

3 to 6 Zoom discussion 13 May, 2020 1pm

As restrictions are gradually eased and we look at getting back to centres and schools now is a good time to reflect upon how we have met the NQS “remotely”. How have you observed, reflected and planned for learning and how might this translate into the mid year summary/report/parent-teacher discussion?

- Are you being mindful of the needs of the children?
- Are you helping parents become more aware of these needs?
- How are you meeting these needs?
- How are you supporting families to meet these needs?

NQS

https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-02/Guide-to-the-NQF-3-Assessment-and-rating_1.pdf

Quality areas (with standards under each and elements under each standard)

QA1	Educational program and practice
QA2	Children’s health and safety
QA3	Physical environment
QA4	Staffing arrangements
QA5	Relationships with children
QA6	Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
QA7	Governance and leadership

You may like to have longer discussions within your workplaces and teams on the following as a starting point:

QA1 Educational program and practice

- 1.1 The educational program enhances each child’s learning and development.
- 1.2 Educators facilitate and extend each child’s learning and development.
- 1.3 Educators and co-ordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.

QA2 Children’s health and safety

- 2.1 Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
- 2.2 Each child is protected.

QA5 Relationships with children

- 5.1 Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
- 5.2 Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships

QA6 Collaborative partnerships with family and communities

- 6.1 Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
- 6.2 Collaborative partnerships enhance children’s inclusion, learning and wellbeing.

Things shared during the discussion included:

- We need to be aware of all of these and be able to describe how our programme, practice reflects this
- Possibility that we continue discussions to discuss each standard/element and how these are met in a Montessori context. We do this, we just need to get better at articulating how we do this.
- Not doing “themes” as this is very adult led versus child focussed.
- A discussion on “culture” and how this is integrated into all the areas. Culture reflected in PL activities/presentations/items, in grace and courtesy... the links between sensorial and language.
- Thinking more widely.

- Need to be giving children the message that we are more similar than different—we have the same needs (shelter, clothing, food, communication...) and they might look different/be expressed differently and these differences can be explored and celebrated but they don't single us out
- Looking at skills and purpose versus just listing names of materials (and know your audience—if it is for you, fine to write pink tower, if it is for ACECQA, for parents... probably not saying the child “has done lots of 3 period lessons, can do the touch tablets...)

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/learning/Pages/veyldf.aspx>

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Frameworks (for the Victorians also refer to these documents)

five learning and development outcomes for all children from birth to eight years:

- [identity](#)
- [community](#)
- [wellbeing](#)
- [learning](#)
- [communication](#)

Student reporting requirements (prep/3rd year children)

– more relevant for those of you also within a primary school

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/practice/Pages/reportsregs.aspx>

Student reports should be individualised, accurate and easy to understand.

Schools are required to provide a written student report at least twice a year to the parents or carers of each child enrolled at the school.

Schools report student achievement against the achievement standards in five focus areas: English, mathematics, health and physical education, the arts, and personal and social capability.

Schools can decide on the format of reports in partnership with students, parents and carers and the local community. Reports can also be customised to suit school and individual student needs.

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/ablesintroguide.pdf> (Abilities Based Learning and Education Support – an introductory guide)

Things shared during the discussion included:

Best part of zoom was reconnecting with the families, seeing the home environment, doing spontaneous things—less focus on materials.

Talking more to parents about Montessori

- Holistic approach, not just academic or materials
- Connecting with more independent skills
- Getting more insight into what parents value
- Montessori as an education for life
- Looking at integrated approach, creativity, learning is (and should always be) fun
- Supporting parents who are worried their child might fall behind

Parent/teacher interviews/discussions – between 15 to 20 minutes (depending on the centre)

- Be mindful about what you write in a report
- Think about the actual skills/knowledge acquired versus listing the names of materials (eg the child is exploring visual discrimination so they can see the difference between large/small, thick/thin, long/short and can put these in order, can see small differences... versus they can do the pink tower, brown stair and red rods)
- Consider avoiding “jargon”, use “plain language”
- Think about the general aims for PL, sensorial, language, maths... and how these are met versus going through a checklist of materials
- How you will support children to apply skills and knowledge
- Think about strategies you might give parents so they can follow this through at home

How are you going to make the transition back from remote learning?

- How will you take into account the needs of the children, families, educators?
- How might you change your prepared environments to factor in physical distancing?
- How will you model new behaviours to the children? (actions speak louder than words!)
- What new processes and procedures might you have?
- How you will support children (and families and educators) in feeling secure, confident...

Things shared during the discussion included:

- Reducing the number of chairs per table, reducing the number of tables and spreading these out more
- Running more of an indoor/outdoor programme if possible so the numbers of children in any one space is reduced
- Meeting children at the gate (either parents supply own pens/staff sign chn in and out/2 containers one for “clean” pens and one for used ones)
- Staggered drop off/pick up times, more flexibility
- Temperature check, hand washing
- More frequent wiping of “high touch” areas
- Discussion around mats –washable ones, how to clean, having more/fewer mats
- Discussion around washing hands each time you replace a material on the shelf/everyone washing hands at regular periods through a session, wiping down materials at the end of each day
- Individual sets of pencils, scissors so each child has their own container/pencil case...
- Working out different ways to greet/farewell (versus shaking hands)
- Modelling hand washing
- be mindful that we don’t interrupt children’s concentration, motivation, enthusiasm... to say you can’t touch this until you wash hands
- Having a “break” hasn't affected the children’s learning
- Finding balance so the environment is familiar, so there is order and structure but also be flexible, so we are mindful of possible behavioural changes and the impact the past few months has had on children, parents, staff.

- Some children will be glad to be back, to be in familiar surroundings with routines etc, may find they go straight back into work (similar to when they come back from a holiday) some may need more support and need/want closer adult contact and reassurance.
- Having indoor shoes to change into

<https://ela.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Practical-measures-for-Approved-Providers-to-consider-FINAL.pdf>

ELAA has put together this information sheet for Approved Providers and ECEC services to use as a starting point in creating strategies and practices that will help you meet the current additional requirements to maintain the health and wellbeing of staff, children and families.

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces>

COVID-19 Information for workplaces

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/collection/covid-19-resource-kit>

This section includes a range of resources for business to download and display in their workplaces, including checklists, infographics, fact sheets for industry and posters on handwashing, hygiene and physical distancing.

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/signage-and-posters-covid-19>

This includes posters on what is COVID-19 and how you can stop it spreading, how to wash your hands and the physical distancing requirements.