

Quality Area Six:
COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH
FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Self-Assessment Tool &
Quality Improvement Plan Summary

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Quality Area 6 focuses on supportive, respectful relationships with families which are fundamental to achieving quality outcomes for children. Community partnerships that are based on active communication, consultation and collaboration also contribute to children’s inclusion, learning and wellbeing.

Additional information and resources about Quality Area 6 are available in the [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#) and on the [ACECQA website](#).

Quality Area 6: Standards and elements

Standard 6.1	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.	
Engagement with the service	Element 6.1.1	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
Parent views are respected	Element 6.1.2	The expertise, culture, values, beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child’s learning and wellbeing.
Families are supported	Element 6.1.3	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
Standard 6.2	Collaborative partnerships enhance children’s inclusion, learning and wellbeing.	
Transitions	Element 6.2.1	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing relevant information and clarifying responsibilities.
Access and participation	Element 6.2.2	Effective partnerships support children’s access, inclusion and participation in the program.
Community engagement	Element 6.2.3	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

Law and Regulations

The table below includes the sections of the National Law (S) and National Regulations (R) underpinning Quality Area 6.

Please assess whether your service is compliant or non-compliant in accordance with the [National Law and Regulations](#), relevant to your service type.

NOTE: If a law or regulation is not applicable to your service or service type, you are not required to select whether you are compliant or non-compliant.

Law (S) / Regulation (R)	NQS	Does your service meet legislative requirements?	Compliant / Non-compliant
R.157	STD6.1	<p>Do you respect the right of parents to enter the service when their child is in attendance unless;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allowing the parent to come into the service poses a risk to the safety of children or staff?• Allowing the parent to come into the service would prevent you or educators and staff from carrying out your normal duties, such as supervising children, delivering the program or meeting health and safety needs? or• You reasonably believe that allowing them entry would contravene a court order?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Compliant <input type="radio"/> Non-compliant

If you answered 'non-compliant': you are not meeting regulatory requirements and should take immediate steps to rectify this non-compliance. Use the box below to note the relevant Law/Regulation with your action.

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Standard 6.1 Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.

Record up to five key evidence points and/or practices that are currently occurring at your service. Identify if these practices meet the National Quality Standard.

NOTE: You have already indicated your services compliance with the National Law and Regulations. This evidence should demonstrate key practices that reflect the elements in this National Quality Standard.

Concept	Element ID	Element	Identified evidence and key practices	Confirm
Engagement with the service	ELE6.1.1	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.	1. Our Orientation Process for families previously involved a presentation at the NWPS orientation day, followed by emailed information. In 2019, we reviewed this process in conjunction with families to find out what would support them more & decided to create a video for both children & parents with important information that would help them feel prepared and comfortable. Parents & children are also invited to attend an orientation session at the service prior to their first attendance.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Met <input type="radio"/> Not Met
			2. We have made a decision to utilise multiple communication channels for the provision of information to families, to ensure parents feel a part of the service. These communication channels include emails, newsletters, our website, our Facebook page, Kinderloop, SMS emergency reminders, where necessary and notes on the touchscreen for drop off and pickup. We also send information through the school messaging app, the school newsletter, and via school mailing lists.	
			3. To ensure we receive feedback from families, we organise quick surveys, to gather their input and guide the direction of the centre. As well as quick surveys at the sign in desk, we also complete Vacation Care surveys to ascertain the dates our families need care, and their preferences regarding the mix of incursion / excursion / in-centre days. Previous surveys have also focussed on the cost of vacation care days, to ensure we are meeting the needs of the community.	

			<p>4. Our philosophy has a strong focus on positive communication & relationships. One of the ways we ensure this open feedback is through our staff appraisal process. Our process is built around the concept of 360-degree appraisals, which incorporates feedback from families. This feedback is integral to ensuring parents feel valued as part of the NWOOSH community, and that they have a say in the future direction of the centre, specifically around opportunities for internal professional development.</p>	
			<p>5. Our service is managed by volunteer parents of the centre and the wider NWPS community, and further, all parents are invited and welcome to attend committee meetings and contribute to service decisions. A recent example of this was with regards to enrolment. The committee came together to discuss this policy in 2019, and following consultation with the school and NWPS existing and prospective parents, a decision was made that enrolment and re-enrolment would open to all families simultaneously</p>	
Parent views are respected	ELE6.1.2	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.	<p>1. Through the enrolment process, we collect the cultural information & home language of the child, as well as the cultural background of each parent. This information was recently reviewed in a staff meeting, and consideration was given as to how we can incorporate these cultures more in everyday program and practice. We currently link cultures with programmed activities, menu items and conversations, and we intend to discuss cultural ways of celebrating as we get closer to Christmas.</p>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Met <input type="radio"/> Not Met
		<p>2. Shared decision making is critical to us at NWOOSH, as we recognise the parents as the most influential part of a child's life. An example of shared decision making is visible at the service as we discuss toileting information with families. Through working with families and children we have been able to suggest and refer, where appropriate, and put in place practical solutions to encourage independence and privacy, and to promote child wellbeing.</p>		
		<p>3. Through reflection on parental involvement in the learning cycle, we recognised that our paper version of the observation, planning and cycle process was not visible enough to families, and therefore parents were not interacting on a regular basis. We therefore introduced Kinderloop to promote 2-way communication. Parents are utilising the comments on observations and learning to share information from home to enrich the programming process.</p>		

			<p>4. We recognise a holistic understanding of the child is integral to a child's wellbeing. As such, communications are often had with children as to things that are impacting their life outside of NWOOSH. Recently a child shared with staff that they were not getting on well with their teacher. Through communications with the family and school, this was addressed and the child is now happier in themselves, and enjoying school more.</p> <p>5. Bushfires earlier this year sent significant smoke into our local area, and we had concern for our children diagnosed with asthma, particularly those triggered by smoke. We communicated with our families directly regarding their knowledge of their child's asthma, and one in particular with a recognised trigger of smoke was consulted in depth. We developed a strategy for her child's wellbeing with regards to appropriate times to be outside, and kept her informed through constant communication.</p>	
Families are supported	ELE6.1.3	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.	<p>1. We recognise the importance of linking with services to support the wellbeing of families at the centre. We therefore have a standing section of our newsletter known as our "community corner". This section of our newsletter highlights local events & services, thereby promoting healthy relationships in the local community, as per area 6 of our centre philosophy. Other items highlighted in Community Corner include support services for children & families, such as Beyond Blue & the Kids Helpline.</p> <p>2. Our website includes a section on community links. This provides families with direct access to support services such as Kids Helpline & Parentline, as well as links to parenting advice, such as the Raising Children Network, and childcare Subsidy information to assist in the claims process. We also have started posting community events in the news section of the website, to encourage parents to access local community events, such as sustainability courses through Thornleigh Recycling Centre.</p> <p>3. Our sign in and out area involves pamphlets of local businesses linked with NWOOSH. This may be for incursion providers, club providers, or information brochures about health such as immunisation and healthy eating. This information allows parents to find out information of available resources in the local area, and link to community organisations such as sporting groups for children to be involved in outside the service.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Met <input type="radio"/> Not Met</p>

			<p>4. Our staff participate in area OOSH meetings, known as KHOOSH. These meetings allow for staff members to be aware of available community resources, and share these with other OOSH professionals, as well as bring this information back to families.</p>	
			<p>5. NWOOSH information is readily accessible to parents through our website, Facebook page, newsletters & emails. In addition, we also post enrolment information, & vacation care information on the local community Facebook page to ensure the service information is available to those outside of NWPS. At the service, we have displays at our parents sign in and out area, including items such as our policies, menu and programs. Information for any new families is made available through the school also</p>	

Standard 6.2 Collaborative partnerships enhance children’s inclusion, learning and wellbeing.

Record up to five key evidence points and/or practices that are currently occurring at your service. Identify if these practices meet the National Quality Standard.

NOTE: You have already indicated your services compliance with the National Law and Regulations. This evidence should demonstrate key practices that reflect the elements in this National Quality Standard.

Concept	Element ID	Element	Identified evidence and key practices	Confirm
Transitions	ELE6.2.1	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.	1. At NWOOSH we are conscious that transitions happen both inside our environment and externally. As such, we plan our SKOOSH programs and activities to assist in preparing children for high school and adult life. This is best featured through our SKOOSH excursions, where we often utilise public transport, and focus on acceptable behaviour in the community. We also focus on supporting local business to instill values of community and belonging.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Met <input type="radio"/> Not Met
			2. At NWOOSH, our staff are regularly communicating with teachers, to ensure we are able to best cater to the needs of the children. This is particularly critical in the kindergarten year group. Teacher engagement can take the form of behaviour books where needed, notes on roll call sheets or individual conversations. We also provide teachers in kindergarten with a list of children attending each day to ensure their safe transition to OOSH.	
			3. As we move towards the end of each year, thought is given to the roll call and afternoon tea situation, particularly with regards to the transition of children from one area to another. To assist in this transition, staff discuss new process and procedures with families and communicate closely with the school and teachers. Children are given advance notice of any changes, and are able to have input into the transition process also. This helps to create consistency and comfort for the children	

			<p>4. To assist in a smooth transition between preschool settings & oosh, we communicate centre information with children of local preschools through their services. In addition, we encourage children from kindy to visit us in the January vac care, allowing them to settle into the environment when our numbers are smaller, separating the transition to school and OOSH into smaller parts. Communications with other EC settings allow us to be aware of child specific information for continuity.</p> <p>5. Our processes used to involve walking kindy children to and from oosh for the first school term of the year only. This was reviewed in conjunction with the school, teachers, P&C and staff, and a decision was made to walk to extend this throughout the year. This was implemented and allowed for more discussions and relationships with kindergarten children, and increased safety for these children. This has been particularly important this year when schooling has lacked continuity.</p>	
Access and participation	ELE6.2.2	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.	<p>1. In early 2019, we got in contact with our Inclusion Professional at KU. Through this process we were able to create a SIP, and also organise Inclusion support funding to resource the centre to better manage the process of including all children at the service. This has increased our capacity to care for all children in the NWOOSH environment, as well as be ready to assist others that may enter the environment in the future. We have also discussed having an "Inclusion Lead" in our staffing team.</p> <p>2. We have recently commenced communications with the school counsellor with regards to access and participation of children in the program. This partnership helps us to ensure we are consistent across the OOSH and school services, and also provides staff with professional guidance, to encourage their ability to participate at NWOOSH. The counsellor has also offered some training for staff members, which we will be organising in the coming weeks.</p> <p>3. Inclusion is identified in Area 2 of our philosophy. In line with this value, we consulted with Inclusion Professionals to participate in an inclusion training session. Staff identified what inclusion means to them and noticed commonalities across the group. The training has encouraged us to reflect more on inclusive practice. E.g. when implementing COVID changes we looked at whether we needed to make changes to the plan to ensure this wouldn't disadvantage any child or family at the service.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Met <input type="radio"/> Not Met</p>

			<p>4. Through conversations at a KHOOSH area meeting, and with Inclusion Professionals, we recognised the importance of developing a Reconciliation Action Plan in our centre. Our staffing team investigated the process behind this, and brainstormed ways that we can acknowledge and embed this in our centre operations. Our first step with this has been to develop our Acknowledgment of Country. Our children and staff participate in this during roll call time each session</p>	
			<p>5. At NWOOSH we recognise that partnerships with families are integral to supporting children at the centre. Through the introduction of Kinderloop, we have been able to share the child's current interactions with the program more easily as well as programming directions for expansion. This has allowed parents to add comments or feedback on the posts, and continue learning experiences at home, thereby acting in partnership with the centre to support the child.</p>	
Community engagement	ELE6.2.3	The service builds relationships and engages with its local community.	<p>1. NWOOSH recognises that through engagement with the community, we encourage a child and family to feel a sense of belonging and purpose. We have a strong excursion program, both in our Vacation Care offering, and through our Skoosh program. Children participate in local excursions such as Brickpit park, Brickpit sports stadium and Thornleigh Mini Golf. Children also see staff engaged with other local businesses outside of OOSH times, adding to their feeling and understanding of community.</p>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Met <input type="radio"/> Not Met
		<p>2. To build relationships with other children's services, along with families who are not yet part of NWOOSH, we have a strong enrolment communication plan. This plan involves communication with Directors of EC services, who in turn share information with their parents. Information is inclusive of factsheets regarding enrolment and orientation processes and opening dates, and general centre information such as vacation care programs.</p>		
		<p>3. Community relationships are important to us at NWOOSH, as they allow for us to support a wider range of members through our service. Facebook has a community minded page, that highlights important information and happenings in the community, and allows businesses and services to post once per week. At NWOOSH, we utilise this Facebook page to inform members of the local community about our vacation care program, along with important information such as enrolment opening dates.</p>		

			<p>4. Through safety week each term, we partner with services in the local community to encourage awareness and knowledge of safety across a range of topics. We have engaged services such as WIRES, SES, Fire Brigade and the local vet clinic to name just a few. Children enjoy this engagement with the community, as do our community representatives.</p>	
			<p>5. Through our goal of being a more sustainable centre, we have been utilising community services to assist. We have recently begun taking soft plastics to Thornleigh Recycling Centre & have also spoken this year about engaging with them to allow a mini excursion for children to see the process & learn more about the recycling initiatives in the community. Unfortunately with COVID, we have not been able to see this to fruition, but we intend to follow this up once we are able</p>	

Quality Area Six: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

Standard 6.1 - Respectful relationships with families are developed & maintained & families are supported in their parenting role.

Standard 6.2 - Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning & wellbeing.

Collaborative partnerships with families and communities provides significant foundation in both practice and planning cycle so that quality care can be provided on an individual basis. These relationships are invaluable in understanding the ever-developing needs, interests, skills, knowledge, strengths and culture of each child which is the foundation of our planning cycles/program. For our centre to ensure care is delivered at a high-quality level of service it is vital to reflect upon current practice regarding these partnerships, recognise areas of improvement and develop S.M.A.R.T. goals to implement these changes. The focuses of improvement for this area include:

- Supporting children and families at drop-off times as it was reflected that the implications of COVID-19 resulted in a change in routine for these moments of connection and communication. The importance of these exchanges was highlighted in end of session debriefs wherein the need for educators' support in these moments was realized.

Progress Notes: Educators on "gate" duty now have a role in reminding children to do final check in particularly during drop-off.

With the ongoing nature of COVID-19 and its impacts upon day-to-day operations discussions have begun regarding the implications of this upon new families and kindergarten children. These ideas include updating the kindergarten orientation video as well as drop off & pick up procedures and use of facilities to ensure families' confidence and peace of mind.

- Upon reflection of previous transitions from the NWOOSH K-3 age group into the SKOOSH age group, educators suggested the need to increase support for both families and children of Year 4s through visual and verbal narration of this transition.

Progress Notes: It was brainstormed by educators to offer an orientation video similar to the successful Kindergarten video that enables a visual learning opportunity to become familiar with the next stage of their NWOOSH journey including routines, benefits, & responsibilities.

- From a staff's observation it was determined that whilst educators are engaged with the ongoing operations of the centre and play an essential role of the feedback cycle, they were not receiving the same information which was delivered to families. This caused educators concern as they expressed desire to provide consistency with families.

Progress Notes: Management concurred with this observation and agreed that the delivery of information be reconsidered to ensure consistency.