group settings.

Revised draft - Phase two

Element 5.2.2 Each child is supported to understand how their own actions affect others.

Developing self-awareness and an associated ability to empathise with what others feel or experience as a result of their actions or words is a key aspect of the development of children’s social skills. As children’s awareness of how their actions affect others increase, they can simultaneously develop the ability to regulate their own behaviour by considering the potential outcomes of their actions and adjusting their conduct accordingly.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children being encouraged and supported to make decisions based on what they predict may be the outcome of a certain behaviour or action
- children supported to show an increasing capacity to understand, self regulate and manage their emotions in ways that reflect the feelings and needs of others
- children supported to show increasing awareness of the needs and rights of others
- children encouraged to empathise with and express concern for others
- opportunities for children to reflect on their actions and consider the consequences for others
- children encouraged to express their ideas and feelings and to understand and respect the perspectives of others
- nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators discussing emotions and feelings with children in planned and spontaneous experiences
- nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators talking with children about how the actions or behaviours of others make them (the educator or coordinator) feel
- nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators listening and responding empathetically to children when they express their emotions
- nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators supporting children to negotiate their rights in relation to the rights of others and intervening sensitively when children experience difficulty in resolving a conflict
- nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators reassuring children that it is normal to experience positive and negative emotions at times
- nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators engaging in interactions with children that promote respect for diversity and value distinctiveness
- groups arranged so that children are able to undertake activities and develop friendships as part of a small group.

2. Discuss

- how children who have specifically diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties are genuinely and sensitively supported to understand how their own actions affect others
- the ways in which the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators foster an environment that values inclusion and collaboration among all individuals
- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators use their knowledge of individual children’s personalities and friendship preferences to support children to develop their understanding of other’s feelings
- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators include all members of the group in conversations, play and projects.

3. Sight

- a program of activities and routines for children that includes time for children to engage in social play, interactions and conversations with peers
- evidence of planned and spontaneous experiences that support groups and individual children to understand how their own actions affect others

How the service will be assessed

- plans for the inclusion of children who have specifically diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties
- examples of the information gathered from families about their children’s social skills and relationship preferences
- evidence of collaboration with other professionals or support agencies that work with children who have diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators monitoring and supporting interactions between babies and toddlers where they (the educator or coordinator) are aware there may be conflict
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators supporting babies and toddlers to recognise and label other children’s facial expressions, emotions and body language
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators recognising when a child is feeling threatened by, or angry with a peer and sensitively supporting or redirecting these interactions.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children, the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators discussing issues of inclusion and exclusion, fair and unfair behaviour, bias and prejudice.

2. Discuss

- how educators work with each child’s school to ensure that a consistent approach is used to support children who have specifically diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- educators and members of their family modelling positive, socially acceptable behaviour and language.

2. Discuss

- how coordinators work with educators and families to support the inclusion of children who have diagnosed behavioural or social difficulties.

3. Sight

- documentation in relation to playgroup that shows evidence of opportunities for children to engage in social play and collaborative projects.

Standard 5.3 Each child's behaviour, interactions and relationships are guided effectively.

What is this standard about?

Nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators developing strategies for guiding children's behaviour and actions in ways that are positive, respectful and receptive to individual children's backgrounds and contexts.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

An important aspect of children's *belonging, being* and *becoming* involves them learning how their behaviours and actions affect themselves and others and developing the skills to regulate these independently. A positive approach to guiding behaviour builds children's confidence and self-esteem and, over time, enables them to learn how to manage their feelings, how to take care of themselves and other people and to rely less on adults to guide them.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 5.3?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- The service has a written policy on positive guidance of child behaviour that reflects current practice.
- The use of physical force and restraint; physical, verbal or emotional punishment and practices that demean, humiliate, frighten or threaten a child is prohibited.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 5.3

- How does our behaviour guidance policy reflect current information about child development and best practice in guiding young children's behaviour?
- How do our own beliefs and attitudes, and experiences as children, influence the way in which we guide children's behaviour?
- How do the behaviour guidance strategies we use support children to develop the skills to manage their own behaviour?
- What opportunities do children have to make decisions about rules, expectations and outcomes in relation to their own and other's behaviour?
- How do we ensure that the physical environment and routines promote positive behaviour?
- How do we empower children to manage and resolve conflicts between themselves in the first instance?
- How do we manage situations where we experience challenges in relation to guiding a child's or group of children's behaviour?
- How do we work with families and other professionals and resource agencies to ensure that behaviour guidance strategies are tailored for individual children? How are different expectations managed?

Additional questions for services with babies and toddlers

- How do we respond to the distress some babies and toddlers experience when they have to adapt to unfamiliar routines, new people and new places?

Additional questions for service with school age children

- How do we support children to make responsible choices and regulate their own behaviour?
- How do we meet older children's need for independence and greater freedom?
- How do we ensure some consistency between school and the service in the approach taken to guiding children's behaviour?

Additional questions for family day care services

- How do coordinators support educators when they are feeling stressed or are having difficulty coping with a child's behaviour?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 5.3.1 Behaviour guidance strategies preserve the dignity and the rights of the child at all times.

Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally. Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them. (Article 19 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, from Fact sheet: A summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child). The exclusion of a child from the service due to behavioural issues must be considered only as a final resort; where the wellbeing of other children and adults may be compromised.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators using behaviour guidance strategies that:
 - are focussed on supporting children to develop the skills to self regulate
 - preserve and promote children's self-esteem
 - do not isolate children for any reason other than illness, accident or a pre-arranged appointment with parental consent
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators using positive guidance strategies consistently for all children
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators pre-empting potential conflicts or challenging behaviours by monitoring children's play and supporting interactions where there is conflict
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators using positive language, gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice when redirecting or discussing children's behaviour with them
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators guiding children's behaviour in ways that clearly reflect the information received from families, other professionals and resource agencies
- spaces, resources and routines arranged to minimise times when children are likely to experience stress or frustration
- food being used appropriately and not as reward or punishment
- children being acknowledged positively by the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators when they make a positive choice in managing their own behaviour.

2. Discuss

- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators work with families and, when applicable, other professionals and resource agencies to develop and adapt the service's behaviour guidance strategies for individual children
- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators manage situations in which a child's behaviour is particularly challenging.

3. Sight

- the service's behaviour guidance policy that outlines a clear process for guiding children's behaviour positively, based on what is currently understood to be best practice in early childhood education and care.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators speaking in comforting tones and holding babies to soothe them when they are crying
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators being patient, gentle, calm and reassuring even when young children strongly express distress, frustration or anger
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators responding positively to babies' and toddlers' exploratory behaviour
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators encouraging toddlers to engage in cooperative, helping behaviour.

2. Discuss

- the strategies used by the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators to encourage babies' and toddlers' positive behaviour and minimise negative behaviour
- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators manage situations where families have different expectations from the service in relation to guiding babies' and toddlers' behaviour
- how the service manages situations where babies or toddlers bite.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators responding promptly to children's bullying behaviour
- older children having some privileges and increased freedom in recognition of their growing maturity and ability to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

2. Discuss

- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators involve children in developing behaviour limits and the consequences for inappropriate behaviours
- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators ensure there is some consistency between school and the service in the approach taken to guide children's behaviour.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Discuss

- how coordinators support educators when they are feeling stressed or are having difficulty coping with a child's behaviour
- how the service supports the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators to enhance their skills and knowledge in relation to guiding children's behaviour.

Element 5.3.2 Each child is supported to manage their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others, and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

Over time the variety and complexity of ways in which children connect and participate with others increases ... they develop understandings that their actions or responses affect how others feel or experience *belonging*. (*Early Years Learning Framework, 2009, p.25*)

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed:

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children being supported to express their feelings and responses to others' behaviours confidently and constructively
- children being allowed to make choices and to experience the consequences of these where there is no risk of physical or emotional harm to the child or another being
- children being supported to communicate effectively to resolve conflicts with others
- children demonstrating negotiating and sharing behaviours
- opportunities for children to explore different identities and points of view in dramatic play
- children encouraged to assist other children to participate in social groups
- children supported to respond appropriately to the behaviour of others
- opportunities for children to contribute to fair decision-making about matters that affect them
- children supported to show concern for others
- opportunities for children to listen to others' ideas and to show respect for different ways of being and doing
- children supported to make choices, accept challenges, manage change and cope with frustration
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators talking with children about the outcomes of their actions, the rules and the reasons for these
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators assisting children to consider alternative behaviours and problem solve together
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators prompting and supporting children to remove themselves from situations where they are experiencing frustration, anger or fear.

2. Discuss

- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators take into account children's individual abilities when supporting children to learn to manage their own behaviour
- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators learn about and respond to children's individual interpersonal relationships with others, and the relationship preferences they may have
- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators model for children appropriate ways to negotiate and resolve conflicts with others.

3. Sight

- evidence of planned and spontaneous experiences that support children to develop and practise the skills required to participate group discussions and shared decision-making with their peers.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children challenging other children's behaviour that is disrespectful or unfair
- educators and coordinators encouraging children to recognise inappropriate behaviour within the group and identify what actions they can take themselves.

How the service will be assessed

2. Discuss

- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators support children who are subject to bullying behaviour, including social isolation and cyber bullying.

Revised draft - Phase two

Further Reading

Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (2009), *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Policy_Agenda/Quality/Documents/Final%20EYLF%20Framework%20Report%20-%20WEB.pdf

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Dukes, C. & Smith, M (2009), *Building better behaviour in the early years*, Sage Publications Ltd., London.

Epstein, A (2009), *Me, you, us: Social-emotional learning in preschool*, HighScope Press, Washington.

Harris, B (2009), *Everyday learning about getting your buttons pushed*, Early Childhood Australia, Canberra.

Sara, H (2009), *Optimistic carers and children: Pathways to confidence and wellbeing*, Early Childhood Australia, Canberra.

United Nations. (1989), *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

This quality area of the *National Quality Standard* focuses on collaborative relationships with families which are fundamental to achieving quality outcomes for children and community partnerships that are based on active communication, consultation and collaboration.

Introduction

Families are the primary influence in their children's lives and also have strong beliefs and values regarding the education and care of their child, and the experiences in which their child should be able to participate. Effective relationships between educators and families are fundamental to the quality of education and care that children receive.

All families are different. Children will have diverse understandings of 'family' and unique relationships with those who feature prominently in their lives and educators need to think broadly about how families can be defined. Nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators can nurture the important attachment relationship that exists between the family and child when they seek to involve all those who are important to families and children at the service. For example, they recognise the importance of extended families, kinship ties, carers and guardians in children's lives.

Effective collaboration with families regarding the education and care their child receives occurs when constructive strategies for ongoing two way communication are established by the service. Families can provide invaluable information about children's interests, strengths, abilities as well as feedback that assists nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators to develop improvement plans that are practical and focussed on meeting the needs of all children and their families.

The child, the family and the service do not exist in isolation. They are all part of a much wider community. In most communities, the service is one of a range of services that support families with children. When educators and coordinators develop links, share information, and work in collaboration with other community organisations they are better able to achieve the best outcomes for children and families using the service.

Standard 6.1: Respectful supportive relationships with families are developed and maintained.

What is this standard about?

Nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators taking the lead in establishing and maintaining relationships with families through ongoing respectful two way communication.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

Partnerships with families contribute to building a strong inclusive community within the service. Continuous, honest and open, two way communication with educators assists families to feel connected with their children's experience in education and care and helps them develop trust and confidence in the service. Shared decision making with families supports consistency between children's experiences at home and at the service, helping children to feel safe, secure and supported. It is also important to recognise that families, and parents in particular are often busy, juggling a number of priorities and that the service will need to consider a range of strategies to build and maintain relationships with them.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 6.1?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- The service has documented enrolment and orientation procedures.
- Educators and coordinators have access to space for private and confidential discussions with families.
- Families have access to the service during operating hours and are able to speak with educators about issues affecting their child.
- Information about the following matters is available at the service at all times the service is open:
 - the service approval and any service waivers or temporary waivers in place
 - contact details for the Regulatory Authority
 - the service's statement of philosophy or principles
 - the service's nominated supervisor
 - hours of operation
 - admission requirements and enrolment procedures
 - fees charged and arrangements for the payment of fees
 - details of qualifications of educators
 - policy on the participation of students and volunteers
 - the code of conduct
 - the program provided for children at the service
 - service policy in relation to behaviour guidance
 - arrangements for the delivery and collection of children
 - policy on excursions
 - procedure for dealing with illness and emergencies
 - procedures for dealing with infectious diseases
 - medical conditions management policy
 - procedure for dealing with complaints
 - menus
 - a copy of the Act and Regulation (see also quality area 7).
- The service provides information to families about:
 - families' participation in the service
 - inclusion and procedures for reducing discrimination.

- The service plans and implements a variety of opportunities for families to participate.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 6.1

- How do we define the term 'family', and who is in a family?
- How do we help families to feel comfortable and welcome at the service?
- What strategies are in place for information sharing between educators, coordinators and families, during orientation, settling in and on an ongoing basis?
- How does the service establish and maintain a partnership with families with specific or diverse communication needs?
- How do we encourage families to contribute to service activities and to their child's experiences in ways that are meaningful for them?
- How do we share decision making with our families? What are we/are we not willing to share decisions about?

Additional questions for services with babies and toddlers

- How do we support and reassure families with babies and toddlers using an education and care service for the first time?

Additional questions for family day care services

- How does the coordination unit establish and maintain a partnership with families?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 6.1.1 There is an effective enrolment and orientation process for families.

A positive relationship between the service and family begins with effective orientation to the service. To help families settle into the service successfully nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators anticipate the concerns and emotions that individual families may experience at this time and demonstrate a sensitive and constructive approach to meeting their needs during the enrolment and orientation process.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed
<p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Observe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ families being invited to spend time at the service with their child before attending the service ▪ families being encouraged to stay with their child for as long as needed during the settling in period ▪ families being actively encouraged to contact their child’s primary educator during the day if they wish ▪ educators assisting families to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child ▪ children who are distressed at separating from their family being held and comforted, or being closely observed and offered reassurance when they wish this type of interaction ▪ the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators sharing information with families about how their child is settling into the service ▪ the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators inviting children and families to share aspects of their culture and spiritual lives. 2. Discuss <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the provisions made to support families during the enrolment and orientation process ▪ how the settling in process is tailored to meet the needs of individual children and families ▪ how information is gathered from families to support continuity of care between home and the service. 3. Sight <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ enrolment and orientation procedures ▪ written information about the service that is provided to new families on enrolment.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

How the service will be assessed
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ how currently enrolled children are involved in the orientation of new children and their families.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed
<p>Assessors will, for example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ how coordinators determine the best placement for a new child ▪ how families are involved in the selection of an educator best able to meet their child’s needs ▪ how coordinators work with educators and families to settle new children into the service

How the service will be assessed

- the educator’s approach to interviewing new families and settling their child into the service.
- 2. Sight**
- documented information provided to new families about the role of the coordination unit, including
 - monitoring the placement
 - ongoing support for educators, families and children
 - assistance in finding alternate care when the child’s educator is unavailable
 - documented information provided by the educator to new families. For example, information about themselves and their family, their philosophy, routines and expectations.

Revised draft - Phase two

Element 6.1.2 Families have opportunities and support to be involved in the program and in service activities.

Involvement typically focuses on making a contribution to the operation of the service. Some families will want to become involved in the service, and will appreciate a variety of opportunities available for them to choose from. Other families may prefer, or not be able to make the same commitment.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators communicating respectfully and sensitively with all families
- all families being made to feel welcome and valued at the service
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators creating a welcoming environment for all families using the service
- families sharing information with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators about children’s experiences outside of the service
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators encouraging families to share their knowledge, skills and expertise
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators encouraging families to share aspects of their family life and culture
- families being encouraged to talk with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators about the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child’s learning
- educators collaborating with children to document their achievements and share their successes with their families
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators promoting a sense of community within the education and care service.

2. Discuss

- the opportunities provided for families to contribute to curriculum decision making and provide feedback about the experiences planned for their child
- how families are able to contribute to the operation of the service
- examples of the special events and activities planned for families.

3. Sight

- information available to families and educators about families’ participation in the service, and procedures for inclusion and reducing discrimination
- evidence that families, including extended family members, are invited and supported to participate in the program and events at the service.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- coordination unit facilities that are well signposted, accessible and family friendly.

2. Discuss

- how coordinators support and involve families who have difficulty accessing the coordination unit due to their geographical location and/or lack of transport.

Element 6.1.3 Families have opportunities and support to influence and shape the service, to review service policies and contribute to service decisions.

Partnership between the service and families is a relationship that focuses on each child's experience in education and care. In genuine partnerships families, nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators value each other's roles, communicate freely and respectfully, and engage in shared decision making.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- a culture of open communication, characterised by friendly conversations between families, the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators
- the nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and families sharing information about their child's progress, relationships, interests and experiences
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators responding to families' questions, concerns and suggestions in a prompt and courteous manner.

2. Discuss

- the strategies used to engage families with the service's quality improvement processes and development of service policies
- the processes in place to communicate effectively with all families
- the opportunities provided for families to talk with management and educators about their needs and the issues that concern or affect them
- how the service takes account of the suggestions and issues raised by families when planning for improvement.

3. Sight

- evidence that families are involved in an advisory, consultative or decision making role
- evidence that families have opportunities to contribute to the development and review of the service's Statement of philosophy or principles, policies and procedures and *Quality Improvement Plan*.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Discuss

- how coordinators maintain ongoing, two-way communication with families about their child's placement and progress in care
- how coordinators involve families in a regular evaluation of their child's placement
- how the coordination unit keeps families informed about the operation of the family day care service and advises of policy changes.

2. Sight

- evidence of regular communication between the coordination unit and families

Standard 6.2 Families are supported in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about child rearing are respected.

What is this standard about?

Recognising that the family is the most powerful influence on children's lives and learning outcomes are most likely to be achieved when educators work in partnership with families to ensure the experiences planned for children are meaningful.

Recognising that each family's wellbeing, and in turn their capacity to nurture and support their children, is influenced by the community in which they live and the material resources and social support available to them.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

When the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators work in partnership with families they are able to share insights and perspectives about the child and engage in shared decision making. This is more likely to result in the development of a program that builds on children's strengths, abilities and current interests.

Factors inside and outside the family can impact on children's wellbeing. The service can play an active role in supporting families in their parenting role by becoming a reliable source of practical information about resources and services within the local community.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 6.2?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- Relevant information about the program and their child's participation in the program is shared with parents.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 6.2

- How do we learn about children's families and those who are important in their lives?
- How do we facilitate communication with families who have specific or diverse communication needs?
- What do we do when families make unusual requests or express concerns?
- How do we find out about the community resources that are relevant to our service and to the children in the service and their families?
- How do we support families to access community resources?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 6.2.1 The expertise of families is recognised and they share in decision making about their child's learning and wellbeing.

Educators recognise that families are children's first and most influential teachers (The *Early Years Learning Framework*, 2009, p.12).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- daily information being exchanged with families at arrival and departure times
- families sharing information with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators about their child's life, experiences and learning outside the service
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators demonstrating deep understanding of each child, their family and community contexts in planning for children's learning
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators sharing with families some of the interactions they have had with children
- educators, coordinators and families discussing children's individual needs and play preferences
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators sharing children's successes with families
- families being informed promptly and sensitively of any incidents affecting their child.

2. Discuss

- the strategies used by the service to facilitate shared decision making with families and honour families' requests regarding their child's education and care
- the opportunities provided for families to have private discussions with the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators
- how the service supports consistency between each child's home and the service.

3. Sight

- evidence that information from families about children's backgrounds, experiences, likes, dislikes and home routines is regularly updated
- evidence that families have regular opportunities to:
 - provide feedback about children's experiences
 - view and add to their children's documentation
 - contribute to curriculum decision making.

Element 6.2.2 Information is available to families about community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing

Parenting young children is a complex and often stressful task for many families. Education and care services can support families in their parenting role by providing easily accessible and reliable information and helping them make connections with other services in the local community.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators providing information about community services and resources in conversations with families
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators assisting families to locate, contact and/or access local community services.

2. Discuss

- how families are supported and encouraged to independently access information about local community services and resources
- the community resources and support agencies in the local community that may be relevant to the children and families at the service
- the processes used by the service to maintain current contact details for local support services.

3. Sight

- information about community services and resources available to families, for example:
 - in areas of the service regularly used by families
 - placed on noticeboards
 - included in service newsletters
 - included in parent libraries.

Standard 6.3 The service collaborates with other organisations and service providers to enhance children’s learning and wellbeing.

What is this standard about?

Creating links and fostering relationships with other services and agencies in the local community to provide a comprehensive system of support for children and families.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

Open communication and collaboration between the service, family and other professionals within the community can be mutually beneficial. These partnerships:

- can provide everyone with a holistic understanding of the child which contributes positively to the child’s wellbeing and learning outcomes
- build the capacity of all organisations involved to support children and families in the local community
- are more likely to result in information sharing, joint problem solving and the development of best practice models.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 6.3?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- The service establishes links with other services to support children and their families.
- Collection of children must be by a parent or authorised nominee and a record of children’s arrival and departure is kept at the service, with the signature of the person responsible for verifying the accuracy of the record or the person collecting the child.
- Written authorisation is required for a child to be taken outside the premises (except in an emergency situation).
- A risk assessment is undertaken to determine the staffing levels required for the safe conduct of excursions.
- Parents are provided with information regarding excursions (designation, mode of transport, educator-to-child ratios, number of adults in attendance) and their written approval is obtained and documented.

Questions to guide reflection on the service’s practice for standard 6.3

- How do we share information with each other to encourage continuity of care?
- How is communication managed with other educators and with families when there are shift changes, when positions are shared or when different educators care for a child throughout the day?
- How do we support each child’s successful transition to formal schooling or other early education and care services?
- What are some of the barriers that might restrict the participation of individual or groups of children at the service? How can we minimise them?
- In what ways do we work with schools and other community organisations to meet the needs of children and their families?
- How do we access support when we are working with children who have additional needs?
- How effective are our strategies to link with schools, other organisations and service providers and how might we improve them?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 6.3.1 Links with relevant community and support agencies are established and maintained.

Nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators play an important role in integrating the strategies needed to support families and children. In some instances a nominated supervisor, educator or coordinator is the first person to whom a family discloses a particular concern and it is crucial that the family is provided with practical guidance about how they might contact other professionals or agencies for further support and assistance.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

Assessors are unlikely to observe practice in relation to this element during a site visit.

2. Discuss

- the strategies used to develop links and relationships with other support services and agencies in the local community
- the processes involved in making or taking a referral to other services/agencies
- examples of collaboration with professionals working in other services/agencies to develop compatible support strategies for the family.

3. Sight

- processes for making and accepting referrals from other agencies in the local community. For example:
 - child protection agencies
 - early childhood intervention services
 - family support agencies
 - health professionals
- evidence that, where required, families are referred and supported to make contact with appropriate support services/agencies
- evidence that, with the family's consent and when required, information about the child's experiences and achievements in the service are shared with support services/agencies.

Element 6.3.2 Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing relevant information and clarifying responsibilities.

Children develop a sense of security and comfort in a predictable environment with regular, consistent contact with familiar educators. While essential to children of all ages, continuity of care is particularly important to infants and toddlers as they begin to develop relationships based on trust and security. Children also need support to make a positive transition as they move from the service to formal schooling.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children experiencing positive transitions between the service, home, preschool/kindergarten and/or school
- educators on different shifts in centre-based services communicating with each other about:
 - children's experiences earlier in the day
 - information shared by families about their child
- children being supported and appropriately supervised when being transported to or from the service by car, bus, train, tram or foot.

2. Discuss

- the strategies in place to ensure children are supported:
 - when moving from one group to another
 - moving between settings
 - returning to the service after an absence
- the strategies in place to ensure excursions are positive and safe experiences for children
- the strategies planned to support children's positive transition to formal schooling.

3. Sight

- examples of plans to assist children make a positive transition from the service to formal schooling
- written procedure for releasing children from the service and ensuring they are released only to authorised individuals
- records of children's arrivals and departures, with the signature of the person responsible for verifying the accuracy of the record or the person collecting the child
- a written process to monitor who enters and leaves the service premises at all times
- evidence of a written risk assessment undertaken prior to conducting the excursion and informing families of the excursion
- evidence of detailed information provided to families regarding excursions including destination, mode of transport, educator-to-child ratios, and the number of adults in attendance
- written authorisation for children to be taken outside the service premises, including for excursions (except during emergency situations).

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Sight

- evidence that shifts are planned to maximise continuity of care for babies and toddlers.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

2. Discuss

- how information from families about their child's attendance/non attendance at the service is communicated to educators responsible for transitioning children between school and the service
- how information is shared between educators working in the before school and after school components of the service.

3. Sight

- documented procedures for transitioning school age children between school and the service, including a procedure for enrolled children who have not arrived at the service.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Discuss

- processes in place to ensure families are able to access alternate care, if their usual educator is unavailable .

Element 6.3.3 Access to inclusion and support assistance is facilitated.

Partnerships also involve the nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators, families and support professionals working together to explore the learning potential in everyday events, routines and play so that children with additional needs are provided with daily opportunities to learn from active participation and engagement in these experiences in the home and in education and care or specialist settings (Adapted from the *Early Years Learning Framework*, 2009, p.12).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children with additional needs demonstrating:
 - a sense of belonging and comfort in the service environment
 - trust and confidence in educators and staff
- the environment, routines and/or staffing arrangements (in centre based services) being adapted to facilitate the inclusion of children with additional needs
- educators working with families, other professionals/therapists or specialists to support children with additional health or developmental needs.

2. Discuss

- how programs devised by other professionals are consistently followed through at the service
- how the service demonstrates commitment to the full participation of children with additional needs
- how plans are developed to support the inclusion of children with additional needs
- how the service ensures it has the skills and expertise necessary to support the inclusion of children with additional health or developmental needs
- how the service works with inclusion and support agencies to include children with additional needs.

3. Sight

- evidence that the service accepts or actively seeks to accommodate referrals of children with specific needs from other agencies in the local community
- examples of individual support plans for children with additional needs
- examples of individual behaviour guidance plans for children with diagnosed behavioural difficulties
- evidence of regular meetings and/or ongoing communication between families, educators, coordinators and other agencies or specialists working with the child.

Standard 6.4 The service participates in the community.

What is this standard about?

Finding out about the people and resources that are available in the community in which the service is located and where families live and work. Becoming involved in projects and events that support children's learning and establish connections with the community.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

Supporting children and families to feel connected with their community assists them to become aware of the similarities, differences and connections between people and to broaden their understanding of the world they live in.

An active presence in the local community also provides opportunities for the service to gain an understanding of the education and care needs of local families and to promote the type of support the service can offer.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 6.4?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- *There are no specific legislative requirements for this Standard. Refer to the Guiding Principles that apply to all quality areas of the National Quality Standard.*

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 6.4

- What local resources and networks exist that might connect children and families with the community?
- How do we find out about community projects and events?
- What criteria should we use to determine whether the service should be involved in a particular community project or event?
- In what ways could we participate in community events that are relevant to our work with children and families?
- What environmentally sustainable practices already exist in the service?
- How can we increase our understanding of environmental issues and sustainable practices?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 6.4.1 The service participates in the community and demonstrates respect for families and communities .

While working in partnerships with families, it is also important to see families in the context of community and wider society, and seek to strengthen community links and use community resources to meet their needs (Service for Community Child Health Policy Brief No.6, 2007).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children developing their social and cultural heritage through engagement with Elders and community members
- an environment that reflects the lives of the children and families using the service and the cultural diversity of the broader community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

2. Discuss

- how the service builds connections between the service and the local community
- examples of the service's participation in the community
- how the service strengthens children's connection with, and understanding of, their community
- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators raise awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including acknowledging the traditional owners of the land
- how the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators consider the nature of children's connectedness to the land and demonstrate respect for community protocols.

3. Sight

- evidence that the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators liaise with other children's services, local businesses, schools, health services and organisations working with families and children in the local area
- evidence that members of the local community are invited to participate in social events held at the service throughout the year.

Element 6.4.2 The service is involved in appropriate community projects and events.

Education and care services have an important role to play in encouraging children and their families to feel part of their community and in supporting them to make a contribution to it.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

Assessors are unlikely to observe practice in relation to this element during a site visit

2. Discuss

- how the service finds out about community projects and events
- how the service determines the community projects and events it should be involved in
- examples of the projects and events in which the service has participated.

3. Sight

- plans for the service's future participation in community projects and events
- evidence that educators, coordinators, children and families are encouraged to participate in community projects and events that:
 - foster children's connection with their community
 - help children to understand the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation
 - broaden children's understanding of the world in which they live
 - help children to develop an awareness of the impact of human activity on environments.

Element 6.4.3 The service takes an active role in caring for its environment and contributes to a sustainable future.

Children develop positive attitudes and values by engaging in learning experiences, joining in discussions that explore solutions to the issues that we face, and by watching adults around them model sustainable practices (Climbing the little green steps, 2007).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How will the service be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- children participating in planned experiences that:
 - support their engagement with the natural environment
 - increase their awareness of the impact of human activity
 - engage them in appropriate sustainability practices within the service
- children supported to develop awareness of the interdependence of living things
- opportunities for children to increasing their knowledge of, and respect for natural and constructed environments
- sustainability embedded in daily routines and practices
- the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators finding ways of enabling children to care for and learn from the land
- educators and coordinators sharing information and providing children with access to resources about the environment and the impact of human activities on environments
- the service's environmental strategy being consistently implemented.

2. Discuss

- examples of the service's approach to promoting sustainability
- examples of sustainable practices used at the service.

3. Sight

- documentation of children's learning about environmental issues
- evidence that information and ideas about sustainable practices are regularly shared with families.

Further Reading

Bowes, J.M (Ed). (2004), *Children, families and communities: Contexts and consequences* (second edition), Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

Curtis, D. & Carter, M. (1996), *Designs for living and learning – Transforming early childhood environments*. Redleaf Press, Minnesota.

Davis, J. & Elliott, S. (2003). *Early childhood environmental education: Making it mainstream*. Early Childhood Australia, Canberra, ACT.

Kinsella, R (2007), *Greening services: Practical sustainability*, Early Childhood Australia, Canberra, ACT.

McKay, K. & Bonnin, J. (2008) *True Green Kids: 100 things you can do to help fix the planet*. ABC Books.

Newman, R. (2008) *Building Relationships with Parents and Families in School-Age Programs (2nd Edition, Revised)*, Pademelon Press, Castle Hill, NSW.

Stonehouse, A. & Gonzalez-Mena, J (2004), *Making links: A collaborative approach to planning and practice in early childhood services*, Pademelon Press, Castle Hill.

Stonehouse, A. (2004) *Dimensions: Excellence in many ways*. National Family Day Care Council of Australia: Gosford, NSW.

Quality Area 7: Leadership and service management

This quality area focuses on effective leadership and management of the service that contributes to quality environments for children’s learning and development. Well documented policies and procedures, well maintained records, shared values, clear direction and reflective practices enable the service to function as a learning community. Engagement with families in an ongoing cycle of planning and review creates the climate for authentic and sustainable improvement.

Introduction

Effective leaders of education and care services are able to set direction and establish values for the service that reflect its context and professionalism. Effective leadership creates a positive organisational culture that values openness and trust; where people are motivated to ask questions, debate issues and contribute to each other’s ongoing learning and inquiry.

In order to do this well, leaders need in-depth content knowledge as well as a deep understanding and appreciation of children’s learning and development. They are clear about the purpose of early childhood education and care and school age care and have the skills to effectively communicate their goals and expectations.

Leadership is a relationship between people and the best leaders are those who are able to empower others to lead. They listen to differing views, recognise and address areas of potential conflict, and engage and manage teams through the change process.

The effective management of education and care services requires constant review for a changing environment. Managing for quality requires a wide range of skills and a thorough understanding of the education and care system, including standards and effective practice. Approved providers, nominated supervisors and service leaders must work in partnership to meet the expectations of a wide range of stakeholders.

To achieve the best outcomes for children and families, the approved provider needs to provide a skilled workforce, effective budgeting and financial accounting processes, sound administrative systems and a safe and healthy learning environment for children.

Standard 7.1 Effective leadership promotes a positive organisational culture and builds a professional learning community.

What is this standard about?

The characteristics of leadership that enable the establishment and maintenance of a professional workplace in which educators, coordinators and staff can communicate openly, participate in respectful debate and take steps to further their professional learning.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

Building a positive culture and professional learning community involves continually questioning how to improve teaching methods and strengthen relationships with children and families as well as establishing high expectations for the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators and for children's learning.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 7.1?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- Identify a suitably qualified educator or coordinator to lead the development of programs and ensure the establishment of clear goals for teaching and learning at the service.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 7.1

- How is the leadership in our service contributing to the development of a positive organisational culture?
- How can we improve the way we share leadership across the team and develop the skills and capacity of team members?
- How are we creating opportunities for professional conversations?
- How can we share the collective knowledge of the team?
- What do we know about the rate of turnover of educators, coordinators and staff at this service?
- What are the reasons for educators, coordinators and staff leaving the service?
- How can we structure our staffing arrangements to improve continuity for children?
- How can we improve the way we share leadership across the team and develop the skills and capacity of team members?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 7.1.1 A suitably qualified and experienced educator or coordinator leads the development of the curriculum and ensures the establishment of clear goals and expectations for teaching and learning.

Effective curriculum development requires ambitious goals and clarity of purpose. The role of the educational leader is to develop the motivation and momentum for team achievement based on high expectations.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- the educational leader working with the nominated supervisor, other educators and coordinators to observe, support and extend children's learning.

2. Discuss

- opportunities available for discussion and reflective practice
- educators' and coordinators' expectations for their own teaching and for children's learning
- in long day care and family day care services, arrangements for the delivery of or families' access to a preschool program for children in the year prior to full-time school.

3. Sight

- evidence of the educational leader's qualifications and experience
- documented goals for teaching and learning that demonstrate a deep understanding of children's development and learning
- evidence of ongoing planning and evaluation that centres on children's learning and development
- evidence of professional discussion and interrogation of research and new ideas.

Element 7.1.2 There is continuity of educators and coordinators at the service.

Continuity of the relationships between adults and children is a highly significant influence in children's learning and development, particularly in the early years. A positive organisational culture that encourages the nominated supervisor, certified supervisors, educators and coordinators to reflect on their relationships with children and continuously improve the quality of their interactions will be well placed to attract and retain supervisors, educators and coordinators and enhance that continuity.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

Assessors are unlikely to observe practice in relation to this element during a site visit.

1. Discuss

- opportunities to build staff cohesion and pride in the service
- educator's and coordinators' understanding of the importance of educator continuity for children's learning and wellbeing
- how the nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and staff set individual performance and learning goals
- performance development processes that provide all educators, coordinators and staff with targeted feedback to support professional growth.

2. Sight

- rosters and staffing arrangements that reflect the importance of educator continuity on a day-to-day basis
- exit data and documentation that provides information about the reasons for educators, coordinators and staff leaving the service.

Standard 7.2 There is a commitment to continuous improvement.

What is this standard about?

Establishing and maintaining a culture of ongoing reflection and self-review that offers challenge, provides motivation and supports positive levels of educator, coordinator and staff satisfaction.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

Effective evaluation and self review enables the service to improve its policies, procedures and practices. At the same time, it enables the nominated supervisor, educators and coordinators to improve their practice which contributes directly to improved learning outcomes for children.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 7.2?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- The service has a statement of philosophy or principles that outlines the service's philosophy.
- As part of the *Self Assessment and Quality Improvement Planning Process*:
 - self-assess the performance of the service against the *National Quality Standard*
 - complete and submit a *Quality Improvement Plan* as part of the assessment process.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 7.2

- How effective are the induction processes we have in place for new educators, coordinators and staff?
- How do we collect feedback from new employees on the time required for them to listen, read and understand the information provided at induction?
- What evidence/ data are we collecting to inform our planning cycle and what additional information would be useful to inform planning?
- What data management processes do we use to collect, store and enable access to reliable information that contributes to our planning and evaluation?
- How are resources targeted to support improvement plans?
- How do we ensure that we have the knowledge necessary to engage actively in evaluation, self review and improvement planning?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 7.2.1 A statement of principles is developed which guides all aspects of the service's operations.

Each service needs a statement of philosophy or principles to guide their decision making about curriculum delivery, about work with families and about their ongoing learning and reflective practice. The statement will reflect current thinking in early and middle childhood and reflect a shared understanding of the role of the service with children, families and the community.

Regular review of the statement of philosophy or principles against new research, against the *Early Years Learning Framework* and/or the draft *My Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care in Australia*, and against families' views and expectations will support the service's goals for continuous improvement (*Early Years Learning Framework* p. 12-13 and *Draft My Time, Our Place* p. 12-13).

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- availability of the service's statement of philosophy or principles to educators, coordinators, staff and families
- educators', coordinators' and staff practice and decisions informed by the service's statement of philosophy or principles.

2. Discuss

- how a shared understanding of the service's statement of philosophy or principles underpins practice and decision making
- how families are engaged in the development and review of the service's statement of philosophy or principles
- examples of the use of the statement of philosophy or principles to set directions, build commitment and align actions to the service's goals and outcomes.

3. Sight

- the service's statement of philosophy or principles that reflects the principles that underpin the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and the *Early Years Learning Framework* and/or the draft *My Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care in Australia*, i.e.:
 - secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships
 - partnerships
 - high expectations and equity
 - respect for diversity
 - ongoing learning and reflective practice
- the service's statement of philosophy or principles which is freely available at the service and included in the induction process for the nominated supervisor, educators, coordinators and staff and in the enrolment and orientation process for families.

Element 7.2.2 An effective planning and evaluation process is in place that guides service operation and programs and enables the identification and delivery of ongoing improvement initiatives.

Effective services regularly monitor and review their performance to guide their planning. Ongoing self review that results in informed judgement about performance against the *National Quality Standard* is fundamental to an effective cycle of improvement.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- service practices and program delivery that match the service's self assessment as reflected in its *Quality Improvement Plan*.

2. Discuss

- how the service aligns program delivery with service plans
- how approved providers, educators, coordinators and staff engage in reflection and refinement of strategies to create and sustain improvements
- how the service collects and uses information or data from a range of sources to inform the process of planning and review
- arrangements for updating of the service's *Quality Improvement Plan* (at least annually).

3. Sight

- the service's *Quality Improvement Plan*
- the documented process for planning and review against the *National Quality Standard*
- systems for the collection of information from families, children, educators, coordinators and staff about their perceptions of the service.

Element 7.2.3 The induction of educators, coordinators and staff is comprehensive.

Induction is a key process in creating and maintaining a positive and professional culture. Each individual who begins work at the service should have a clear understanding of their role, the expectations for their performance and the earliest possible opportunity to engage with the principles and context that underpin the operation of the service.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

Assessors are unlikely to observe practice in relation to this element during a site visit.

2. Discuss

- with any new educators, coordinators and staff (employed within the past 6 months) their level of understanding of the philosophy or principles of the service and the context in which it operates
- with educators, coordinators and staff their satisfaction with the service's induction process
- how responsibilities and expectations are communicated to each educator, coordinator and staff member
- educators' and coordinators' understanding of:
 - the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
 - the *National Quality Standard*
 - the *Early Years Learning Framework* and/or the draft *My Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care in Australia* or any other approved framework
 - the service's statement of philosophy or principles
 - the service's code of conduct or code of ethics.

3. Sight

- the service's documented induction procedure and information provided to new educators, coordinators, staff or volunteers.

Standard 7.3 Management and administrative systems enable the effective provision of a quality service.

What is this standard about?

The policies and processes necessary for the effective administration and management of the service, including compliance with legal requirements.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

The efficiency and effectiveness of internal systems have a direct impact on the amount of time that educators, coordinators and staff can spend in planning, delivery and evaluation of the program for children and families.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 7.3?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- Under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* a person, other than a prescribed ineligible person, may apply for a provider approval (S10). A person can include an individual; a body corporate; an eligible association; a partnership or a prescribed entity.
- Under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* approved providers must notify certain circumstances to the Regulatory Authority:
 - (1) a failure to commence operating an education and care service within 6 months (or within the time agreed with the Regulatory Authority) after being granted a service approval for the service.
 - (2) in relation to an approved education and care service operated by the approved provider:
 - a) if the approved provider is notified of the suspension or cancellation of a working with children card or teacher registration of, or disciplinary proceedings under an education law of a participating jurisdiction in respect of, a nominated supervisor or certified supervisor engaged by the service;
 - b) if a nominated supervisor of an approved education and care service ceases to be employed or engaged by the service or withdraws consent to the nomination;
 - c) any proposed change to the education and care service premises of an approved education and care service (other than a family day care residence);
 - d) ceasing to operate the education and care service;
 - e) in the case of an approved family day care service, a change in the location of the principal office of the service;
 - f) an intention to transfer a service approval.
 - (3) in relation to the approved provider or each approved education and care service operated by the approved provider:
 - a) any change relevant to whether the approved provider is a fit and proper person to be involved in the provision of an education and care service;
 - b) information in respect of any other prescribed matters.
 - (4) in relation to an approved education and care service operated by the approved provider:
 - a) any serious incident at the approved education and care service;
 - b) complaints alleging:
 - (i) that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child or children was or is being compromised while that child or children is or are being educated and cared for by the approved education and care service; or
 - (ii) that the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* has been contravened;
 - c) information in respect of any other prescribed matters.

A serious incident means an incident or class of incidents prescribed by the national regulations as a serious incident.

- Service practices are documented and information is available at the service and to families, reviewed regularly and includes but is not limited to:
 - the service's statement of philosophy or principles
 - the service's nominated supervisor
 - hours of operation
 - admission requirements and enrolment procedures
 - fees charged and arrangements for the payment of fees
 - details of qualifications of the nominated supervisor, certified supervisors, educators and coordinators
 - participation of students and volunteers
 - the code of conduct
 - the program provided for children at the service
 - arrangements for the delivery and collection of children
 - policy on excursions
 - procedure for dealing with illness and emergencies
 - procedures for dealing with infectious diseases
 - health and safety policy
 - behaviour guidance policy
 - medical conditions management policy
 - procedure for dealing with complaints
 - menus
 - the service approval and any service waivers or temporary waivers in place
 - contact details for the Regulatory Authority.
- Ensure that recording and management of relevant information related to children and families is administered effectively including updating, storage, maintenance of confidentiality, access for families and the Regulatory Authority. Records to include but not be limited to:
 - enrolment
 - attendance
 - permission for excursions
 - child progress
 - medication
 - incident and illness
 - staffing
 - care arrangements/family court orders.
- Enable the secure and confidential storage of records on the premises or immediately accessible to the service.
- Retain and dispose of paper-based and electronic records in accordance with the relevant legislation.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 7.3

- What are the strengths of our management and administration systems that contribute to delivering a quality service for children and their families?
- How can we improve the efficiency of our systems and processes?
- How can we improve our management of confidential information?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 7.3.1 Administrative systems and communication channels are established and maintained to ensure the effective operation of the service.

Approved providers, educators, coordinators and staff have a shared responsibility to ensure the adequacy of systems needed to maintain efficient communication and administration within the service. Approved providers are required to nominate a supervisor (the 'nominated supervisor') to help ensure the service is operated in compliance with the *National Quality Standard* and assist with communication between the approved provider and the Regulatory Authority.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- availability of information technology for administration, planning, evaluation and communication with families.

2. Discuss

- the role of the nominated supervisor in the service
- procedures for educators, coordinators and staff to request specific resources to support program delivery
- human resource management procedures including recruitment and selection, leave, rosters and access to training and development
- opportunities for nominated supervisors, educators, coordinators and staff to comment on and improve the effectiveness of systems within the service.

3. Sight

- examples of internal communication such as meeting minutes, distribution of notices, staff bulletins.

Element 7.3.2 Service practices are based on effectively documented policies and procedures that are available at the service and reviewed regularly.

Well documented information about service practices, which is freely available and reviewed regularly in collaboration with families, will support shared understanding.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- service practice that is consistent with the documented policies and procedures.

2. Discuss

- processes for ensuring that policies, practices and procedures reflect appropriate contemporary research findings
- the provision of information about the service's policies and practices to parents/families prior to the child's attendance at the service
- the ways in which families contribute to the development and review of policies
- how families are explicitly informed of policy changes.

3. Sight

- documented policies and procedures available at the service and to families.

Element 7.3.3 Records and information are stored to ensure confidentially, are available from the service and maintained in accordance with legislative requirements.

Maintaining the confidentiality and currency of information provided by families, educators, coordinators and staff or other stakeholders is an indicator of the level of professionalism that exists within the service.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- the facilities for storage of confidential records at, or immediately accessible to the service.

2. Discuss

- the processes in place at the service to review and update records and information on a regular basis
- the service's practice in relation to the retention and disposal of records.

Element 7.3.4 Appropriate governance arrangements are in place to manage the service.

Governance arrangements for services are required to reflect the appropriate legal status and authority to hold a provider approval and service approval.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed:

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

Assessors are unlikely to observe practice in relation to this element during a site visit.

2. Discuss

- stakeholder engagement in management and decision-making processes at the service.

3. Sight

- evidence of the implementation of appropriate governance arrangements at the service that may include records of committee meetings
- information provided to parents about relevant governance structures that may include the name of the approved provider and the person to contact to make a complaint.

Element 7.3.5 The authority/ies responsible for administering the *Standard* is/are notified about any relevant changes.

Responsibility for notifying the Regulatory Authority of any significant changes to the operation of the service rests with the approved provider.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

Assessors are unlikely to observe practice in relation to this element during a site visit

2. Discuss

- the process the service has in place for informing the Regulatory Authority of relevant changes.

3. Sight

- any records of changes notified to the Regulatory Authority.

Standard 7.4 Adults working with children and those engaged in management of the service or residing on the premises are fit and proper.

What is this standard about?

Checking that persons are fit and proper is a measure that helps to safeguard children against risks to their safety and well-being.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

By establishing the safeguards necessary for the creation of a safe environment for children.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 7.4?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

Under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*:

- The holder of a provider approval must be fit and proper. Matters to be taken into account by the Regulatory Authority in assessing whether the person is fit and proper include:
 - A person's history of compliance with the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*, a former education and care services law of a participating jurisdiction and a children's services law of a participating jurisdiction and any decision to suspend or cancel a licence, approval, registration or certification under those laws
 - and either
 - (i) any prescribed matters relating to the criminal history of the person to the extent that history may affect the person's suitability for the role of provider of an education and care service, or
 - (ii) any check of the person under a working with vulnerable people law of a participating jurisdiction
 - whether the person is bankrupt, or has applied to take the benefit of any law for the relief of bankrupt or insolvent debtors or, in the case of a body corporate, is insolvent under administration or an externally administered body corporate
 - and may include
 - whether the person has a medical condition that may cause the person to be incapable of being responsible for providing an education and care service in accordance with *the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
 - whether the financial circumstances of the person may significantly limit the person's capacity to meet the person's obligations in providing an education and care service in accordance with the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- For the purpose of carrying out an assessment as to whether a person is a fit and proper person, the Regulatory Authority may:
 - a) ask the person to provide further information, and
 - b) undertake inquiries in relation to the person.
- For the nominated supervisor the requirements are set out in regard to Supervisor Certificates and require an applicant to satisfy the Regulatory Authority that the applicant is:
 - a) a fit and proper person to be a supervisor of a service
 - b) meets the prescribed minimum qualifications, experience and management capability.A person in the absence of evidence to the contrary satisfies the requirements of a) above if the person is a registered teacher or a person who holds a current working with children card under the working with children law of the participating jurisdiction.
- Implement procedures to ensure as far as possible that all educators, coordinators, staff and other persons who have contact with children are fit and proper.

- Every adult working with children understands and meets their obligations under the relevant state or territory child protection legislation.

Additional requirements for family day care services

- Implement procedures to ensure as far as possible that all persons who reside in or are frequent visitors to the home of family day care educators when the education and care service is provided to children are fit and proper.
- Every adult working with children understands and meets their obligations under the relevant state or territory child protection legislation.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 7.4

- What can we do to ensure that all educators, coordinators and staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and roles within the service?

Revised draft - Phase two

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 7.4.1 The provider, including managing bodies, any authorised supervisor/nominee engaged to be a manager (on and off-site) demonstrates their fitness and propriety.

Fitness and propriety describes a person's suitability to fulfil the particular role which, in this case, is involvement in the operation of an education and care service. Assessment of the approved provider and any certified supervisor appointed as the nominated supervisor of a service is undertaken prior to granting any approval. The approved provider and nominated supervisor must remain fit and proper for the service to operate under their management.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

Assessors are unlikely to observe practice in relation to this element during a site visit.

2. Discuss

- with the nominated supervisor, their understanding of their responsibilities under the relevant child protection and related legislation.

3. Sight

- the documentation required to be displayed positioned so that it is clearly visible to anyone from the main entrance to the service as required under S172 of *the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*.

Element 7.4.2 The provider takes reasonable steps to ensure the fitness and propriety of educators, coordinators and staff.

Checking records that relate to the fitness and propriety of educators, coordinators and staff assists in safeguarding children against risks to their safety and wellbeing.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

Assessors are unlikely to observe practice in relation to this element during a site visit.

2. Discuss

- with educators, coordinators and staff their understanding of their responsibilities under the relevant child protection legislation.

3. Sight

- evidence of required safety screening clearance for educators, coordinators and staff prior to engagement at the service.

NOTE: The following element only applies to family day care services.

Element 7.4.3 The provider takes reasonable steps to ensure the fitness and propriety of any adults who reside in or are frequent visitors to a home based service while children are in care.

Checking records that relate to the fitness and propriety of adults who reside in or are frequent visitors to the home of family day care educators where the education and care service is provided to children assists in safeguarding children against risks to their safety and wellbeing.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

Assessors are unlikely to observe practice in relation to this element during a site visit.

2. Discuss

- with the nominated supervisor, the service's approach to ensuring the fitness and propriety of adults who reside in or are frequent visitors to educators' homes when the education and care service is provided to children
- with educators, coordinators and staff their understanding of their responsibilities under the relevant child protection legislation.

3. Sight

- evidence of relevant procedures and fitness and propriety checks undertaken with adults residing or frequently visiting educators' homes when the education and care service is provided to children.

Standard 7.5 Grievances and complaints are managed effectively.

What is this standard about?

This standard is about the management of any negative feedback or internal issues that pose a potential barrier to the effective communication between educators, coordinators and families who share the education and care of children.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

By strengthening partnerships and contributing to the service's quality improvement initiatives.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 7.5?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- The service has a documented procedure for dealing with grievances and complaints that is available at the service and to families, and is reviewed regularly.
- Under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* approved providers must notify the Regulatory Authority of the following information in relation to an approved education and care service operated by the approved provider:
 - a) any serious incident at the approved education and care service
 - b) complaints alleging:
 - (i) that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child or children was or is being compromised while that child or children is or are being educated and cared for by the approved education and care service, or
 - (ii) that the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* has been contravened
 - c) information in respect of any other prescribed matters.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 7.5

- What can we do to improve the complaints management processes at the service?
- What systems do we have in place to listen to and document issues raised by children?
- How can we improve our use of the information and lessons learnt from complaints to feed into our improvement processes?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 7.5.1 Processes are in place to ensure that all grievances and complaints are addressed, investigated fairly and documented in a timely manner.

Processes are required to ensure that complaints and grievances are taken seriously and investigated promptly and thoroughly.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- readily available information for parents on how complaints and grievances are made and how they are managed by the service.

2. Discuss

- the management of any complaints or grievances lodged with the service during the most recent assessment cycle
- how educators, coordinators and staff listen to, document and follow up issues raised by children.

3. Sight

- a documented grievance and complaints management procedure
- evidence that grievances and complaints are investigated and documented in a timely manner.

Element 7.5.2 The authority/ies responsible for administering the Standard is/are notified of complaints which allege a breach of legislation or a serious incident.

The Regulatory Authority must be kept informed of any complaints that have the capacity to impact on the provider approval or service approval. The Regulatory Authority must also be informed of any serious incidents which occur at the service.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

Assessors are unlikely to observe practice in relation to this element during a site visit.

2. Discuss

- with the nominated supervisor examples of the types of incidents they consider to be serious and would require notification to the Regulatory Authority.

3. Sight

- records held by the Regulatory Authority in relation to complaints against the service that allege a breach of legislation or a serious incident.

Standard 7.6 Information is exchanged with families on a regular basis.

What is this standard about?

The contribution of regular and planned communication with families to the effectiveness of teaching and learning in early and middle childhood settings.

How does this standard contribute to quality education and care for children?

Acknowledging and valuing the primary relationships in the life of each child and actively supporting the development of each child's sense of identity and belonging.

What requirements must approved providers meet for standard 7.6?

(This will align with the Regulation when it is finalised)

- Service practices are documented in policies and procedures, available at the service and to families and reviewed regularly.
- Relevant information about the program and their child's participation in the program is shared with parents.
- Families have access to the service during operating hours and are able to speak with educators about issues affecting their child.
- Nominated supervisors, educators and coordinators have access to space for private and confidential discussions with families.

Questions to guide reflection on the service's practice for standard 7.6

- How can we improve the quality of information we provide to families?
- How do we demonstrate our respect for, and use the information that families provide to the service?
- How can we be more accessible to families?
- How can we find out whether our communication strategies are reaching all families and whether we need to tailor our approach?

What does this standard look like in everyday practice?

Element 7.6.1 Current information about the service is available to families.

Readily available information supports the partnership between families and the service and assists in developing a shared understanding of the details of service operation.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- relevant information about the operation of the service displayed on notice boards, charts, posters or through other appropriate media.

2. Discuss

- the provision of information to parents and families about the service's policies and practices
- family engagement in the development and review of information.

3. Sight

- newsletters, communication books or other methods of communication with families.

Element 7.6.2 Information is available to families about their child which includes documentation of the child’s learning, development and participation in the program.

One of the goals of high quality early childhood education and care and school age care is to engage with families about the learning and development of their child. The exchange of information about the child is central to the achievement of this outcome.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed
Assessors will, for example: 1. Observe <i>Assessors are unlikely to observe practice in relation to this element during a site visit.</i> 2. Discuss <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ nominated supervisors, educators’ and coordinators’ understanding of the importance of regular communication with families▪ collaboration between educators and children in documenting children’s achievements to share with families▪ arrangements for information about the child to be exchanged with families at mutually convenient times. 3. Sight <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ documented expectations for recording of information from families▪ relevant records about each child’s participation in the program in a format that can be shared with families (e.g. portfolio) and appropriate to the age of the child and the time the child attends the service.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SERVICES WITH SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

How the service will be assessed
Assessors will, for example: 3. Sight <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ relevant records about each child’s participation in the program in a format that can be shared with families (e.g. portfolio) and appropriate to the age of the child and the time the child attends the service. Given the part-time nature of children’s attendance in school age care these records will contain less detail than in other settings.

Element 7.6.3 Information provided by families is documented as appropriate.

One of the primary understandings of early and middle childhood is that children’s learning and development begins from birth (or before) and that families are central to this process. Two-way communication is therefore essential to the success of the partnership between educators and families.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ALL SERVICE TYPES

How the service will be assessed

Assessors will, for example:

1. Observe

- nominated supervisors, educators, coordinators and staff interacting with families.

2. Discuss

- examples of service plans that reflect information from families
- educators’ and coordinators’ ability to access translation services and cultural support for families as required.

3. Sight

- records of enrolment interviews and families’ orientation to the service that elicits information about family values, culture and beliefs
- documentation of two-way communication with families.

Further Reading

Australian Council for Educational Leaders, *ACEL Leadership Capability Framework*, Australian Council for Educational Leaders Ltd., Penrith.

Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Policy_Agenda/Quality/Documents/Final%20EYLF%20Framework%20Report%20-%20WEB.pdf

Cartmel, J; Macfarlane, K; Nolan, A (eds), *Developing and Sustaining Pedagogical Leadership in Early Childhood Education and Care Professionals*, (web-based resource under development).

Ebbeck, M & Waniganayake, M (2003), *Early Childhood Professionals: Leading Today and Tomorrow*, MacLennan & Petty, Sydney.

Ritchie, S & Willer, B (2006), *Leadership & Management: A Guide to the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standard and Related Accreditation Criteria*, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Washington DC.

Rodd, J (2006) *Leadership in early childhood (3rd edition)*, Allen & Unwin, Australia.

Glossary

The following glossary explains some key terms as they are used in the *National Quality Standard*.

Approved learning framework means the *Early Years Learning Framework* or the draft *My Time, Our Place: Framework for school age care in Australia* or any other approved framework provided for in transition arrangements under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and Regulations.

Approved provider means a person who holds a provider approval under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*.

Authorised nominee in relation to a child, means a person who has been given permission by a parent or family member of the child to collect the child from the education and care service or the family day care educator.

Built environments include manufactured, synthetic and commercially produced surfaces, materials, toys and equipment.

Centre based refers to an education and care service providing long day care, preschool, kindergarten and outside school hours care. The service may operate from standalone or shared premises including those on school grounds.

Certified supervisor means a person who holds a supervisor certificate.

Children is the term used within this document to refer to each baby, toddler, three to five year old and school age child both as an individual and a member of a group in the education and care setting, unless otherwise stated. It is inclusive of children from all social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds and of their learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographic locations.

Collaboration involves working together cooperatively towards common goals. Collaboration is achieved through information sharing, joint planning and the development of common understandings and objectives.

Community refers to a group of people who have common characteristics. In this context the term can be defined according to location, race, ethnicity, age, occupation, interest in a particular issue, or other common bonds. In an education and care setting the term community may include children, families, educators, staff, other professionals, school staff and volunteers. It may also include members of the wider community and particular groups or organisations in the local area.

Continuous improvement is the process by which the service evaluates and seeks opportunities to improve its operations and daily practice. The ultimate goal of continuous improvement is to enhance outcomes for children.

Coordinator refers to a person employed or engaged by an approved provider of a family day care service to monitor and support family day care educators or are part of the service. The term 'coordinator' includes: coordinator, child development officer, child care services officer, field officer/worker, manager, director, team leader, play session/group leader and would include the nominated supervisor for the service and any certified supervisors.

Critical reflection involves examining and analysing events, experiences and practices from a range of perspectives to inform future planning and decision making.

Culture describes the customs, ideas, values, practices and way of living shared by a group of people.

Curriculum means ‘all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children’s learning and development’ (adapted from Te Whariki).

Diversity refers to the differences among all individuals. In an education and care setting, diversity may include, but is not restricted to, differences in background, culture, customs, language, faith, religion, family structure, ability, gender, sexuality, child rearing practices and socio-economic status. Diversity is respected when difference is valued and where inclusive practices are implemented.

Documentation results from a process of recording information, discussions and decisions. Documentation of children’s learning may include examples of children’s writing, drawing, painting and construction, photographs of projects and works in progress, transcripts of children’s comments and conversations about their experiences.

Educator is a person who works directly with children and is included in the ‘educator-to-child’ ratio.

Effective means achieving the desired outcome from a particular course of action. A policy is effective when it is consistently put into practice and results in the desired outcome being achieved for children. For example, a sun protection policy is effective when educators consistently implement the strategies outlined in the policy and children and adults are protected from harmful exposure to the sun.

Equity refers to fair and just treatment of all individuals.

Evaluation measures the effectiveness of something by identifying its outcomes, strengths and weaknesses. The results of evaluation are used to inform future planning and decision making.

Experiences are defined as the activities and routines provided for children. Experiences may be planned or spontaneous and should reflect children’s needs, interests and abilities.

Family describes the network of significant people involved in caring for the child outside of the service.

Family day care is a child care service that provides small group care for children from birth through to school age in the home environment of a registered educator. Educators work in partnership with scheme management and coordination unit staff.

Fit and proper describes requirements under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* to assess persons as an approved provider and certified supervisor.

Guide is the supporting information which outlines ways in which a service can meet the *National Quality Standard*.

Harm to a child is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child’s physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. Harm can be caused by physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect or sexual abuse or exploitation.

Hazards are items which have the potential to cause harm, illness or injury. In an education and care setting hazards may include cleaning products, garden chemicals, medications, pest control agents, broken or damaged toys, equipment or surfaces, electrical equipment, sharp objects, soiled materials, foreign objects, spiders and vermin and poisonous plants.

Home based services are provided in the home of the educator or the child’s family. For example, a home based service is provided by an educator in a family day care service or a registered educator who is not part of a family day care service.

Hygiene refers to the clean and sanitary practices which maintain good health at the service. The spread of infectious diseases is minimised when educators and staff use accepted hygiene practices during daily routines such as toileting, nappy changing and hand washing.

Inclusion and support assistance aims to develop the capacity of child care services to create an inclusive environment for all children and their families, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those with on-going high support needs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Induction is a planned process of introducing new staff, relief staff, students or volunteers to the service in preparation for their role. An effective induction will assist new members of the service to understand what is expected of them and what they can expect from the service.

Leader refers to the suitably qualified and experienced educator or coordinator who leads the development of the program and is a role model for other educators in the service.

Natural environments include natural materials and surfaces that have undergone very little modification, for example grass, trees, rocks, plant materials, soil, sand, water, clay, timber, bark, seeds, shells and stones.

Nominated supervisor is a person who is a certified supervisor, who is nominated by the approved provider and has consented to that nomination, to help ensure the service is operated in compliance with the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* including the Regulations and the *National Quality Standard* and assist with communication between the approved provider and the Regulatory Authority.

Observation describes information obtained by watching, listening and interacting with children to identify their skills, interests, needs and abilities. This information will assist educators to plan meaningful experiences for children.

Orientation is a process designed to familiarise children and families with educators, staff, service operations, and daily practices when they commence care. The primary goal of orientation is to support children to adapt to unfamiliar routines, new people and new places. Orientation also provides an initial opportunity for sharing of information between families and the service about care expectations, the child's individual needs and how the service will meet them.

Outside school hours care is a service that provides care for school age children before school, after school, on pupil-free days and/or during school holidays (vacation care). Outside school hours care may use standalone facilities, share school buildings and grounds, and/or share facilities such as community halls. Care for school age children outside of school hours, on pupil-free days and during school holidays may also be provided by family day care and long day care services.

Parents in relation to a child, includes:

- a. a guardian of the child; and
- b. a person who has parental responsibility for the child under a decision or order of a court.

Partnership is a co-operative and mutually beneficial relationship between those working together and sharing a responsibility to achieve a common goal, such as positive outcomes for children. Effective partnerships require good faith, mutual respect and common understanding from which decisions can be made.

Planning occurs at a number of levels within an education and care service. Planning refers to making decisions about what will happen at the service for children. In daily planning, educators consider relationships and interactions, routines, the environment, experiences provided for children and how the program will be delivered. Planning also occurs at the service level to ensure effective management and administrative practices and systems are in place so that the service is responsive to the needs of children, families and the community.

Policy is a written statement which details service practices and procedures and explains the reasons for them. A policy is informed by current best practice and guides consistent application of service procedures by ensuring that all stakeholders have the same understanding and expectations.

Preschool program means an early childhood educational program delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher to children in the year that is 2 years before grade 1 of school.

Professional development is the process of maintaining and continuously improving current knowledge and skills in an area of expertise through both informal and formal learning opportunities.

Professional standards describe the appropriate and expected behaviour of management, educators and staff. They are used to guide ethical decision making and respectful relationships within the service.

Programs include the spontaneous and planned experiences provided for children at the service designed to facilitate learning.

Resources are items such as toys, play equipment, books, writing materials and craft materials for children to use in their play, learning experiences and physical activities. Resources provided by the service must be safe and appropriate to the age and skills of the children using them and should extend their interests and abilities.

Routines are structured, daily events that occur at regular intervals in the education and care environment. They may include children's arrivals and departures, the collection of school age children, transitions, nappy changing and toileting, snack and mealtimes, rest and sleep.

Service describes the management, educators, coordinators and staff of a family day care or centre-based education and care service. In family day care, the term 'service' refers to both the coordination unit and the family day care educator's home.

Service approval means a service approval granted and amended under Part 3 of the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*.

Service waiver means that under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* an approved provider may apply to the Regulatory Authority for a waiver from a requirement that an approved education and care service comply with a prescribed element or elements of *the National Quality Standard* and the national regulations as provided for in the national regulations. While a service waiver is in force, the approved education and care service is taken to comply with the element or elements of the *National Quality Standard* and the national regulations that are specified in the service waiver.

Spontaneous means unplanned, impulsive or 'spur of the moment'. In an education and care setting spontaneous learning opportunities emerge as children, explore, discover, imagine and interact with both educators and their peers.

Staff member in relation to an education and care services, means any individual (other than the nominated supervisor or a volunteer) employed, appointed or engaged to work in or as part of an education and care service, whether as a family day care co-ordinator, educator or otherwise. Staff members would include the cook, administrator, gardener, housekeeper or cleaner.

Statement of philosophy or principles outlines the values and beliefs that are important to children, families, educators, staff and management which guide everything that happens at the service.

Supervision is the continuous and active observation of children and intervention to promote their wellbeing. Active supervision ensures that children are safe, that risks within the environment are minimised and that they are engaged in positive interactions and activity, without over-protection or over-direction. Supervision requirements will vary according to the age and number of children, the activity taking place, the environment and the needs of individual children.

Supervisor certificate makes the person to whom it is issued eligible to be placed in day to day charge of an approved education and care service.

Sustainability is the result of finding ways to meet current needs that do not impact on the quality of the environment or reduce the capacity of future generations to meet their own needs.

Teacher means an early childhood teacher holding an approved qualification under the *National Quality Standard* or a qualification that has been assessed as equivalent.

Temporary waiver means that under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* an approved provider may apply to the Regulatory Authority for a temporary waiver from a requirement that an approved education and care service comply with any prescribed element or elements of the *National Quality Standard* and the national regulations as provided for in the national regulations. A temporary waiver must specify the period of the waiver which cannot be for a period of more than 12 months. While a temporary waiver is in force, the approved education and care service is not required to comply with the element or elements of the *National Quality Standard* and the national regulations that have been temporarily waived.

Transitions describes the movement of children from one setting or service to another, from one group or room to another or the move from one activity to the next.

Revised draft - Phase two