

Quality Improvement Plan for Monash Primary and Preschool

2020

Service name

Monash Primary and Preschool

Service approval number

SE-00010656

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters where our centre is located and recognise their continuing connection to country. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal peoples.



Context

Service Context

Monash Preschool is a site based preschool located on the same campus as Monash Primary School. We are a Department for Education site, offering high quality preschool education in the Riverland of South Australia. We are located approximately 240kms from Adelaide. We border the Monash Adventure Playground and Monash community oval, and have extensive grounds and play spaces within our school and preschool site.

Children at Monash Preschool access either twelve or fifteen hours of preschool per week (on average), depending on their reason for enrolment. In 2020, the attendance schedule will be every Monday and Wednesday, as well as 4 Thursdays per term. There will be 2 additional Child Free Days for the purposes of staff training and development during the year.

As an education community, we partner with families to nurture the social and emotional characteristics that all children need to develop to become successful citizens and life-long learners. These commitments form the basis of our work with all children and families from Preschool, and then into school through to Year 7.

We have a strong commitment to learning improvement, with the vision to develop learners who can talk about their learning, set challenging learning goals, persist with learning, seek feedback to improve and work as a member of a team.

Building a positive sense of self and being able to build respectful relationships with others means that we deliberately offer a range of opportunities for children to be engaged and successful at preschool. We enjoy a strong and positive relationship with school students and staff. We share learning spaces, create opportunities for Early Years Staff (Preschool to Year 2) to work together to design learning specifically for early years children, participate in a “buddy” program and have access to specialist staff in the Student Wellbeing Leader and admin support.

Context

Statement of Philosophy

At Monash Preschool we nurture respectful, caring relationships that foster inclusion and enable children to learn and succeed through play.

We value

- Respectful, caring relationships
- Self-aware, confident, persistent individuals
- Meaningful connections with families and community
- Learning through child-initiated play.

Strengths



5

Review
and evaluate

With reference to the three exceeding themes:

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

Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice

At Monash Preschool, children's knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests drive curriculum decision-making, based on Belonging, Being, Becoming and the Early Years Learning Framework Learning Outcomes. Our Statement of Philosophy guides the learning program and improvement planning.

Staff begin each year by identifying each child's strengths in relation to identity, connectedness with our community and wider world, physical, social and emotional wellbeing, confidence, curiosity as a learner and effectiveness as a communicator. Information is gathered from families through questionnaires, regular informal chats, formal learning meetings, observations and formative assessments. This information is used to guide the teaching and learning program to offer engaging opportunities to challenge children's thinking and extend their learning and development. An assessment cycle ensures preschool staff gather relevant data and evidence of learning and progress for all children throughout the year.

Staff understand that critical reflection of processes, programs, the physical environment and interactions is essential to creating a productive learning environment. Staff reflect together at the end of each day, evaluating and planning learning opportunities for the next preschool day, based on data collected and staff observations of children's needs, ideas and wonderings. Children's voice and sense of agency is central to our program and underpins many of our decisions.

The teacher meets formally with every family twice during the year to discuss their child's learning goals as part of developing Individual Learning Plans. Families are also invited to arrange a meeting at any time they wish to discuss their child's progress. Staff are deliberate and intentional about the data and assessment information they collect for each child, ensuring it is directly linked to learning goals and progress. Children's portfolios contain learning stories, work samples and evidence of learning, which are sent home with families twice during the year. At this time parents/caregivers are invited to add feedback in designated boxes highlighted on the learning stories and snapshots. The portfolios are available for families to peruse at any time. At the end of the year, the portfolios and a Statement of Learning are provided to the family as a celebration of their child's learning and progress.

The learning program and 'This week we have...' summaries are available to families on Class Dojo and on the sign in desk in the preschool.

Children who have been identified for support are monitored and tracked at fortnightly staff meetings. These discussions and agreed strategies are documented. Children with identified needs are grouped for small group intentional teaching and targeted activities. Focus areas for individual children are also recorded in our planning documents as well as on individual sheets designated for observation collection, for easy access by all staff, including relief staff. We regularly share updated information with parents on a one-to-one basis at drop off and pick up times.

The Move To Learn program is implemented several times a day, with the intention to support children to integrate a range of essential movements/skills for improved learning outcomes. Families are informed of the program and invited to work on the skills with their children at home. A local chiropractor was employed as a consultant for 2019 to support our implementation of the program, and this will continue in 2020.

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Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Rest and quiet areas are provided in both inside and outside spaces. A couch and cushions are available inside, providing children with the opportunity to relax and or sleep as they need to. The verandah area contains large leaf shades, cushions and books, and educators set up other spaces on the grass and under trees to encourage rest and relaxation as appropriate. As part of our daily routine, children have a dedicated rest time after lunch - they read, listen to music, and lie down with a cushion. Children are encouraged to independently seek opportunities for sleep and rest.

At Monash Preschool, staff sit with the children at lunchtime, modeling healthy lunch choices and engaging in reciprocal conversations. Children are supported during eating times to ensure fruit is eaten before packaged snacks and sandwiches are eaten first at lunch time. *Get up and Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood Guidelines* are available in the Parent Library and inform our food choices for cooking experiences as well as discussions with children and families around lunch box options. Once children have finished their lunch eating routine, they put their lunch things away, clean their own placemat and join others on the mat for relaxation time.

Our Preschool program includes children learning about what it means to be healthy and making healthy choices. We regularly provide opportunities for children to try new foods and engage in cooking and food preparation experiences. Connecting with members of the community such as chefs and fruit growers, as well as learning about foods of different cultures, is part of our annual program when possible.

Special consideration and procedures are in place for children with dietary needs and Health Care Plans are updated and stored in the Staff Sign-in folder for staff only access. Daily physical activity is embedded in our program. Children have access to the Outdoor Learning Environment throughout the day, they make choices about the outdoor play equipment and appropriate protective clothing is available for play to continue during wet weather. The UV is checked on-line as part of our morning routine, giving children the required information about the weather and sun smart actions. Our intentional teaching program includes daily Move To Learn movement sessions and a weekly Physical Skills program.

First aid processes are well established and emergency contact details are available for quick access in the case of an emergency. Bathroom and kitchen facilities are well maintained and clean, with adequate signage and appropriate procedures displayed. Since 2019, WHS practices and procedures have been streamlined to ensure we have effective practices occurring across our whole site. An admin SSO is responsible for supporting the WHS portfolio across the site.

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Quality Area 3: Physical Environment

Monash Preschool is located in a purpose built preschool which adjoins Monash Primary School and, in 2019, amalgamated with the school to become a site-based preschool. The preschool program utilises the range of school facilities available, including the Library, Computer Room, Music room, Covered Outdoor Learning Area and extensive oval. Within the preschool space, there are two outdoor learning areas, one of which is specifically dedicated to nature play to promote imaginative and dramatic play. The other outdoor space includes a playground, cubby house, large sandpit with a water volcano and water course as well as climbing platforms, a hill, lawn areas and paths. The preschool is well equipped with a wide range of moveable equipment and play resources, and children's voice is integral in the selection of what will be available each day. Further developments of the outdoor learning spaces are planned for 2020, utilising the amalgamation grant to enhance the facilities and learning spaces available to early years children at Monash.

Within the indoor learning space, resources are stored in open shelving to allow children to access desired equipment to support their learning and interest. Depending on the program's focus and learning goals, educators will set up specific learning tasks and invitations to play, to encourage different lines of inquiry and to promote wonderings. Children are encouraged and supported to keep learning spaces tidy, well maintained and free of clutter to assist with the safe and easy navigation of the learning environment. The preschool is well resourced, and due to the connection with the early years of school, educators have access to an extensive range of resources to enhance the program throughout the year.

Promoting sustainability and environmental care through effective recycling processes has been a focus of 2019, and as such children actively participate in reducing our contribution to landfill. Children learn about practices such as re-using containers, sorting paper and plastic rubbish for recycling, and re-using food scraps for worm farms or to feed chickens. Community connections are enhanced by organising incursions and excursions to help children learn about more recycling.

Identified hazards or required maintenance is reported to and actioned by relevant site staff, namely the Work Health Safety Manager and the Grounds Manager.

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Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements

All staff at Monash Preschool accept responsibility for ensuring our preschool operates as a positive and professional learning community. Interactions convey mutual respect, equity and recognition of each other's strengths and skills.

Families are invited to share information with staff that will support inclusion and understanding of cultural perspectives. This occurs through family surveys on enrolment, as well as during Family Information Sessions and learning discussions. All interactions with or between children, families and other staff members are expected to be respectful and accepting, aligned with our Statement of Philosophy. Skills, contributions and achievements are acknowledged and celebrated through newsletters, Class Dojo, personal letters, notice boards, etc.

Educators are focused, active and reflective throughout the day and make appropriate changes to the program or group times to meet the needs or interests of the group. Processes are in place to ensure there is always a staff member within a learning space that children are accessing.

Until end of 2018, prior to amalgamation, all ECW relievers employed at the site held a minimum Certificate III in Children's Services and the Director held a Graduate Diploma in Strategic Leadership. From 2019, as a site based preschool, contracted SSOs hold a minimum Certificate III in Children's Services and the teacher has a degree in Early Childhood. The Principal has a Bachelor of Early Childhood (Honours) and Masters of Education. Qualifications of contracted staff are framed and displayed on centre walls. We maintain regular teacher and SSO relievers when possible to ensure consistency for children and these relievers are offered inclusion in Child Free Days and Training and Development opportunities. Absent staff are replaced to maintain educator to child ratios. Monash Preschool has a history of supporting Pre-service teachers and TAFE students for placement during their study. We share a photographic display of staff each day. Preschool staff meetings are held fortnightly and regular items on the agenda include areas such as WHS, individual needs, targeted group work, parent conversations and reflection on children's learning. Whole site staff meetings are held weekly, and preschool staff attend meetings specifically related to their role.

Training and development is provided for all staff and offered through external providers and by sharing expertise within the site and across Partnership. Training and development opportunities align with improvement plans to support staff to meet the needs of children. Evidence-based practices form the basis of programming and planning. Since 2019, regular Early Years Team meetings have supported Preschool-Year 2 staff to build connections and develop quality learning programs and opportunities across our early years.

As part of the self-review cycle, a Child Free Day is scheduled in Term 4 for educators to reflect on our Statement of Philosophy, monitor progress against targets, reflect on strengths and improvement areas and celebrate successes. This day is also essential for improvement planning for the following year.

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Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children

At Monash Preschool, we value relationships with children and families. We strive to ensure children and their families feel welcome, respected and safe. We achieve this by getting to know each child and their family, holding special events at the preschool where the children are able to bring along a family member and by warmly greeting each child and their carer by name as they arrive each day.

During the first 4 weeks of the preschool year, we align with the school to have a whole site priority of establishing relationships, building a sense of connectedness and belonging and observing children to note particular needs and strengths that will inform the preschool program.

All children have a social and emotional learner or wellbeing related goal as part of their Individual Learning Plan. We use the *You Can Do It* program's 5 key dispositions as a basis for our program to support the social and emotional learning of all children. Many children use the language of persistence and confidence and encourage each other to 'have a go' and 'keep trying'. During 2020, we will be making further connections with the school's "Social and Emotional Learners Framework" in order to build strong foundations for developing social and emotional learners Preschool to Year 7.

We celebrate children's achievements on a daily basis. Multicultural backgrounds are embraced at Monash Preschool when we learn songs and basic counting and language from the cultures represented within our preschool. Days of cultural significance are celebrated at preschool under the guidance of families who share their experiences and perspectives with staff and children.

Throughout the day, children are exposed to many opportunities that encourage collaborative learning which helps promote a sense of belonging. Each session, photo and name cards are used by the child who is the 'Helping Hand' to say good morning to each individual in the group. Our daily routine is flexible to allow children adequate time to fully engage in their play. Creations such as block buildings are often retained for further development on the next preschool day with children accessing a 'stop' sign to raise awareness to others of 'a work in progress'. Other children are included in celebrating the work of others, and we encourage children to share their learning or help each other.

Children at Monash Preschool are supported to learn to manage their behaviour, understand how their actions affect others, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts. Staff provide clear and reasonable instructions and give children choices when necessary. Consequences to inappropriate behaviour are fair and appropriate and support is given to the child as they learn to manage their emotions and work successfully as a member of a community.

Children's engagement levels are monitored with the Process Oriented Monitoring System tool (POMS) as part of our assessment cycle. Observations are discussed and children requiring support are identified and targeted within the program. Documentation is also entered into each child's Individual Learning Plans for sharing with parents each term.

Strengths



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Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

At Monash, we have a history of strong family involvement and we welcome families to be involved in their child's preschool education. Parents are encouraged to stay on in the mornings and spend time engaging in their child's learning for the first part of the day. During this time, staff support each other to allow time for parent conversations that may be of a pressing or urgent manner. We deliberately plan special events throughout the year which provide opportunities for all parents and significant others to be involved such as Twilight Preschool, Mother's and Father's Day Breakfasts, Sports Day and the annual Family Fun night (incorporating children's self-portrait art works). Furthermore, we employ a range of communication modes to ensure families are informed of the preschool program and events, as well as celebrate achievements and daily happenings. In 2019, 100% of families acknowledged that they connected with at least one form of our communication modes: Class Dojo, newsletters, face-to-face meetings, phone calls/SMS and Facebook, and 100% of families attended Learning discussions.

New families are invited to attend a Pre-Entry Welcome Evening where we provide a Welcome Pack and introduce them briefly to the Australian Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), Preschool Indicators of Literacy and Numeracy, National Quality Standards, and our Statement of Philosophy. This offers them the chance to meet staff and each other, familiarise themselves with the preschool, hear about daily routines and gather ideas about how to support their child to have a successful transition to preschool. This meeting also gives parents the opportunity to share information about their child and raise any questions or concerns they may have around their child starting preschool.

Our 2019 Parent Opinion Surveys returned extremely positive results, with 10 of 14 families participating in the survey. There was a total of 440 responses (44 questions x 10 families). Of that 440, all except 5 were 'strongly agree' or 'agree'; that's 98.9% of responses! Families also had the opportunity to provide some comments, and all of these were very positive.

Strengths



5

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Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership

From 2019, the Principal is responsible for the effective leadership of Monash Preschool, and works collaboratively with the teacher to provide a high quality learning program. Administrative tasks have been streamlined where possible, and undertaken by the school admin staff as per school processes. The preschool teacher has additional administrative time allocated each week to support the Principal to ensure effective leadership and management of the preschool, as well as track and monitor improvement plans. SSO staff are actively involved in planning and programming, and are essential to the provision of a high quality program. Documentation of staff meetings and planning is shared with the Principal via email.

At the end of 2018, with the closure of Monash Kindergarten, the Monash Primary School Governing Council unanimously agreed to amend the Constitution to ensure at least one representative from the preschool is a member of the site's Governing Council each year. In 2019, there were two preschool families on Council. In addition, an Early Years sub-committee provides an opportunity for families to have a voice in matters specifically related to the early years (Preschool-Year 2) at Monash.

The Statement of Philosophy (SOP) was reviewed in 2019 following the amalgamation, and underpins the approach to teaching and learning at our preschool. Improvement priorities, goals, actions and success criteria are reflective of the SOP. Families learn about and build an understanding of the SOP during information sessions, Family Information packs, the website and ongoing communication from preschool staff.

All staff are committed to a cycle of continuous improvement, critical reflection and self-review as part of improvement planning. Prior to 2019, Performance Development Meetings were held bi-annually and scheduled for Week 8, Terms 1 and 3. From 2019, Performance and Development planning enables staff to connect with colleagues across the site to develop and meet their goals. Staff are involved in conversations with the Principal/other Line Managers as well as Team Meetings and focussed colleague conversations. PDPs are closely aligned with site priorities and reflective of personal goals, and incorporated into the review cycle.

Records and information are stored appropriately in the preschool office or admin building. Information is shared with families on a regular basis via newsletters, notices at sign-in desk, conversations with parents during drop offs and pick-ups, Learning Discussions, Facebook page, SMS, Class Dojo and notes home via children's note pockets. The preschool has a mobile phone to enable staff to text and use Dojo to share information about children and share in special achievements as they occur. Grievances are managed according to the Grievance procedures, dealt with in a timely manner and documented.

Learning Improvement Plan



Goal 1: Improve children's oral language skills with a specific focus on word knowledge (vocabulary)

Challenge of practice: If we implement a consistent approach to assessing and developing children's language and vocabulary, then we will improve children's oral language skills.

Actions	NQS links	Timeline	Resources	Responsibility
Educators identify relevant and key evidence gathering tools with the support of Local Education Speech Therapists and develop an assessment/evidence gathering cycle to track progress.	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 4.2, 7.2	By end Term 1 2020	Support Services Speech Pathologist - suggest tools. DfE Best Advice papers.	Teacher and Principal develop cycle as part of annual calendar. Teacher and SSO track progress using tools
Educators develop a structured and intentional approach to group times to provide opportunities for children to connect and engage with an audience.	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 4.2, 5.2, 7.2	Documented end Term 1 2020, reviewed termly, formalised T4 2020	Emergent Literacies T&D resources and info. Helen Barney and Speech Pathologists.	Teacher and SSO to identify opportunities and plan accordingly. Teacher to connect with R-2 teachers to consider opportunities across Early Years.
Educators identify daily opportunities to engage children in high quality interactions (shared, reciprocal conversations) to promote and build word knowledge.	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 7.2	Documented end Term 1 2020, reviewed termly, formalised T4 2020	SSTEW observational tool. RRR observations of adult interactions. Helen Barney and EY colleagues.	Teacher to arrange observations to gather base feedback, lead planning and arrange regular subsequent observations for feedback to track progress/improvements.
Educators use the book-based learning approach to select appropriate texts to immerse children in Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary.	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 4.2, 7.2	Documented end Term 1 2020, reviewed termly, formalised T4 2020	Support Services Speech Pathologist. Partnership colleagues to understand book based practice.	Teacher and SSO - planning and data gathering.
Success criteria	We will observe children: Maintaining reciprocal shared conversations with peers and educators as measured by "strive for 5". Developing their confidence to speak to and connect with a group as evidenced by observations on a site-generated checklist. Using increasingly sophisticated vocabulary to express ideas and connect with others as evidenced by children's use of use of Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 words during observations.			

Learning Improvement Plan



Goal 2: Build on children's sense of identity and social and emotional wellbeing to support their successful engagement with others and the learning program.

Challenge of practice: If, through offering a safe and challenging environment, we create opportunities for children to learn to manage their emotions, practice resilience and engage positively with others, then we will build children's sense of identity, connectedness and wellbeing so they engage successfully with the learning program.

Actions	NQS links	Timeline	Resources	Responsibility
Educators will talk with children about their emotions and responses to events with a view to supporting their developing understanding of emotional regulation and self-control and building their vocabulary (EYLF p34)	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 5.1, 5.2	T&D and agreements developed by end T1, ongoing from T2	SEL Framework You Can Do It program Student Wellbeing Leader Interception resources	Educators - make link between SELF, You Can Do It and EYLF and plan curriculum. Student Wellbeing Leader supports with resources.
Educators will identify children at risk in terms of social and emotional wellbeing using POMS, plan relevant interventions and track progress.	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 5.1, 5.2	Evidence gathering by end W5 T1, planning ongoing from W5 T1.	POMS Be You Resources - screeners? Parent survey responses Educator observations	Educators Helen Barney to support with RRR or other observations Student Wellbeing Leader
Educators and families will identify a wellbeing priority for each child as per Social and Emotional Learners Framework/You Can Do It program and track progress against success criteria using observation data/evidence.	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2	ILP meetings by end W9 T1, ongoing tracking and monitoring from W9	ILP SELF and YCDO resources Interception resources Site based checklist	Teacher - meeting with families Educators - observing and tracking progress Principal - support tracking against SC
Educators will reflect on their practice and gather feedback about how effectively they motivate and encourage children to persist and build resilience and how they celebrate and acknowledge children's successes and efforts.	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 7.2	Once per term, to be factored into assessment cycle calendar	RRR DfE PDP processes	Leaders to conduct observations (teacher to arrange) Principal to incorporate into PDP process
Success criteria	<p>We will observe children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showing an increasing capacity to understand, self-regulate and manage their emotions. Using increasingly complex vocabulary to describe feelings and emotions, connected with the SELF language. Making choices, accepting challenges, taking considered risks, managing changes and coping with frustrations and the unexpected. Increasingly co-operating and working collaboratively with others through improved oral language and vocabulary skills. Confidently exploring and engaging with social and physical environments through relationships and play. 			

National Quality Framework responsibilities

NQS links	Task	Steps involved	Timeline	Responsibility	Resourcing	Completed
6.2	Review and document our Transition Program and Policy now that we are a site-based preschool.	Gather feedback from preschool educators, reception teachers and parents about their experience with the 2019-2020 transition program.	End T1 2020	Alana, Mel, Early Years sub-committee	EY meetings	
		Review current policy documents and make changes based on feedback and suggestions.	Mid-T2 2020	Alana, Mel, Bev, Kylie, Tahlia	EY meetings	
		Plan the trial transition process for 2020, with clear timelines and feedback processes incorporated into 2020 and 2021.	From end T2 2020	Alana, Mel, Bev, Kylie, Tahlia	EY meetings	
3.1 3.2 6.2	Physical environment - upgrade of facilities and grounds with amalgamation grant.	Get plans and suggestions from Creative Pools and Landscaping for community consultation - children, parents, educators, GC.	End T1 2020	Lee Santini and Alana	Lee Santini Amalgamation grant	
		Approve final designs and ideas	T2 2020	Governing Council and Alana		
		Plan a celebration/opening of the redevelopment for the community.	When works completed	Governing Council		
7.2	Document our annual assessment cycle and calendar to reflect our effective self-assessment and quality improvement processes.	Reflect on 2019 assessment calendar and annotations, insert 2020 QIP assessment deadlines and events (adjusted based on enrolment numbers).	End T1 2020	Alana, Mel, Bev		
		Regular reflection and check in at staff meetings to track progress of assessments and document changes to align	Ongoing from W1 T1 2020	Mel, Bev with support of Alana		
		Publish calendar at end of year for clear commitments for 2021, with regular reviews scheduled in 2021.	End T4 2020	Mel, Bev, Alana		

Approvals



Approved by director/principal

Alana Kitson

01/02/2020

Approved by governing council chairperson

Approved by education director