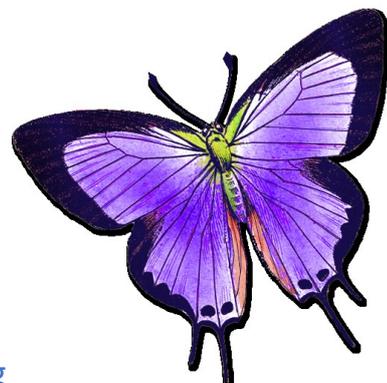


Seaford Kindergarten

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2019



celebrating early years learning

Heather Morony

Our Context:

Seaford K-7 Campus Preschool operates full time and is located on a shared campus with the Seaford K-7 School. We often call ourselves Seaford Kindy.

Eligible children can access 2 full days per week, plus ½ day on alternate Fridays. This provides the Universal Access allocation of 15 hours per week.

A playgroup - called Family Connections - operates alongside the Friday morning kindy session supporting children and their families in the community. It provides a transition step for those children starting kindy the following year.

Being situated on one site enables a strong partnership with the school.

Our Philosophy:

At Seaford K-7 Campus Preschool we believe that all children are capable and competent learners and that each child is a unique individual who possesses rights and responsibilities as an important and influential member of their community. We value children being confident and resilient and having the opportunity to become responsible and caring citizens.

We believe that children will flourish in a learning environment where they and their families are welcomed, respected and have a strong sense of belonging; where there is culture of safety to take risks in intellectual, social and physical challenges and where the joy and effort of learning is acknowledged by all.

We will therefore work together with each child and his or her family to implement a play-based curriculum which will scaffold, stretch, make visible and celebrate their learning journey at kindergarten.

Reviewed November 2018

The standards and elements of the 7 Quality Areas of the National Quality Standards (NQS) were reviewed in determining plans for improvement in 2019.

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Quality Area 1: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Strengths:

Individual Learning Plans are created for all children.

Weekly staff meetings ensure ongoing reflection of spontaneous and intentional play and teaching experiences.

A profile on each child is developed through reflective practice, observations and an information meeting with individual families in term 1. This enables staff to be responsive to children's interests and developmental needs.

'Learning Conversations', are organised in term 2 for each family to meet with an educator about their child. Evidence of learning, based on the Early Years Learning Framework and the child's literacy, numeracy and learning dispositions are discussed.

These meetings provide families the opportunity to work in partnership with educators to plan children's learning.

Children's voice is valued, respected and contributes to programming. Children are encouraged to problem solve and 'have a go'.

Intentional planning occurs for smaller group experiences to further children's engagement and to provide opportunities for children to contribute, collaborate and participate in language rich experiences. Key word signing is a strategy used to support communication.

Our Aims for Quality Area 1-

1. supporting and improving children's oral language (NQS1.1.1)
2. continuing to track and focus on children's learning dispositions.
3. a more rigorous approach to numeracy

These improvement goals were decided upon at the Pupil Free Day in November 2018 as our staff team reviewed 2018.

Strategies to achieve this include:

1. Oral language:

- 1) increasing opportunities for smaller group work focussing on supporting language (in both targeted story/language sessions with up to 4 children and with educators engaging closely with small groups throughout the session in play based learning opportunities.
- 2) A focus on Key Word signing
- 3) Promoting speech and language to families- each family to receive a set of resources.

2. Learning dispositions:

- 1) Continue supporting and tracking children's learning dispositions using the Reflect Respect Relate tool .. promote the importance of learning dispositions with families

A focus on 2 dispositions.. collaboration and persistence (having a go).

- 2) continue the program-'You Can Do It'

3. numeracy:

- 1) being specific in focussing on 1 mathematical area/concept-developing one particular area at a time, the language used

and how it is being incorporated in the various activity spaces.

2) Director and Teacher involved in a professional learning program (Learning Design and Reflection Practice- LDAR) in which there will be an inquiry project.

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Quality Area 2:

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Strengths:

Educators regularly promote and model self-help skills and healthy practices within the program (eg washing hands and being sun safe)

The importance of eating healthy food and drinking water is promoted and Information is provided to all families (through information sessions, newsletters and the Parent Handbook)

Systems are in place to ensure that timely checks are organised to provide every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm:

- regular safety checks for both the indoor and outdoor environments.
- WHS - an agenda item at staff meetings to ensure relevant information is shared and any concerns are addressed
- Each term there are planned emergency practices. Both evacuation and invacuation practices (including prior discussions about emergencies) are organised for a set week of each term. Feedback about the practices are documented.

Educators work in partnership with families, special educators and support personnel to support children in regulating their behaviour.

This discourages unsafe play as children develop positive interactions with their peers.

Both the kindy and our local school, Seaford K-7 follow the 'You Can Do It' program, supporting children in being caring of others and playing safely.

Additional staffing- some of which is self-funded by our kindy- provides further support and supervision for individual children.

The Child Protection Curriculum is incorporated into the program through-out the child's year at kindy and 'Child Protection' is an agenda item at staff meetings.

Children are involved in developing risk management plans to develop safe practices.

Our Aims for Quality Area 2-

- continue to focus on promoting healthy lifestyles for children and their families. This includes nutrition, dental health, physical activity and relaxation (N.Q.S. 2.1.3)

At our Pupil Free Day in Nov. 2018 staff noted that, despite our promotion of healthy food at kindy, we were observing an increasing amount of packaged and processed food that children were coming to kindy with. (N.Q.S.2.1.3).

Further discussion as a staff team also highlighted the importance of promoting relaxation for children.

Strategies to achieve this include:

- providing families and children with information re nutrition (including suggestions for lunches and snack times), dental care, physical activity, relaxation and sleep. To be promoted at the initial parent information sessions, displays, newsletters, information that is sent home and visits from dental health, dietician, health personnel etc

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Quality Area 3:

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Strengths:

Children can access both the indoor and outdoor learning environment throughout the day. Learning is seen as equally important in both environments.

Educators respond to children's interests in physical and intellectual challenge- this is evident in the range of activities, both indoors and outdoors that are offered to engage and stimulate children. Educators respond to children's interests and developmental needs by providing a rich learning environment.

Recycling is a practice that is encouraged and actively embraced. There is a commitment to ensure that recycling is embedded in the program and practices (eg at fruit time and lunch times).

Gardening activities are promoted- such as growing vegetables and herbs and families and children were involved in setting up a Butterfly Garden (using a Natural Resource Management grant).

Educators are enthusiastic in having an outdoor learning environment that incorporates more elements of nature play-to encourage children's exploration, curiosity, imagination and creativity.

Our Aims for Quality Area 3-

to continue

- improvements to the outdoor learning environment to stimulate children's curiosity, exploration and engagement - incorporating more elements of nature play. *Educators believe that this will providing more learning opportunities in numeracy, literacy, creativity, exploration and problem solving.* (N.Q.S.3.2)

- embedding sustainable practices in the kindy and supporting children in being environmentally responsible. *This is seen by staff as an ongoing priority and commitment to embed positive environmental practices throughout the program.* (NQS 3.2.3)

Strategies to achieve this include:

- continue developing our outdoor space to include more areas for collaborative and exploratory play and intentionally planning to promote problem solving, numeracy, literacy and a growth mindset.

- involve children (by incorporating children's voice in planning and setting up the outdoor learning environment) and families

- connecting, as part of the River Hub Partnership, with Nature PlaySA, on a *Collaborative Research Project-* exploring innovative ways to develop the outdoor learning environment for our curriculum.

- inviting the Onkaparinga Council to discuss and model sustainable practices (reduce, reuse and recycle) to continue embedding sustainable practices eg with lunch scraps, paper towelling, garden refuse etc.

- developing children's connection with and respect for the environment through gardening and caring for various live resources such as stick insects, caterpillars, butterflies etc.

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Quality Area 4:

STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

Strengths:

Staff meetings are held weekly on alternate Mondays and Wednesdays to ensure that meetings are inclusive of both fulltime and part time staff and is therefore relevant for both the Monday/Tuesday group and the Wednesday/Thursday group. A Minutes folder for staff meetings is accessible enabling staff who can not attend a meeting to access information. The agenda items include Child Protection, Programming, WHS, Facilities, QIP update, Focus Children and AOB. Critical reflection on children's learning and development are discussed and staff respond to children's interests and developmental needs through programming.

There is an expectation for all staff to meet with the Director for Performance Development Reviews twice per year. Educators are encouraged to undertake professional development and where possible to undertake training as a team to improve their practice, knowledge and skills.

In term 4 2018, staff participated in a Pupil Free Day- critically reflecting on the year and revisiting the kindy philosophy. Parent feedback from the recently returned Parent Surveys were incorporated in developing future directions.

Extra site funded support provides further early assistance and intervention for those children who may require additional support.

This is in addition to the funding allocated for Preschool Support in the RES.

Our Aims for Quality Area 4-

Our Quality Improvement Plan aims to

- support the high number of children who may require additional support for their learning and wellbeing

Educators in reflecting on the current routines and group times and the impact of having larger group sizes wanted to develop strategies to ensure children were identified - and able to receive support. There have been high numbers of children with speech and language impairment and social/emotional needs. (NQS4.1, NQS 4.1.1)

Strategies to achieve this include:

- organising story and discussion groups into 2 main groups –with smaller groups of 3 and 4 children who require further support for speech and language and /or social skills). This will be organised through Preschool Support and additional staffing.
- where possible organise additional staffing to support children with special rights in accessing the learning program.

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Quality Area 5:

RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

Strengths:

There are positive relationships between staff, families and children. Evident

- when children and their families are welcomed on arrival at kindy
- a range of opportunities are offered for planned meetings with families to support children's learning and well-being.

There is a 'welcoming feel' to the kindy with a strong sense of

1. respect for children, families, staff and visitors
2. belonging- being a community

Children's voice is encouraged and valued- in decision making and problem solving.

There is a balance between intentional teaching and incorporating a child initiated curriculum. Children are encouraged 'to have a go', develop safe play practices and assess risks.

By belonging to a small group (for stories, discussion, songs and games) children and educators develop stronger connections and relationships.

Our Aims for Quality Area 5-

- ensure children feel safe and protected.

Staff observations and feedback indicate a need to support children in their relationships with peers- to 'interact to others with care, empathy and respect' outcome 1 EYLF (NQS 5.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.3)

- continue supporting children's 'sense of belonging' and connectedness- developing a strong sense of community
- promote dispositions for collaboration and a sense of fairness through: -staff modelling behaviours and communication strategies

Strategies to achieve this include

- organising smaller groups to encourage and model collaborative play and learning experiences (stories, activities and games) - (Outcome 1 EYLF, Outcome 2 EYLF and in the Active Learning Scale of RRR)
- continue embedding the 'You Can Do It' program, *getting along* -intentional teaching and modelling through the character, Gabby Get Along.

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Quality Area 6:

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Strengths:

Being on a shared site with the Seaford K-7 Campus School, the kindy has developed a stronger collaborative partnership with the school. Meetings are organised between the early years educators across the 2 sites, sharing pedagogical practice and supporting transition and continuity of learning.

Kindy children visit school especially to participate in play-based learning opportunities that are organised at the school- supporting school transition for the following year.

As a member of the River Hub Partnership, strong and collaborative local networks with local kindergartens and schools has provided opportunities for educators to share their pedagogy and practice. The River Hub Partnership Improvement Plan has sound strategies to improve pedagogy, literacy, numeracy and intervention processes.

‘Family Connections’ is a play group program that operates during and alongside the Friday morning kindy session. By attending this program, families and children are supported in their transition into kindy. Positive relationships are formed between families, children and staff during Family Connections. It provides an opportunity to support children who may require early intervention.

A Preschool Parent Committee has been formed enabling families to have a further voice in kindy matters (this is in addition to having a joint Governing Council with the school). Through the Committee’s motivation and support the kindy has held a Spring Market Day and in 2018 a Fun Fit Family Day.

A Community News board provides current items, information and events of interest for families.

Educators are working closely with families building a stronger partnership though

- information and orientation sessions in term 4 of the year prior to their child’s year of kindy
- the Director meeting individually with in term 1 to build a profile about each child supporting their learning and well being
- a ‘Learning Conversation’ held in term 2 with each family and their child’s focus teacher- (this is in addition to informal catch ups)

Our Aims for Quality Area 6-

Continue developing strong partnerships with families in supporting children’s learning (N.Q.S.6.1). *Educators, in working with the DECD psychologists, special educators and speech pathologists, recognise the importance of working with families in supporting children’s learning and wellbeing. We are continuing to strive for increased participation and involvement of families especially in the educational program.*

Strategies to achieve this include

- improving communication with families about children’s learning and wellbeing eg with information that aligns with our educational priorities.
- encouraging more family involvement within the kindy program (eg cooking, music or reading activities) and by participating in Governing Council and the Preschool Parent Committee.

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Effective communication is critical to ensure an inclusive culture.

•ensure that there is a system of documentation in place to manage risk effectively (N.Q.S. 7.1.2)

Time allocated to manage Work Health and Safety – including risk assessment- needs to be organised more effectively.

Quality Area 7:

LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE MANAGEMENT

Strengths:

A collaborative team culture exists through consistency with staffing, regular weekly staff meetings and program planning, sharing and critical reflection opportunities. Regular Professional Development Reviews with all staff clarify directions and pedagogy.

Effective reflection for continuous improvement through staff reviewing the Quality Improvement Plan in term 4 and in having QIP on the agenda at staff meetings.

Staff are involved as a team in reviewing and developing the kindy philosophy.

The River Hub Partnership Improvement Plans supports our priorities of improving children's numeracy and literacy, tracking and monitoring learning and supporting learning dispositions. This is embedded in the QIP.

Self review for improvement is an ongoing and reflective practice (of pedagogy, program, routines, staffing and professional development).

Our Aims for Quality Area 7-

•Ensure all staff, including part time staff, are kept updated and informed about kindy business, Partnership, Professional Development and Department for Education information (N.Q.S.7.2)

Strategies to achieve this include

• staff are kept informed about relevant information through: staff meetings (minutes need to be read and initialled by staff if they are not able to attend), Governing Council and Preschool Parent Committee news, the River Hub Partnership, Health and Safety news and Professional Development opportunities

• improving the current system for recording Visual Inspections, risk assessments and evaluations of evacuations etc

Progress Summary: