

File Reference:  
(if applicable)



Australian Children's  
Education & Care  
Quality Authority

# National Quality Standard Assessment and Rating Report

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Service Name **Greenbrook Kindergarten**

Service Approval Number **SE-00003905**

Provider Name **Greenbrook Kindergarten Inc**

Provider Approval Number **PR-00001553**

Assessment & Rating Number **ASR-00033540**

Report Status

Date Report  
Completed **13 May 2022**

# About this report

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## *Purpose*

The purpose of this report is to give the approved provider notice of the outcome of the rating assessment and the rating levels for their education and care service (under section 136 of the Education and Care Services National Law).

The goals of the report are to provide:

- an assessment of the education and care service against the National Quality Standard (NQS) and the National Regulations
- the reasons for rating the service at each level
- support for the ongoing quality improvement of the education and care service

## *The rating system*

The National Regulations prescribe the rating levels within the assessment and rating process (regulation 57). The rating levels are:

- Exceeding National Quality Standard
- Meeting National Quality Standard
- Working Towards National Quality Standard
- Significant Improvement Required

Further information on how ratings are determined is available in the [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#) (Chapter 3: Part 3-Assessment and rating process) available on the ACECQA website at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au).

# Assessment and rating visit details

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## Type of service

Long Day Care  Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)

Family Day Care  Preschool/Kindergarten

Nominated Supervisor **Kirsten Lang**

Educational Leader **Kirsten Lang**

Primary Contact  
(for assessment & rating) **Kirsten Lang**

Quality Improvement Plan  
Date Received **21 April 2021**

## Visit

Date **5 April 2022**

## Authorised officer

Name **Melissa Thompson**

## Further information

Greenbrook Kindergarten is a single unit purpose-built funded kindergarten run by a voluntary parent committee of management, in a community of many different cultural and language backgrounds, including newly arrived families to Australia.

The service has been operating for 48 years and provides funded three-year-old and four-year-old kindergarten across the week.

Nominated supervisor Kirsten Lang and Administrative officer Stacey Maxwell participated in the leadership discussion and a separate phone conversation was conducted with incoming person with management or control Lisa Shortis.

The service was previously assessed as Exceeding the National Quality Standards in 2015.

**Contact details for the service:**

- Service address: 31 Lowalde Drive, Epping Vic 3076
- Telephone number: 0394013083
- Email address: greenbrook.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

**Other details:**

- Persons with management or control: Lisa Shortis (incoming)/ Stephanie Tonkin (outgoing)
- Number of approved places: 30
- Number of children in attendance during the visit: 17
- Ages of children in attendance at the service: 3-5 years

# Summary comments

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Greenbrook Kindergarten has received a rating of **Exceeding National Quality Standards**.

Embedded practices, critical reflection and meaningful engagement with families and the community was evident across the service. Educators created a supportive, inclusive, and respectful environment, and demonstrated a deep understanding of individual children's and family's needs.

Children actively engaged in the stimulating learning experiences within the child-centred play-based curriculum, with the respectful encouragement and responsive teaching by educators. Detailed information about children's participation in the educational program, and progress towards their collaboratively planned learning and development goals with families, was available on Story Park, and exchanged with families and allied health professionals.

Most educators had been at the service for several years, and educators worked collaboratively across both the three and four-year-old groups creating continuity and consistency. The service philosophy was viewed as a living document that was embedded throughout all areas of the service. The service engaged in ongoing critical reflection and had adapted and evolved practices in response to the challenges presented by the pandemic, including at a governance and leadership level to ensure ongoing quality service provision.

As part of ongoing continuous improvement, the leadership team and educators who work at the service are encouraged to reflect on the Child Safe Standards in particular the new Victorian Child Safe Standards which will commence in Victoria on 1 July 2022. Consider how an ongoing commitment to children's safety influences the design and delivery of the educational program is one place to start.

Further information and a range of resources and guides are available for services to further reflect on, support and promote children's safety. [The Commission for Children and Young People](#) (CCYP) has information on the [revised CSS](#), including [comparative tables](#) and [FAQs](#).

Continuing to maintain a service culture of critical reflection, and openness will support the service in their continuous quality improvement journey and the service goal of maintaining an exceeding rating with the National Quality Standards.

## Quality Area 1 – Educational program and practice

Standard 1.1	The educational program enhances each child’s learning and development.	
1.1.1	Curriculum decision making contributes to each child’s learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.	Met
1.1.2	Each child’s current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.	Met
1.1.3	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child’s learning.	Met

### Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 1.1

Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

### Standard 1.1 is rated

**Exceeding NQS**

### Evidence for Standard 1.1

The Early Years Learning Framework ‘Being, Belonging, Becoming’ and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, were embedded in educators curriculum decisions. Educators consistently supported children’s identity and sense of belonging and demonstrated this through a ‘We belong together’ display book for the group which included a page with each child’s along with a ‘Our families’ photo album which was available on the bookshelf for children to enjoy. Educators also supported children’s developing literacy skills through guiding children in how to begin to write their names on their work.

Educators consistently collected information about each child from their families and from allied health professionals. The service goal of creating a culturally inclusive environment was evident through representation of the cultural backgrounds of the service community including Aboriginal culture, in various items within the educational program including books, pictures, dramatic play equipment and fabrics, puzzles, and posters displayed throughout the service.

Children’s learning was maximised through the flexible organisation of routines. Children moved between the indoor and outdoor learning environments engaging in experiences of their choice when concurrent play indoors was available. Children were able to choose when to stop to refuel their bodies during progressive mealtimes, or to take a rest based on their individual needs and to support their active and positive participation in learning.

**In addition:***Practice is embedded in service operations*

Educators were committed to providing an educational program that was responsive and reflective of children. Across the service, educators consistently demonstrated high-quality practice by linking curriculum decision making to the approved learning frameworks and the service philosophy. Educators understood each child's current knowledge, ideas, cultures and interests and supported children to explore, ask questions, and express their ideas through projects and visual representations.

*Practice was informed by critical reflection*

Educators informally reflected daily, and formally in a weekly meeting, making modifications and additions to the program as required. For example, educators had reflected on the challenge for children with English as a second language, sitting through a large group time discussion on the mat, and removed large group times from the session routine, and facilitated responsive discussions with small groups of children.

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

Educators collected information about children through collaborative relationships with allied health professionals working with children and families, to support the development of collaborative learning goals for each child. Through engagement with Wurundjeri Council the service had reflected on how to respectfully share Aboriginal songs and artifacts in the program with children.

**Quality Improvement Plan notes for Standard 1.1**

The service may like to consider:

- Continuing the service commitment to cultural competence in all aspects of service practice and delivery [educators guide to the early years learning framework for australia 2.pdf \(acecqa.gov.au\)](#).
- Engaging and extending relationships with various cultural groups within the community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups, to enhance the educational program.

Standard 1.2	Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development.	
1.2.1	Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.	Met
1.2.2	Educators respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback.	Met
1.2.3	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.	Met

Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 1.2	
Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

<b>Standard 1.2 is rated</b>	<b>Exceeding NQS</b>
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Evidence for Standard 1.2
<p>Educators were thoughtful and intentional in their responses and engagement with children as they extended on children's learning through their interactions by asking open ended questions to encourage children's problem solving, creativity, experimentation, and innovative thinking skills, and providing feedback. For example, educators used instruction, demonstrating, and role modelling skills in how to hold a pencil to write a letter, and how to use various materials available in baskets to make pictures in wooden frames.</p> <p>Children's agency was embedded within the curriculum. Children freely moved around the indoor and outdoor learning environments engaging in experiences of their choice, including when a child asked to play indoors, and the educator opened the door to facilitate concurrent indoor/outdoor play. Educators respectfully supported children's choices, including recording their voices and ideas for the future. For example, when preparing the garden beds and digging in the coffee grinds, the educator recorded the vegetables and fruits the children identified they would like to plant.</p> <p><b>In addition:</b></p> <p><i>Practice is embedded in service operations</i> Educators demonstrated embedded intentional teaching practices and consistently challenged children to extend their thinking and learning. During snack time a conversation between a child and educator about what a smoothy was, resulted in a rich discussion about fruit and vegetables and a plan in place to make smoothies as part of the program.</p> <p><i>Practice was informed by critical reflection</i> Educators critically reflected individually and as a team, on teaching skills and strategies for facilitating and extending children's learning. The different techniques were displayed on the wall</p>



indoors to support and prompt educators when working directly with children.

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

Allied health professionals shared strategies to support children's participation through goal setting and contributing to children's individual learning and support plans. Collaboration with educators through visits to the service, case plan meetings, and sharing of information following external appointments between families and allied health professionals also contributed. Educators implemented recommended teaching strategies and planned regular reviews of progress to consistently inform practice and support their interactions with children.

### **Quality Improvement Plan notes for Standard 1.2**

The service may like to consider:

- Continuing to enhance knowledge and practice of all educators through continuing to engage with professional resources and programs including [Early Abilities Based Learning and Education Support \(Early ABLES\)](#) [Early ABLES professional learning \(education.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Standard 1.3	Educators and co-ordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.	
1.3.1	Each child's learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection.	Met
1.3.2	Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.	Met
1.3.3	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.	Met

### Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 1.3

Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

**Standard 1.3 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

### Evidence for Standard 1.3

An effective cycle of planning was embedded within the educational program. Educators recorded information about children's participation through individual and group learning stories and completed assessments of each child's learning and development. Individual learning goals for each child were developed and reviewed collaboratively with families, and group goals and learning were planned and analysed.

Critical reflection practices were embedded in the educational program for individual children and the group. Educators met weekly to reflect on the educational program, teaching and learning, including individual children's needs, and reflections were regularly documented on Story Park.

Story Park provided an accessible platform for educators to embed sharing the planned educational program, and descriptions and analysis of each child's and the groups participation, learning and development. Educators also ensured they personally touched base with each family face to face, on the phone or via email communication at least once or twice per term to discuss children's progress.

#### **In addition:**

##### *Practice is embedded in service operations*

An embedded cycle of assessing, planning, and documenting the educational program was consistent across both the three and four-year-old groups and shared with families on Story Park. All educators consistently contributed to the planning, implementation, and critical reflection and documentation of the educational program, and the ideas and reflections were consolidated and regularly updated on Story Park to share with families.

##### *Practice was informed by critical reflection*

Processes for planning and documenting the educational program had evolved and transitioned from paper based to web based using the Story Park App. This occurred following critical reflection on how

educators could ensure communication about content and implementation of the program and how it related to each child, was consistently made available to families during the pandemic.

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

Families provided positive feedback on the change to electronic sharing of information about the educational program, and the service subsequently have included individual learning goals and support plans on Story Park, to enable families to log in and exchange information with allied health professionals during appointments. Educators also followed up with families in person when they had not recently engaged in verbal or electronic conversation about their child's participation and learning or via Story Park, to maintain regular engagement.

## Quality Area 1 summary

For Quality Area 1, is there a significant risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children?

No

Regulation 62(2) prescribes that an Exceeding National Quality Standard rating may only be given for Quality Area 1 for an education and care service that educates and cares for children who are in the year that is 2 years before grade 1 of school if the service either provides a preschool program or has a documented arrangement with an approved provider of another education and care service to provide a preschool program and informs parents of this arrangement.

Does the service educate and care for children who are in the year that is 2 years before grade 1 of school?

Yes

Does the service have a preschool program? A preschool program means an early childhood educational program delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher.

Yes

**Quality Area 1 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

## Quality Area 2 – Children’s health and safety

Standard 2.1	Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted.	
2.1.1	Each child’s wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child’s need for sleep, rest and relaxation.	Met
2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.	Met
2.1.3	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.	Met

### Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 2.1

Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

### Standard 2.1 is rated

**Exceeding NQS**

### Evidence for Standard 2.1

The service promoted each child’s health and wellbeing, and age appropriate opportunities for rest and relaxation were provided. Educators consistently promoted and supported children’s wellbeing. Educators respectfully asked children how they were feeling to support their developing awareness of their body temperature and the weather, their energy levels and their bodies needs for food, water and rest.

Processes for managing illness, injury and effective hygiene practices were in place and consistently managed. Educators supported children to take increased responsibility for their own health and hygiene, discussed basic health routines, encouraged healthy eating and promoted physical activity throughout the program. A COVIDSafe plan was in place and the service had been implementing a range of risk-mitigation strategies such as external gate drop off and pick up and educators wearing masks when not working directly with children.

#### In addition:

##### *Practice is embedded in service operations*

Practices to promote and support children’s health and physical activity were embedded within day-to-day operation of the service. Educators consistently supported children to actively engage in physical games and activities in the educational program, and management of children’s health and wellbeing. Healthy eating was further supported when children freely ate the vegetables and fruits growing in the service gardens when they wanted. Posters promoting healthy eating were

displayed throughout the service and information was made available to families about healthy foods and recipes from Starting Blocks, Raising Children Network, and Eat for health.

*Practice was informed by critical reflection*

Educators had critically reflected on promoting and supporting children's health and wellbeing and the benefits of increased outdoor play during covid-19. Modifications were made to the structure of the program to be an 'all-weather program' as a permanent ongoing feature. Information about the all-weather program was provided to families during orientation including that wet weather clothing and footwear is encouraged for children as part of the outdoors in all types of weather program.

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

The service maintained a relationship with DPV, a local hub of health professionals, and facilitated onsite dental and podiatry services. They also maintained relationships with private audiology, speech, and dental services who offered onsite screening for children prior to the service covid safe plan restricting onsite visitors.

Standard 2.2	Each child is protected.	
2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.	Met
2.2.2	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.	Met
2.2.3	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.	Met

### Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 2.2

Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

**Standard 2.2 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

### Evidence for Standard 2.2

Practices to protect children's safety were embedded throughout the service. Regular daily safety checks of the environment were completed, any hazards removed, and maintenance requested. Educators consistently collaborated to ensure children were actively supervised both indoors and outdoors at all times.

Incident and emergency management practices were in place and regularly rehearsed. The service had rehearsed a partial off-site emergency on several days in term one, providing opportunities for educators and children in each group to become familiar with the process and evaluation of the effectiveness of the process in relation to the dynamics and abilities of each group.

All staff had completed online mandatory reporting training, and documented processes were in place, including contact numbers displayed for educators to respond to an at-risk child. The service was also aware of the new Child Safe Standards and the Commission for Children and Young People website for accessing resources and online training.

#### **In addition:**

##### *Practice is embedded in service operations*

Educators regularly talked about consent with children including personal privacy and sought permission before taking photos of children explaining how the photos will be used. Before assisting children with personal care needs educators asked permission and offered assistance, and when changing nappies provided assistance in pairs.

##### *Practice was informed by critical reflection*

Educators critically reflected on how they could improve safety measures across the service.

For example, after rehearsing emergency evacuations, the educators identified the strollers they had available to assist children who required additional assistance to evacuate were not large enough, and the service purchased specialist strollers to assist evacuation for taller and heavier children.

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

The service promoted measures to protect children's safety with families, by providing families with information about emergency rehearsals conducted at the service. They also included the visual card for emergencies educators used with non-verbal and non-English speaking children, to support families to continue discussing emergencies with their children at home.



## Quality Area 2 summary

For Quality Area 2, is there a significant risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children?

No

**Quality Area 2 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

## Quality Area 3 – Physical environment

<b>Standard 3.1</b>	<b>The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.</b>	
3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.	Met
3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.	Met

### Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 3.1

Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

**Standard 3.1 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

### Evidence for Standard 3.1

The design of the purpose-built building and outdoor area facilitated the successful operation of the service. The bathroom was accessible for all children from the indoor and outdoor areas, and an undercover area supported uninterrupted outdoor access in wet or hot weather. An office space and kitchen area were also immediately accessible from the children's room, and an entrance gate into the large open outdoor area facilitated external drop off and pickup outside of the children's indoor light filled learning environment.

Effective processes for checking safety and maintaining cleanliness were in place, including for requesting maintenance. Educators supported children to actively engage in wiping the meals area after they ate and tidying learning environments, they had been using in preparation for educators resetting the environment for the next person.

#### **In addition:**

##### *Practice is embedded in service operations*

Embedded systems were in place for requesting premises maintenance from Whittlesea Council in addition to the annual scheduled visit. Processes for requesting equipment maintenance through the committee of management, ensured that the premises was always fit for purpose and well maintained. The cleaners visited twice weekly, and the service had a committee run working bee twice a year.

##### *Practice was informed by critical reflection*

Educators had reflected on the supervision challenges presented by an enclosed cubby house and had successfully requested it be replaced with an open sided structure with a floor and roof, to enable clear supervision and maintain protection from sun and rain.

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

Families provided feedback through the service survey about the age of some equipment and the committee had created a plan for replacing and updating older equipment.

Standard 3.2	<b>The service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning.</b>	
3.2.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.	Met
3.2.2	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.	Met
3.2.3	The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.	Met

### Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 3.2

Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

**Standard 3.2 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

### Evidence for Standard 3.2

The design of the open plan inclusive environments promoted access and participation of all children both indoors and outdoors. Clear pathways between learning areas, with space for children to explore and create invited active and sustained play. Children actively engaged in quality learning experiences that were enhanced by the inclusion of both natural and manmade elements. Baskets of open-ended natural materials and recycled materials were available on shelves for children to use flexibly in any space. There were shaded areas outdoors, garden beds, trees, and plants, surrounding, and within the play spaces.

Educators consistently promoted play-based learning and exploration through the design of the quality learning experiences, and wide selection of open-ended materials available both indoors and outdoors. The children independently engaged with collected items and recycled items. For example, children utilised the magnifying glasses to explore the natural outdoor environment and investigated beetles, a child also collected rocks to show educators and peers, and the educator supported children to take photos of their discoveries with the camera to add to their rock collection photos for the 'Thinking Book'.

Environmental responsibility and care for the environment was embedded in everyday practices. Children actively engaged in choosing the vegetables and fruits to grow, prepared garden beds for planting and cared for the growing plants. Children also composted and feed the worms with their meal and snack time food waste. Recycled materials were utilised within learning experiences, including families being invited to contribute recycled boxes for craft. Educators also fostered and nurtured children's respect for the environment when talking with the children about where they would like to leave their collected rocks on Wurundjeri country after photographing them. The children chose the sandpit.

**In addition:***Practice is embedded in service operations*

The service environment was consistently inclusive with open ended materials and loose parts providing flexibility for children to use the materials of choice in the way that they chose in their play-based learning both indoors and outdoors. Some children created with shells and flowers in the sand pit, and other children engaged in play with trucks and spades. Another group of children engaged in discussion with an educator about the features of the animals' bodies that they were playing with on a mat, including the elephant's long trunk.

*Practice was informed by critical reflection*

Educators reflected on the layout of the environments and the design of the learning experiences to ensure they were engaging and responsive and made modifications to the spaces in the program as required to promote inclusivity. Educators also reflected on making environmentally appropriate choices, including searching for alternatives to plastic straws and metal glitter, and finding more sustainable alternatives.

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

Educators actively sought feedback and ideas for ensuring the environment was inclusive from early intervention professionals and the Pre School field Officer during visits to the service. For example, ensuring there was sufficient floor space for children to lie on their stomachs on the floor in play, and ensuring clear thoroughfares for children with mobility challenges to safely move around the environments.

### Quality Area 3 summary

For Quality Area 3, is there a significant risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children?

No

**Quality Area 3 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

## Quality Area 4 – Staffing arrangements

Standard 4.1 Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development.		
4.1.1	The organisation of educators across the service supports children's learning and development.	Met
4.1.2	Every effort is made for children to experience continuity of educators at the service.	Met

### Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 4.1

Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

**Standard 4.1 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

### Evidence for Standard 4.1

Children's learning and development was enhanced through the organisation of consistent and familiar diploma qualified educators, who worked collaboratively with both the three and four-year-old kindergarten teachers. The roster was also organised to facilitate each educator to have non-contact time when they were not working directly with children, to contribute to the cycle of planning through observations, reflections, and preparing experiences, and for staff to meet regularly together as a team to reflect and plan enhancing the educational program for children.

Continuity was consistently supported when the service had a number of long-term staff members, who worked in both the three and four-year-old sessions, and staff worked to cover each other's absences where possible. A regular educator worked to cover lunch breaks, and the ECT's relieved each other providing opportunities for developing relationships with all children. This in turn supported the three-year-old children transitioning to the four-year-old group at the beginning of the year with familiar educators. If relievers outside of the service were required, the service had a relationship with an agency and requested familiar educators when possible, and a documented induction process was in place for all staff new to the service.

#### **In addition:**

##### *Practice is embedded in service operations*

The service considered the arrangement of staff members, ensuring continuity that responded to the identified needs of children and families attending the service. The service collaborated with educators in the design of the roster and had structured the staffing to ensure consistent staff worked in each group, covered lunch breaks, and staff had time together each week for group meetings and regular time for team meetings.

*Practice was informed by critical reflection*

Educators had reflected on the organisation of educators and the impact of covid-19 on their wellbeing and the importance of time away from work and modified the staff roster to enable each staff member to have one day off per week. All educators had reported the positive benefits on wellbeing of these changes.

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

The services approach to structuring the roster ensured that a familiar educator was always available to engage with families at drop off and pick up and support children transitioning to and from the service. Families had provided positive feedback about the continuity and consistency of educators, with some families returning with siblings of children who had previously attended the service, and who had moved out of the area, but chose to travel back to the service.



<b>Standard 4.2</b>	<b>Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical.</b>	
4.2.1	Management, educators and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills.	Met
4.2.2	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.	Met

<b>Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 4.2</b>	
Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

<b>Standard 4.2 is rated</b>	<b>Exceeding NQS</b>
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**Evidence for Standard 4.2**

Mutual respect and collaborative practices of educators were embedded in all interactions. Educators met weekly to critically reflect on the educational program and practices, sharing and exploring questions and challenges, ideas, knowledge, and resources. The ECT from the three-year-old group was in the final year of completing a bachelor's degree and regularly shared theory and practice examples with the team, promoting a culture of respectful and professional inquiry, learning and development.

The ECA code of ethics, UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, legislation, National Quality Standards, learning frameworks, and service policies procedures, consistently guided the service operations, and were embedded in educator's day to day practices. The rights of the child were forefront and evident in all educators' decisions and interactions when they consistently respectfully asked permission of children when offering help or support.

**In addition:**

*Practice is embedded in service operations*  
 Educators consistently demonstrated professionalism in their roles, collaborating respectfully and striving to interact ethically, promoting a positive and supportive atmosphere. Practices and interactions aligned with the service philosophy, policies, procedures, and code of conduct.

*Practice was informed by critical reflection*  
 Service pedagogy was based on four theoretical perspectives including Reggio Emilia, Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model, and post structural perspectives. Educators used these theories as a basis to critically reflect upon all aspects of their practice. For example, using the Ecological model to reflect on the wider context of children's worlds, including their family and cultural community, to inform educators practice and interactions with children and families.

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

All educators participated in critical reflection both as individuals and as a team. The team regularly discussed contemporary resources, theories, and practice ideas. Team members considered the innovative ideas and if/how they may work within the service community context. The service had also begun to ask families about any suggestions/feedback in planning for increasing the hours for the three-year-old funded kindergarten program for the following year.

### Quality Area 4 summary

For Quality Area 4, is there a significant risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children?

No

**Quality Area 4 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

## Quality Area 5 – Relationships with children

Standard 5.1	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.	
5.1.1	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.	Met
5.1.2	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.	Met

### Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 5.1

Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

**Standard 5.1 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

### Evidence for Standard 5.1

Educators were responsive and engaged with children at children’s levels, promoting supportive relationships, and a safe and secure environment for all children. Children had recently commenced at the service, and some were also new to early learning settings, and educators discussed strategies to support the children prior to and on their arrival and demonstrated a considered understanding of each child.

Children’s dignity and rights were embedded in the educational program, through the consistent promotion of children voices and opportunities to make choices. Educators consistently sought children’s consent by asking if they could help them or if they needed any help, before assisting or approaching them. For example, educators gained consent before taking photos, and supporting them with personal care needs.

#### **In addition:**

##### *Practice is embedded in service operations*

Educators consistently demonstrated acknowledgement and commitment to the rights of children through respectful and equitable relationships, which supported each child to feel secure and included within the service. Children’s positive responses to the educators indicated that this type of interaction was authentic and embedded practice.

##### *Practice was informed by critical reflection*

Educators reflected on their role and the importance of building relationships with children and their families as the main goal for the first term, to support children to feel secure and implemented using picture cards to support communication with children from non-English speaking backgrounds and non-verbal children.

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

Educators talked with allied health professionals supporting children and families during enrolment and in preparation for orientation about strategies educators could put in place to support children to transition successfully into the service.

<b>Standard 5.2</b>	<b>Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.</b>	
5.2.1	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.	Met
5.2.2	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.	Met

<b>Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 5.2</b>	
Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

<b>Standard 5.2 is rated</b>	<b>Exceeding NQS</b>
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**Evidence for Standard 5.2**

Children were provided with regular opportunities to collaborate during play with peers and educators. Collaborative and flexible learning experiences were consistently provided throughout the program for parallel and cooperative play. Children demonstrated developing friendships, and sought out their peers to play alongside each other, and together in small groups. Children confidentially sought the support of educators when they needed help to share and take turns.

Educators observed and offered support to assist in problem solving and negotiation. Posters and cards outlining 'The Zones of Regulation' were displayed throughout the service, and educators used them as an emotional intelligence tool to support children's developing autonomy in learning to identify, understand, and regulate their emotions and behaviours, and in communicating with their peers and educators. Children actively identified the colour and expression in describing emotions in the zones and with the support of educators.

**In addition:**

*Practice is embedded in service operations*  
 Educators consistently used the zones of regulation to support children's developing agency in self-regulation, responding to others, and managing conflict with dignity and consideration of children's rights. For example, a child approached an educator to express concern about their friend being in the red zone, and the educator thanked the child for looking out for their friend. The educator was able to talk with the other child individually about their emotions, respecting their dignity, and the child identified what they could do to move back to the green zone and re-joined the group.

*Practice was informed by critical reflection*  
 Educators reflected on how they could support children's developing skills in the zones of regulation. Educators reflected on the support needs of individual children and devised strategies to assist children identifying their emotions, and steps they as educators could take to support children to build self-regulation skills.

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

Educators engaged with families and allied health professionals about each child's ability to regulate their emotions at home, and the family's capacity to support the child to do so, as a foundation for supporting each child's emotional and behavioural regulation at the service. Educators shared collaboratively created individualised behaviour guidance plans with families and allied health professionals to support a consistent approach across both home and the service.

### Quality Area 5 summary

For Quality Area 5, is there a significant risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children?

No

**Quality Area 5 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**



## Quality Area 6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Standard 6.1	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.	
6.1.1	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.	Met
6.1.2	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.	Met
6.1.3	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.	Met

### Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 6.1

Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

**Standard 6.1 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

### Evidence for Standard 6.1

Respectful relationships with families were embedded in service practices. Families contributed and were involved in service decisions at their level of comfort, ranging from providing responses to surveys, feedback on draft policies, to being actively involved in fundraising or as member of the service committee of management.

Families were acknowledged as children's first teachers and their wealth of knowledge about their child supported educators to develop a shared understanding of individual children. Educators regularly engaged with parents in person, on the phone or via email and Story Park to discuss children's learning and wellbeing, to learn about the family's culture and what that meant for each family.

The service website and Story Park App provided current information about the service for families, and educators regularly shared updates, resources, links to services within the local community and information about local events to support parenting and family wellbeing. Information in other languages was shared when available, translated through an App or language Loop when needed, and communicated by staff, other families, or family members, where appropriate, to support the sharing of information with families for whom English was not their first language.

#### **In addition:**

*Practice is embedded in service operations*

Embedded systems were in place for developing and maintaining supportive relationships with families, and to support family's involvement in the service. The service was continuing to build on

opportunities for families to participate actively in the educational program, and in events at the service including community evenings, within the covid-19 context and at family comfort levels.

*Practice was informed by critical reflection*

Educators had critically reflected on how they could minimise paper-based documents follow covid-19 and exchange and share information about children with families and decided to use the Story Park App. Educators also reflected on the importance of not generalising culture, and the importance of taking time to understand what culture means to each family. Educators are working building relationships with families to facilitate the sharing of their culture with the service.

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

Families have provided positive feedback on the benefits of the introduction of electronic communication and continue to engage with the online learning stories, individual goals for their children, and the survey response rate had also increased. Families are invited to participate in the educational program and share what their culture means to them and how they celebrate their culture in their family. For example, a family shared their Indian cultural celebration through an activity with flowers with the children.

### **Quality Improvement Plan notes for Standard 6.1**

The service may wish to consider:

- Continuing to resume and explore building on opportunities for family's to actively participate in and share knowledge and skills within the educational program on site, in accordance with covid-19 restrictions and the service covid safe plan. The service is encouraged to continue to explore creative strategies for establishing and extending remote participation opportunities, in respecting families concerns about attending in person or inability to attend, and possibilities for remote participation.

Standard 6.2	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.	
6.2.1	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.	Met
6.2.2	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.	Met
6.2.3	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.	Met

Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 6.2	
Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

<b>Standard 6.2 is rated</b>	<b>Exceeding NQS</b>
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Evidence for Standard 6.2
<p>Established relationships with local schools supported continuity for children and the sharing of information supported a collaborative transition process for children and families. Individual transition plans for children transitioning into the service were prepared when needed in collaboration with their parents and allied health professionals. Consistent staffing and embedded documentation processes within the service also supported continuity for children transitioning from three-year-old kindergarten to four-year-old kindergarten.</p> <p>Ongoing collaborative partnerships with allied health professionals, the preschool field officer, kindergarten inclusion support, early intervention support services and children's families, supported the effective inclusion and participation of children within the educational program. Individualised support plans were created and implemented for children, additional workers worked in the service supporting children, allied health professionals visited children whilst attending the service, teachers attended case plan meetings, and referrals were made, and assessments supported.</p> <p>The service had well established relationships with various services and organisations within the local community including local primary and secondary schools, health services and businesses. The service was using their School Readiness Funding to foster authentic engagement in community projects and looking at ways to engage and get back out into the community post the pandemic restrictions.</p> <p><b>In addition:</b></p> <p><i>Practice is embedded in service operations</i> Well established processes for supporting transitions into and from the service were</p>

continuing including visits by children to schools and by school students and foundation teachers to the service as part of the transition to school support. For example, weekly visits from Grade six leaders, hosting a year 9 student as part of community volunteering program, and regular excursions to the local primary school to support the children becoming familiar with the school environment had been conducted. The four-year-old kindergarten teacher also had re-commenced conducting home visits to families to support the rapport and building of collaborative relationships with families. The service used Language Loop to support families for whom English was a second language in completing paperwork and applications, including NDIS forms, and school applications

*Practice was informed by critical reflection*

The service had critically reflected on importance of maintaining collaborative partnerships during covid pandemic and adapted communication to via, email and phone with schools to continue to support children's transitions to school. The service had also enabled parents to share children's individual learning plans with allied health professionals by placing them on the Story Park App to facilitate sharing of information about children's learning and development goals and progress efficiently and effectively.

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

Families' engagement with online sharing of information, and in children's individualised learning plans, has enabled transparent up to date information to be all stored in the one place. It is easily accessible on Story Park, supporting and enhancing children's inclusion, learning, and wellbeing. Educators also record notes from meetings and conversations in the App, enabling them to be accessible by parents and educators as a record of actions agreed/ discussed to refer back to.

## **Quality Improvement Notes for Standard 6.2**

The service may like to consider:

- Continuing commitment to extend community engagement opportunities post covid, including with cultural groups and through the Community Engagement Project and School Readiness Funding.
- Continuing the service commitment to inclusive practices for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The service may like to consider exploring reconciliation and [Narragunnawali - Professional Learning](#) and [Narragunnawali - Curriculum Resources](#)

### Quality Area 6 summary

For Quality Area 6, is there a significant risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children?

No

**Quality Area 6 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

## Quality Area 7 – Governance and leadership

<b>Standard 7.1 Governance supports the operation of a quality service.</b>		
7.1.1	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations	Met
7.1.2	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.	Met
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision making and operation of the service.	Met

### Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 7.1

Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

### Standard 7.1 is rated

**Exceeding NQS**

### Evidence for Standard 7.1

The service philosophy was a collaborative document drafted by educators, using ideas and feedback gathered by educators in their interactions with children, families, and the service community, including the committee of management.

Embedded systems guided the management of risk and operation of the quality service. Comprehensive policies and procedures outlined processes and supported effective decision making. The nominated supervisor was responsible for the day-to-day direct delivery of the kindergarten program, the administration officer was responsible for day-to-day office administration and records tasks, a bookkeeping service was employed to manage fees and wages, and the committee of management as the approved provider was responsible for overseeing and making decisions about the overall operation of the service, including regulatory compliance, administration, direct service delivery, and finances.

Detailed position descriptions provided a comprehensive overview of the responsibilities of each role within the committee and for each staff member of the service. Effective systems, including processes for handover and induction were in place for any changes in roles of committee members and staff members. Reports were regularly provided to the committee of management by the bookkeeping service, from the nominated supervisor, and the administration officer, supporting the committee to maintain informed and able to make decisions about the over successful operation of the service.

**In addition:***Practice is embedded in service operations*

Embedded processes and comprehensive systems were in place to support governance and the successful operation of the service. Delegation of tasks to ensure accountabilities for all regulatory and financial requirements, and regular review dates were planned in advance for all policies, procedures, position and role descriptions. The service philosophy principal value of respect was embedded in all aspects of the service delivery.

*Practice was informed by critical reflection*

Critical reflection on the service philosophy being too long and not reflective of the context of the service due to changes in demographic and cultural background of families, lead to the simplification of the philosophy and changing of the images used to be reflective of the families currently using the service.

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

Parents actively shaped the successful operation of the service through their roles on the committee of management. The ongoing decision of the committee to continue online meetings facilitated greater participation from the parent community as non-vaccinated parents were able to continue to attend. Families also shaped the content of the service philosophy by the questions they asked about the things they wanted to know, and the feedback they provided about what they want from and like about the service.

Standard 7.2	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.	
7.2.1	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.	Met
7.2.2	The educational leader is supported and leads the development and implementation of the educational program and assessment and planning cycle.	Met
7.2.3	Educators, co-ordinators and staff members' performance is regularly evaluated and individual plans are in place to support learning and development.	Met

### Demonstration of Exceeding themes for Standard 7.2

Practice is embedded in service operations	Yes
Practice is informed by critical reflection	Yes
Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community	Yes

**Standard 7.2 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

### Evidence for Standard 7.2

The service was committed to continuous quality improvement, creating a positive culture and an open learning community. Critical reflection was consistent, as the service strived for best practice, exploring different perspectives and different ways of assessing and evolving practice.

The educational leader worked collaboratively with all educators and the other early childhood teacher, and together as a team, in creating a culture of professional enquiry and providing mentoring and support to enhance skills and competence in critically reflecting on the development and implementation of the cycle of planning for the educational program. Participating in professional networks and liaison with other teachers and early childhood professionals, and professional development opportunities provided ongoing support of the educational leader's commitment to enhancing knowledge and expertise to share within the role.

Embedded practices for supporting learning and development of all staff members through individual performance plans and annual appraisals were supported by the president and vice president in collaboration with the nominated supervisor. Regular progress reviews were conducted throughout the year to update training achieved, needed, and review goals.

#### **In addition:**

##### *Practice is embedded in service operations*

The service had an embedded positive organisational culture and professional learning community. The service commitment to the educational leader further supported the culture through consistently providing mentoring and support to all staff in their professional practice for delivering an educational program with high expectations for each child's learning.



*Practice was informed by critical reflection*

The service was committed to a culture of critical reflection and conducted an annual self-assessment against the National Quality Standards to ensure that the quality improvement plan accurately reflected the current culture and goals for the service and was regularly reviewed to maintain its relevance. Educators also contributed suggestions to the quality improvement folder from their critical reflections

*Practice was shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community*

The service Quality Improvement Plan was in the process of being uploaded and transitioned to a new format compatible with Story Park to enable all families to actively engage with and contribute to it, after only the staff and committee members had access to it during covid-19 restrictions.

### Quality Area 7 summary

For Quality Area 7, is there a significant risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children?

No

**Quality Area 7 is rated**

**Exceeding NQS**

# Assessment and rating summary

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<b>Quality Area 1 is rated</b>	<b>Exceeding NQS</b>
<b>Quality Area 2 is rated</b>	<b>Exceeding NQS</b>
<b>Quality Area 3 is rated</b>	<b>Exceeding NQS</b>
<b>Quality Area 4 is rated</b>	<b>Exceeding NQS</b>
<b>Quality Area 5 is rated</b>	<b>Exceeding NQS</b>
<b>Quality Area 6 is rated</b>	<b>Exceeding NQS</b>
<b>Quality Area 7 is rated</b>	<b>Exceeding NQS</b>
<b>Overall rating</b>	<b>Exceeding NQS</b>

## Quality improvement plan notes summary

### Quality Area 1

#### Standard 1.1

The service may like to consider:

- Continuing the service commitment to cultural competence in all aspects of service practice and delivery  
[educators guide to the early years learning framework for australia 2.pdf \(acecqa.gov.au\)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/educators-guide-to-the-early-years-learning-framework-for-australia-2.pdf)
- Engaging and extending relationships with various cultural groups within the community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups, to enhance the educational program.

#### Standard 1.2

The service may like to consider:

- Continuing to enhance knowledge and practice of all educators through continuing to engage with professional resources and programs including [Early Abilities Based Learning and Education Support \(Early ABLES\) Early ABLES professional learning \(education.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/early-ables/early-ables-professional-learning)

#### Standard 1.3

### Quality Area 2

#### Standard 2.1

#### Standard 2.2

### Quality Area 3

#### Standard 3.1

#### Standard 3.2

### Quality Area 4

#### Standard 4.1

#### Standard 4.2

### Quality Area 5

#### Standard 5.1

#### Standard 5.2

<b>Quality Area 6</b>	
<b>Standard 6.1</b>	<p>The service may wish to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing to resume and explore building on opportunities for family's to actively participate in and share knowledge and skills within the educational program on site, in accordance with covid-19 restrictions and the service covid safe plan. The service is encouraged to continue to explore creative strategies for establishing and extending remote participation opportunities, in respecting families concerns about attending in person or inability to attend, and possibilities for remote participation.</li> </ul>
<b>Standard 6.2</b>	<p>The service may like to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing commitment to extend community engagement opportunities post covid, including with cultural groups and through the Community Engagement Project and School Readiness Funding.</li> <li>Continuing the service commitment to inclusive practices for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The service may like to consider exploring reconciliation and <a href="#">Narragunnawali - Professional Learning</a> and <a href="#">Narragunnawali - Curriculum Resources</a></li> </ul>
<b>Quality Area 7</b>	
<b>Standard 7.1</b>	
<b>Standard 7.2</b>	