

Quality Improvement Plan

The Children's House Montessori School

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Updated March 2017

Service details

Service name	Service approval number
The Children's House Montessori School	95/424/076
Primary contact at service	
Denise Underwood	
Physical location of service	Physical location contact details
Street: 109 Cressy Road	Telephone: 0298890400
Suburb: North Ryde	Mobile: 0425896091
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Postcode: 2113	Email: childrenshousensw@gmail.com
Approved Provider	Nominated Supervisor
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Postal address (if different to physical location of service)	
Street: P O Box 6645	
Suburb: North Ryde	
State/territory: NSW	
Postcode: 2113	

Operating hours

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Opening time	8.30	8.30	8.30	8.30	8.30		
Closing time	15.30	15.30	15.30	15.30	15.30		

Additional information about our service

Provide additional information about your service—parking, school holiday dates, pupil-free days etc.

Parking for staff and visitors is at the side of the school.

We follow the NSW School terms and holidays.

The first day of each term is a pupil free day.

How are the children grouped at your service?

The children are grouped in two groups, one group has children from 3 years to 6 years and the other group consists of a small group of five year olds. We also have an after session group of 3 and 4 year olds and a parent/toddler group.

Name and position of person(s) responsible for submitting this Quality Improvement Plan

Denise Underwood (Nominated Supervisor)

Service Statement of Philosophy

As a Montessori preschool, the Children's House adheres to the Montessori philosophy and teaching methods.

We believe children:

- Are unique and valued individuals who develop in different areas at different rates and with different styles.
- Should be encouraged and supported in the pursuit of their learning interests and abilities.
- Develop positive self-esteem by having the opportunity to experience and accept new challenges in a safe and encouraging environment.
- Have an innate capacity for learning and desire to learn.

As teachers our aims are:

- To enhance each child's strength, competencies and self-esteem.
- To facilitate the development of the total child with the integration of the intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual and social aspects of life.
- To develop the independence and adaptability of the child as we see education as an aid to life and preparation for it.
- To provide a learning environment that is active, experimental, individually paced and self-correcting, independent and unlimited in scope.
- To provide a range of experiences, challenges and beliefs that contribute to their understanding, empathy and acceptance of others without bias, regardless of their ability, gender, culture, family structure or economic status.
- To maintain a safe health environment that will enhance our children's autonomy, initiative and self-worth.
- To help children learn to interact effectively, and in doing so to learn to balance their own rights, needs and feelings with those of others.
- To acknowledge the worth of the cultural and linguistic diversity that children bring to the environment.
- To encourage families to share their knowledge of their child and to reciprocate by sharing our knowledge of children with parents so that there is mutual growth and understanding in ways that benefit the child.

As a community:

- We encourage families to contribute as volunteers to provide ongoing support to enable our preschool to run effectively and flourish.
- We actively cultivate respectful, supportive relationships among children, teachers, parents and the community.
- We welcome visitors to our school in a friendly courteous manner.
- We are keen to be involved in local events as a means to give back to our local community.

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice

This quality area of the National Quality Standard focuses on ensuring that the educational program and practice is stimulating and engaging and enhances children's learning and development. In school age care services, the program nurtures the development of life skills and complements children's experiences, opportunities and relationships at school, at home and in the community.

Quality Area 1	Standards and elements	
Standard 1.1	An approved learning framework informs the development of a curriculum that enhances each child's learning and development.	
	Element 1.1.1	Curriculum decision-making maximises each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, and confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.
	Element 1.1.2	Each child's current knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are consistently incorporated and actively drive all aspects of our program.
	Element 1.1.3	The program, including routines, is organised in ways that maximise each child's involvement and engagement in learning.
	Element 1.1.4	The documentation about each child's program and progress is available in an accessible format and opportunities are provided for discussion with families.
	Element 1.1.5	Every child is actively and consistently supported to engage in the program.
	Element 1.1.6	Each child's agency is consistently considered and promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions and influence events and their world.
Standard 1.2	Educators and co-ordinators are focused, active and reflective in designing and delivering the program for each child.	
	Element 1.2.1	Assessment of each child's learning and development is part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation. It is an interactive process that drives development of the program.
	Element 1.2.2	Educators consistently respond to children's ideas and play and intentional teaching is embedded within the program to scaffold and extend each child's learning.
	Element 1.2.3	Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, is consistently used to implement, review and revise the program.

Quality Area 1

Educational Program and Practice Strengths

Strengths	1.1.1	The Montessori philosophy naturally compliments the EYLF by: promoting identity through individual learning programs and outcomes; connecting children to their immediate community through grace and courtesy discussions as well as the wider world through cultural activities; developing a sense of wellbeing through activities such as care of self and care of environment; promoting confidence in learning through self-correcting activities in the sensorial, language and maths areas; promoting respectful communication between children and adults and children as well as engaging in communication based tasks. Having individual education plans, which include current knowledge and understandings, interests and developing abilities obtained through observations achieve this.
	1.1.2	Montessori educators engage in careful observation of the choices that children make, and the expressions or interactions that the children engage in. Through these observations our educators can extend and enrich intentional teaching opportunities as well as create ways to invite, engage and inspire the child. Ongoing communication with individual parents keep us informed about community events that are important to their families and assist us in building up an image of the child. Additional activities are added and current activities are modified whenever the need arises.
	1.1.3	Our routine involves a long period of time whereby children can engage in a wide range of activities. They can build and enjoy a sense of community through the inclusions of home-like experiences in the daily routine, such as food preparation and sharing of food at snack time. Children are primarily engaged in individualised or small group experiences. This is due to the fact that we have a three-year age range; therefore children have a broad range of interests, abilities, needs and learning styles and therefore benefit more from individualised and attentive teaching.
	1.1.4	Information about each child's program and progress is made available to our families at four information sessions each year and at informal and formal parent meetings. Information sessions allow families to interact with the Montessori materials and ask questions about the Montessori philosophy. Individual children's programs and progress are discussed with the families formally twice a year, however arrangements can be made at any time to meet the nominated supervisor or educators. Reports on each child's progress are updated weekly and can be emailed or printed out for parents at any time.
	1.1.5	The diverse nature of the materials in our prepared environment, and the aesthetic or intellectual appeal of each item placed carefully in the environment, acts as an almost irresistible invitation to each child to participate. Educators engage in careful observation of the choices children make, and the expressions or interactions that they engage in, in order to extend intentional teaching opportunities as well as to create ways to invite, engage and inspire a child. Educators identify any barriers to participation and work in partnership with other agencies to achieve positive outcomes for all children.

Strengths contd.	1.1.6	Children are able to make choices about which activities to engage in based on the selections from the prepared environment. However they are not free to infringe upon the rights of others, therefore educators are on hand to encourage children to make informed decisions about their choices and behaviours. Educators assist children to build conflict-resolution skills by acting as a mediator when required and stepping back to remain as an observer when children seem capable of independent problem solving. Peers are also encouraged and supported to assist one another in the program. The learning experiences allow for children to take increasing responsibility for self-help and health routines.
	1.2.1	Every educator participates in observations of children's learning which accompanied with their professional knowledge, skills and experience informs the cycle of planning, documenting and evaluating necessary for children's progress towards particular learning outcomes. In particular Montessori educators have an understanding of children's sensitive periods and the indicators that may manifest when a child is experiencing a period of particular sensitivity towards a certain stimulus or subject. Individual educator and team critical reflections are incorporated into planning records and team meeting minutes. This allows for exploring record keeping practices, teaching strategies and the setup of the environment on a continual basis.
	1.2.2	Educators use strategies such as modelling and demonstrating to introduce the materials to the children. Points of interest are used as part of the task to stimulate the child's interest and attention. With their understanding of Montessori theories such as the absorbent mind and the sensitive periods for language, Montessori educators can engage in open questioning, speculation, explanations and problem solving to extend children's thinking and learning. The in-built control of error found in the Montessori materials provides scaffolding for children without the intervention of an adult.
	1.2.3	Educators make observations throughout the day about children's experiences, thinking and learning. These observations not only assist in the critical reflection of an individual child's learning and development but also provide an insight into curriculum decision-making that will support and extend children's learning, development and wellbeing. Discussions are held as required between our educators should the prepared environment need to be changed. Children are directly able to request activities, suggest creative experiences or spontaneously create a new task.

Improvements sought for QA1

Element 1.2.1	Assessment of each child’s learning and development is part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation. It is an interactive process that drives development of the program.
Identified issue	We would like to establish ways that students can achieve self-assessment and reflection to enable them to become more independent learners.

Improvement Plan For QA1						
Standard/element	What outcome or goal do we seek?	Priority (L/M/H)	How will we get this outcome? (Steps)	Success measure	By when?	Progress notes
1.2.1	That all students have the skills to self-assess and be able to reflect on their learning with this leading to students being able to contribute to curriculum planning.	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review what is happening now. - Brainstorm possible ways students can self-assess and reflect on their learning. - Teach the required skills to students - Format documents that can be used. - Decide what evidence needs to be collected. 	All students have a pathway to be able to assess and reflect on their work.	2018	

	<h2>Quality Area 2: Children’s health and safety</h2> <p>This quality area of the <i>National Quality Standard</i> focuses on safeguarding and promoting children’s health and safety.</p>	
Quality Area 2	Standards and Elements	
Standard 2.1	Each child’s health is promoted.	
	Element 2.1.1	Each child’s health needs are consistently supported, monitored and promoted.
	Element 2.1.2	Each child’s comfort is provided for and there is a range of opportunities for both individuals and groups that effectively meet each child’s need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
	Element 2.1.3	Effective hygiene practices are actively and consistently promoted and embedded in the everyday program.
	Element 2.1.4	Preventative steps are evident in controlling the incidence and spread of infectious diseases. In addition, the management of injuries and illness is in accordance with recognised guidelines and best practice regarding these issues is embedded in the everyday program.
Standard 2.2	Healthy eating and physical activity are embedded in the program for children.	
	Element 2.2.1	Food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child. Healthy eating is consistently and actively promoted and embedded in the everyday program.
	Element 2.2.2	Physical activity that builds on children’s interests and development is embedded in all aspects of the program.
Standard 2.3	Each child is protected.	
	Element 2.3.1	Children are effectively supervised at all times and educators are attuned to the needs of all children to ensure each child’s safety and wellbeing.
	Element 2.3.2	Effective steps are taken to identify and manage risks and the precautions taken protect children from hazards and harm reflect best practice.

	Element 2.3.3	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed and reviewed in consultation with relevant authorities. Strategies are regularly practised and implemented effectively.
	Element 2.3.4	Educators, co-ordinators and staff members understand their roles and responsibilities in accordance with relevant child protection legislation and they actively raise family and community awareness of child protection issues.

Quality Area 2

Children's Health and Safety Strengths

Strengths	2.1.1	Children's health needs are identified, discussed and supported. Children's health plans and medical details are displayed for all staff. Parents sign a form should medication be required to be given. Two staff members check correct dosage. Medication is kept in either the secure cupboard or the secure fridge.
	2.1.2	Children are encouraged to develop the dignity of independence through work with the Care of Self activities. A hand-washing poster in the bathroom illustrates effective hand washing steps. Self-help skills, such as dressing and hand washing, are taught and practiced. Children freely choose between quiet and more active activities. Whole group activities are rare and when they do occur are well supported by our educators. Cushions and mats provide place to rest.
	2.1.3	Children practice the skills that are vital to daily life through the Montessori Practical Life curriculum. Children are shown care of self - activities as well as care of our environment activities. These include cleaning work areas and utensils used in the preparation of food. Children's lunch boxes are stored in the fridge. Fruit and other snacks are handled and prepared according to best practice. Should any activity or part of be put into children's mouths, the activity is put into the kitchen to be washed.
	2.1.4	Children continually engage in tasks that promote healthy practices, such as plate and utensil washing, dusting, washing tables, sweeping and basic hygiene skills. Educators as a result of their strong tendency for careful observation are often able to notice non-verbal indicators that a child is unwell. All staff have first aid qualifications that include asthma and anaphylactic training and are aware of our health and safety policies. First aid kits are available in every room and are regularly maintained.
	2.2.1	Children engage in cooking and food preparation as a way of learning about nutrition, acquiring practical skills and building a sense of community. The older children have lunch at the centre, which has been brought from home. We all sit to have lunch together and discussions about what is healthy food often occur. Educators model healthy food choices. We explore food from different countries through our cultural lessons, which assist children in their understanding of the diversity of cultures in our centre and the different types of food consumed at our centre.
	2.2.2	Children move freely around the classroom. Educators actively promote this sense of liberty to choose activities that they are interested in. There is a diverse range of experiences, both indoor and outdoor that inspires children to engage in physical activity. Children work through a rich and broad curriculum that incorporates and promotes fine and gross motor movement in almost every area. The outdoor area includes uneven surfaces for children to master balance and co-ordination.

Strengths cont.	2.3.1	Montessori educators are keen observers and are experienced in maintaining supervision of a group even while engaging in one-on-one lessons with an individual. In our mixed age classroom it is also common for the older children to take on a nurturing, protective role towards the younger peers.
	2.3.2	Children work with real tools and utensils under the careful guidance of educators. They come to understand the associated risks and to gain the physical control required to avoid these risks. Educators discuss sun safety with children and model how to put on sunscreen. Risk assessments are done for every excursion and held on file. Parents complete all required authorisations before and on excursions.
	2.3.3	Children are involved in practising safety procedures. They are exposed to the various symbols used by the community to depict hazards and emergency equipment. Visits from the police and firemen alert children to what to do in an emergency. Families are informed of our emergency procedures at parent information evenings and through our policy documents. Emergency equipment is tested six monthly.
	2.3.4	Educators support the children's ongoing progression from 'dependent' to 'independent' as another way of liberating the child from potential risks. Children engage in activities about feelings and emotions that enable them to converse freely and comfortably about situations that may arise. Families are supported when their circumstances change in ways that may affect the needs of the child by providing opportunities for listening and responding to Families' comments.

Improvements sought for QA2

Element 2.3.4	Educators, co-ordinators and staff members understand their roles and responsibilities in accordance with relevant child protection legislation and they actively raise family and community awareness of child protection issues.
	Denise and Renae to attend child protection course to update.

Improvement Plan For QA2						
Standard/ element	What outcome or goal do we seek?	Priority (L/M/H)	How will we get this outcome? (Steps)	Success measure	By when?	Progress notes
2.3.2	To have all risk assessments updated for all relevant excursions. To continually check that the correct authorizations from the parents have been filled in for each excursion.	H	- Discuss what safety issues need to be included - Make risk assessment - Check that all parents have the correct forms	Forms are completed before the excursion	Dec 2015	All risk assessments are up to date. Checklist in place to make sure authorisation forms are completed by parents for every excursion and annually for regular outings. Completed.
2.3.4	All educators are aware of their obligations and responsibilities in relation to child protection All families are informed.	H	- Review who needs to attend a training course on child protection - Encourage educators to attend Inform families by way of newsletter about where to go for help	100% of educators have attended the appropriate training course Newsletters have been sent out	Dec 2017	Three staff have completed child protection modules within their certificates and diplomas. Principal and Certified Supervisor to attend courses to update. Ongoing.

Quality Area 3: Physical environment

This quality area of the *National Quality Standard* focuses on the **physical environment** and ensuring that it **is safe, suitable and provides a rich and diverse range of experiences that promote children’s learning and development.**

Quality Area 3: Standards and elements

Standard 3.1	The design and location of the premises is appropriate for the operation of a service.	
	Element 3.1.1	All outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources provide a stimulating learning and care environment for children.
	Element 3.1.2	All premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained and enhance the learning environment for children.
	Element 3.1.3	Facilities are designed or adapted to ensure active participation by every child in the service and to promote flexible use, and interaction between indoor and outdoor spaces at all times.
Standard 3.2	The environment is inclusive, promotes competence, independent exploration and learning through play.	
	Element 3.2.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces are designed and effectively organised to engage every child in quality experiences involving the built and natural environments. The spaces provide the flexibility to respond to children’s individual needs, development, self-initiated play and exploration.
	Element 3.2.2	Resources, materials and equipment are sufficient in number, organised in ways that extend every child’s participation in the program and are consistently used in numerous ways.
Standard 3.3	The service takes an active role in caring for its environment and contributes to a sustainable future.	
	Element 3.3.1	Sustainable practices are embedded in service operations and consistently promoted in the everyday program.
	Element 3.3.2	Children are actively involved in being environmentally responsible and supported to continue this involvement within the program and in the broader community.

Quality Area 3

Physical Environment Strengths

Strengths	3.1.1	Educators prepare the environment according to the Montessori principles in order to create a sense of order and logic. Related activities are grouped together and placed in sequential order to promote beauty and harmony in the environment. From a cognitive perspective this attractive and orderly environment promotes a sense of mental order by inviting the child to engage in activity and by promoting respect and recognition for patterns and sequence.
	3.1.2	Children actively participate in caring for and cleaning the materials, furniture and environment. This promotes a happy community consisting of responsible, contributing individuals. The Educators also model how to maintain a safe and clean environment by cleaning alongside the children. The Educators maintain the environment at the highest standard by providing real, beautiful and fragile materials that require constant vigilance.
	3.1.3	Children are able to freely interact with a variety of peers and experiences. Our activities and materials are all accessible by the children so they are not dependent on the educators to get things for them. Children are able to move freely onto the deck to sweep, water plants, wash windows and participate in art activities. Often nature is brought into the environment (such as plants, shells, and insects) for examination.
	3.2.1	Children can independently approach the various areas of the environment to explore experiences or choose activities. The environment is set up to cater for a wide range of ages, abilities and interests which can be evidenced by observing the types of activities chosen by the children. Children are able to change the physical environment by moving the furniture. In every area there are activities to cater for all levels of capabilities and if further extension is required other activities will be added.
	3.2.2	The materials provided in our environment span an extremely diverse range of topics, which enhance children's learning experiences. The environment communicates a sense of order and organisation, which allows children to make considered, deliberate choices. There is sufficient time and resources for children to initiate and become actively involved in experiences. Children have access to real and natural materials, resources and equipment, such as woven baskets, wooden furniture, recycled materials, and sensory materials in sufficient quantities for individuals and groups of children.
	3.3.1	Children engage with resources and materials that are natural and organic such as wood. Through our lessons children are made aware of how to care for the environment and appreciate the interdependence of everything in it. Children are encouraged to recycle used materials. Attention is drawn to water conservation by teaching children to turn off the taps and only fill their cup with the amount they are going to drink.
	3.3.2	Children are given opportunities to learn the skills required to truly care for the environment, and are encouraged to understand why this is such an important task. They are encouraged to respect, protect and nurture the environment. This occurs primarily through work with the practical life area and care of the environment activities.

Improvements sought for QA3

Element 3.1.1	All outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources provide a stimulating learning and care environment for children.	
	Identified issue	.There is no designated library quiet area in the classroom. There is only a couch which is too small.
Element 3.1.3	Facilities are designed or adapted to ensure active participation by every child in the service and to promote flexible use, and interaction between indoor and outdoor spaces at all times.	
	Identified issue	The side deck needs to be renewed as the wood has rotted in parts. It needs to be widened to accommodate more activities and to be made an all-weather area.

Improvement Plan For QA3

Standard/ element	What outcome or goal do we seek?	Priority (L/M/H)	How will we get this outcome? (Steps)	Success measure	By when?	Progress notes
3.1.1	To have a new classroom ready to open in term I 2016	M	Liase with the Ryde City Council to get approval. Employ an engineer to draw up plans. Employ builders	To open the classroom for students	2016	2017: With drop in enrolments we do not need a new classroom at this time.
3.1.1.	To alter the back area of the classroom to incorporate a library/quiet reflection area.	M	-Draw up plan -Approach builders for costs -Seek approval from school council - Employ builder	Open new area to children after holidays	Dec 2018	
3.1.3	To renew the side deck. To add a roof and waterproof roll downs to allow children to use deck in all weather.	M	-Draw up a plan -Approach builders for costs -Seek approval from school council -employ builder	Open new area when ready	Dec 2018	

Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements

This quality area of the National Quality Standard focuses on the provision of qualified and experienced educators, coordinators and nominated and experienced supervisors who are able to develop warm, respectful relationships with children, create safe and predictable environments and encourage children’s active engagement in the learning program.

Quality Area 4: Standards and elements

Standard 4.1	Staffing arrangements enhance children’s learning and development and ensure their safety and wellbeing.	
	Element 4.1.1	Educator-to-child ratios and qualification requirements are maintained at all times, and the organisation of educators contributes to a high quality learning and care environment for children.
Standard 4.2	Educators, coordinators and staff members are respectful and ethical.	
	Element 4.2.1	Professional standards are embedded in practice, interactions and relationships and this promotes positive relationships, and a safe and predictable environment for both children and adults.
	Element 4.2.2	Educators and staff consistently demonstrate a high level of collaboration. They affirm, challenge, support and learn from each other to continually improve their skills, to enhance practice and relationships.
	Element 4.2.3	Interactions consistently demonstrate mutual respect, equity and recognition of each other’s strengths and skills, promoting a positive atmosphere within the service.

Quality Area 4 Staffing Arrangement Strengths

Strengths	4.1.1	Our centre often operates with a higher adult to child ratio than the regulations state. This ensures that optimal learning and development is supported. Our educators blend into the environment, rather than standing out as the centre of attention. The educator divides her time between giving individual lessons, small group lessons and observing the children at their activities. All educators hold first aid qualifications and have had training in asthma and anaphylaxis. All Educators keep up to date with child protection information. In a Montessori environment children are encouraged to feel that they are responsible contributors to the environment, and as such they may be involved in the 'tidying up' that is required at the end of the day.
	4.2.1	Fortnightly staff meetings give all educators and other staff members the opportunity to be heard. Informal meetings at lunchtime also provide an opportunity for discussions. We provide in house training on the implementation of the National Quality Standard and the Early Years learning Framework. Any new policies or changes to policy and procedures are discussed with educators before implementation. Educators engage in broader professional development through national conferences and weekend courses.
	4.2.2	A staff handbook provides new staff members with our philosophy and the Code of Ethics that guides our interactions with other educators, staff, families and children. The Montessori philosophy draws educators who hold similar core values about teaching and childhood. This creates an immediate sense of community and a strong initial foundation from which our educators are able to build positive, ongoing professional relationships.
	4.2.3	The Montessori principle of supporting 'intrinsic' motivation rather than 'extrinsic' rewards may affect the way staff members support the achievements and strengths of one another. The lack of 'competition' in the Montessori environment also applies to staff interactions and, as such, creates a more harmonious workplace as educators view one another as collaborators not competitors. Educators and staff are clear about their responsibilities in relation to each other, the service, the children and families and demonstrate a genuine commitment to providing a quality service.

Quality Area 4 Staffing Arrangement Strengths

Improvements sought for QA4

Element 4.1.1	Educator-to-child ratios and qualification requirements are maintained at all times
Identified issue	We need to ensure all staff onsite are qualified educators including our admin staff.

Improvement Plan for QA4

Standard/element	What outcome or goal do we seek?	Priority (L/M/H)	How will we get this outcome? (Steps)	Success measure	By when?	Progress notes
4.1.1	To ensure that educators with the necessary qualifications are always available to support continuity of care	H	-Develop a recruitment plan that is effective, transparent and equitable -Advertise in the MAF quarterly bulletin	To have a relief roster of at least 3 educators and to have an additional staff member.	October 2015	A new staff member with Diploma training has started with us. She is doing her Montessori Diploma and will achieved it by 2018. Completed
4.1.1	To have our administrator attend a Montessori assistants course so she can be an assistant in the classroom as required.	H	-Enrol Administrator in the course -Have her attend course -Support by way of school paying for course and give her time away from the school to complete the course.	The staff member to have completed the course	Dec 2018	

Quality Area 5: Relationships with children

This quality area of the *National Quality Standard* focuses on relationships with children being responsive, respectful and promoting children's sense of security and belonging. Relationships of this kind free children to explore the environment and engage in play and learning

Quality Area 5: Standards and elements

Standard 5.1	Respectful and equitable relationships are developed and maintained with each child.	
	Element 5.1.1	Interactions with each child are consistently warm, responsive and build trusting relationships that promote children's sense of security and belonging.
	Element 5.1.2	Every child is consistently encouraged and supported to engage with educators in meaningful, open interactions that enhance the acquisition of skills for life and learning.
	Element 5.1.3	Each child is consistently included and involved in the program and displays confidence and security.
Standard 5.2	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults.	
	Element 5.2.1	Collaborative learning opportunities are effectively facilitated and every child is consistently supported to work with, learn from and help others.
	Element 5.2.2	Each child is consistently encouraged and supported to manage their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.
	Element 5.2.3	The dignity and the rights of every child are consistently supported and promoted at all times.

Quality Area 5

Relationships with Children Strengths

Strengths	5.1.1	Our uninterrupted period of time ensures that children have the opportunity to engage in deep discussions with educators and their peers. The child has time for exploration and time to become deeply absorbed in the exchange of ideas and to move from one interaction to the next. Educators and children collaborate in all aspects of the daily routine, this allows for increased opportunities for discussions and interactions. Educators speak in soft, respectful and quiet tones with the children, at their eye level.
	5.1.2	Educators aim to help children acquire the tools and habits required for a lifetime of learning, exploring, engaging, communicating and interacting. Through careful observation educators can support each child when they require it allowing each child to feel empowered and excited by personal achievement. Educators model investigative processes, critical thinking and conceptual considerations during formal lessons and casual conversations with children.
	5.1.3	Regardless of a child's unique abilities, interests and personalities there is always something within the environment that a child will find inviting, engaging and inspiring. Our cultural studies promote an overall sense of respect for diversity. The mixed age range where siblings can attend the same session reflects the lives of the children and their family and the local community.
	5.2.1	Each child has the right to choose to engage in a collaborative endeavour when he sees the social, emotional, intellectual and physical benefits of seeking assistance and input from peers. Children are provided with ample opportunities to learn the language and behaviour required to initiate, maintain and conclude social experiences. This understanding of the structure of social play, combined with each child's confidence with problem-solving and the Montessori materials, allows for countless harmonious and constructive group experiences. The environment is set up with adequate resources to reduce possible conflict and encourage positive interactions between children.
	5.2.2	Each child is allowed the freedom and autonomy to express himself and to engage in self-directed activity. However, each child is aware that this freedom has as its limit the collective interest. Children and educators consistently act and react to protect and restore these limits when they are overstepped. Educators gently redirect a child who has become unable to control his behaviour. Educators seek the underlying motivation for a child's behaviour rather than focusing solely on the behaviour itself and therefore consider various psychological or emotional triggers for behaviours and will seek to rectify the root cause.
	5.2.3	The Montessori method has a very strong aversion to external rewards or punishments and as such each child feels an uncompromising sense of safety and security. Each child will make mistakes or take missteps but these are treated as opportunities for that child to learn, rather than a reason to admonish a child. Our strategies used to assist children with building self-control, primarily through purposeful activity and self-esteem of meaningful achievement can be observed.

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

This quality area of the *National Quality Standard* focuses on collaborative relationships with families that are fundamental to achieving quality outcomes for children and community partnerships that are based on active communication, consultation and collaboration.

Quality Area 6: Standards and elements

Standard 6.1	Respectful supportive relationships are developed and maintained.	
	Element 6.1.1	There is an effective enrolment and orientation process based on active communication, consultation and collaboration with families that supports all families.
	Element 6.1.2	Families are offered a range of opportunities to be actively involved and are encouraged to significantly contribute to service decisions.
	Element 6.1.3	Comprehensive and current information about the service is provided to families in an accessible format.
Standard 6.2	Families are supported in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about child rearing are respected.	
	Element 6.2.1	The expertise of families is actively sought and valued and they have the opportunity to share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing and contribute to the service program.
	Element 6.2.2	Current information about community services and resources is provided in a variety of accessible forms to all families to support parenting and family wellbeing.
Standard 6.3	The service collaborates with other organisations and service providers to enhance children's learning and wellbeing.	
	Element 6.3.1	Links with relevant community and support agencies are well established and maintained consistently.
	Element 6.3.2	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are systematically promoted by sharing relevant information, clarifying responsibilities and building collaborative strategies with relevant stakeholders.
	Element 6.3.3	Inclusion and support assistance is consistently facilitated, ensuring each child is able to participate fully in the program.
	Element 6.3.4	The service establishes effective relationships and actively engages with their local community.

Quality Area 6

Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Strengths	6.1.1	Families are invited to observe the classroom in action. This allows the Montessori educators to engage with the parents to explain the unique aspects of the Montessori method. Parents in turn are encouraged to talk about the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning. Montessori children actively participate in welcoming new children and families to our community. Easy to read information about how the service operates and what we provide can be found on our website. Bi-lingual parents are on hand to aid in communication with families for whom English is their second language.
	6.1.2	Educators engage in friendly, open dialogue with parents and families on a daily basis. This communication is enhanced through newsletters and emails, which strengthen the lines of communication. Families are welcomed into the centre on guest days, parent evenings, and picnic days and also come on outings with the extended day children. Drop off and pick up times also provide opportunities for educators to provide feedback. Parent/ educator meetings provide educators with the knowledge required to enhance children's experiences and learning.
	6.1.3	Families can access current information about the operation of the centre from our noticeboard and our website. Information about our philosophy and policies and procedures are readily accessible to parents. Educators support family members who are not regular attendees through informal meetings and notices. Two copies of the service policies are available in hard copy for parents to read. A selection of policies are also held on our website for parents and the wider community to read.
	6.2.1	Educators provide parents with both verbal and written information regarding physical accidents or health incidents that may have occurred during the session. A Montessori educator, having a holistic view of a child's wellbeing, will likely verbally communicate details about a child's mood, behaviour and activities after an accident (although written documentation may be restricted to including only objective, factual information). Parent information sessions as well as the availability of Montessori books, magazines and articles are the key to families understanding the Montessori principles. This creates a harmonious and consistent early experience for the child. Documentation of children's learning is available for parents to provide feedback.
	6.2.2	Educators work to develop a reciprocal trusting relationship with families to support parents in their parenting role. The most commonly used services are promoted on the noticeboard. Other services are provided to individual families when the need arises. Brochures are available on a variety of topics for families to take at any time. A parent library is available for parents to take books home to read.

Strengths cont.	6.3.1	Our philosophy, policies and procedures demonstrate a commitment to full participation of children with additional needs. Educators have informal discussions about children and their needs whenever it is required. From these discussions conclusions can be made as to where to go next. Having knowledge of community resources helps our nominated supervisor to recommend professionals from other services who will contribute positively to our children's wellbeing and learning outcomes.
	6.3.2	Children are welcomed into our environment each day with a consistent, predictable custom and routine. Children have the same educators all through their session be it the morning or all day. Transitions from home to preschool are managed so they are positive experiences for the child and the parent. Transition to big school is discussed with each parent individually. Every child is given the opportunity to visit their new school as many times as is felt necessary. Excursions away from the centre aid children to become more independent when travelling without their parents. Parents are assisted to find a school that will continue to support the parent's goals and values relating to their child's development.
	6.3.3	Educators can redesign or alter the prepared environment to ensure that there are opportunities for children with additional needs to explore freely and make choices, thus upholding the principles that are applied to all children within the Montessori environment. The broad, deep and holistic curriculum allows for children with additional needs to find at least one area where their self-confidence is improved by success and independent achievement. The mixed-age range ensures that children with developmental delays do not seem out of place as they may find that younger peers provide an appropriate level of stimulation or company. Children and educators work on lessons that encourage an overall attitude of tolerance, equity and respect for diversity.
	6.3.4	Children engage in cultural lessons that introduce concepts such as social and physical geography. This assists children to develop a sense of belonging in a local, national and global community. It also provides children with insight into the universal connections between humans, regardless of time or place, and the beauty of differences. These explorations help children to develop a natural interest in the world and a desire to learn more about the various communities that they can belong to. Visits from police, firemen, vets, dentists, and bush care persons, local businesses, health care services and grandparents all help to build connections between our service and our community.

Improvements sought for QA6

Element 6.1.1	There is an effective enrolment and orientation process based on active communication, consultation and collaboration with families that supports all families.	
	Identified issue	We need to evaluate our communication with our families to ascertain if we have an effective orientation process.
Element 6.3.4	The service establishes effective relationships and actively engages with their local community.	
	Identified issue	We have very little to do with our neighbours and local community.

Improvement Plan For QA6

Standard/ element	What outcome or goal do we seek?	Priority (L/M/H)	How will we get this outcome? (Steps)	Success measure	By when?	Progress notes
6.1.1	To evaluate how well we communicate with new families.	M	- Develop an enrolment and orientation feedback form for families to provide suggestions -Collect data and collate -Review and use to develop a communication plan	Communication plan developed.	Dec 2018	
6.3.4	To develop strategies for engagement with neighbours and our local community	M	-Brainstorm ideas at school council meetings -Discuss ideas amongst staff and parents -Choose first idea and actively encourage all stakeholders to engage in it.	Establish contact with a neighbour	June 2018	

Quality Area 7: Leadership and service management

This quality area of the *National Quality Standard* focuses on effective leadership and management of the service that contributes to quality environments for children's learning and development. Well-documented policies and procedures, well-maintained records, shared values, clear direction and reflective practices enable the service to function as a learning community. An ongoing cycle of planning and review, including engagement with families, creates the climate for continuous improvement.

Quality Area 7: Standards and elements

Standard 7.1	Effective leadership promotes a positive organisational culture and builds a professional learning community.	
	Element 7.1.1	Well-established governance arrangements, which are regularly reviewed, contribute to the effective management of the service.
	Element 7.1.2	The induction of educators, co-ordinators and staff is comprehensive and contributes to sustained quality relationships and environments that facilitate children's learning and development.
	Element 7.1.3	Effective processes are in place to consistently achieve continuity of educators and coordinators resulting in the establishment and maintenance of secure relationships with children.
	Element 7.1.4	A suitably qualified and experienced educator leads the effective development of the curriculum, and ensures the establishment of clear goals and high expectations for teaching and learning.
	Element 7.1.5	Adults working with children and those engaged in management of the service are fit and proper.
Standard 7.2	There is a commitment to continuous improvement.	
	Element 7.2.1	A statement of philosophy is regularly reviewed by educators and staff and is consistently evident in all aspects of the service's operations.
	Element 7.2.2	Regular evaluation of the performance of educators and staff members leads to individual development plans that provide a focus for continuous performance improvement.
	Element 7.2.3	All educators and staff members, and where possible, families and children contribute to an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process that promotes ongoing service improvement.

Standard 7.3	Administrative systems enable the effective management of a quality service.	
	Element 7.3.1	Records and information are regularly reviewed, stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality, are available from the service and are maintained in accordance with legislative requirements.
	Element 7.3.2	Well-managed administrative systems ensure effective operation of the service and contribute to continuous service improvement.
	Element 7.3.3	The Regulatory Authority is notified of any relevant changes to the operation of the service, of serious incidents and any complaints that allege a breach of legislation.
	Element 7.3.4	Effective practice and consultation processes minimise escalation of grievances and complaints. Any grievances and complaints are actively addressed, investigated fairly, resolved and documented in a timely manner. Action taken by the service contributes to continuous improvement.
	Element 7.3.5	Service practices are based on effectively documented policies and procedures that are readily available at the service and reviewed and evaluated regularly in partnership with educators, staff and families.

Quality Area 7 Leadership and service management

Strengths	7.1.1	Directors for the service are chosen from the parent body for their skills in leadership and governance. Their qualifications are varied which contributes to the breadth and depth of the committee.
	7.1.2	Our staff manual and the induction process provides new staff with an understanding of how our centre operates, a copy of our philosophy, code of ethics and job descriptions.
	7.1.3	Our centre has achieved an excellent retention rate with regard to educators and admin staff. With 2 staff having completed 14 years of service, 1 staff having completed 10 years of service, and 2 staff members having completed 6 years of service. Staff cohesion is built through regular staff outings celebrating birthdays and end of terms.
	7.1.4	Our educational leader has a degree in early childhood education, a masters in primary teaching and a Montessori diploma with 20 years teaching experience. There are many opportunities available throughout the day for the educational leader to support other educators as well as to observe, support and extend children's learning. Discussions about the curriculum and training in the Montessori method occur frequently.
	7.1.5	Our centre adheres to the Working with Children checks to ensure only 'fit and proper' persons are employed. These checks can be found in the staff records. Educators are aware of their role as mandatory reporters and responsibilities under the child protection laws. Our two certified supervisors have participated in courses on child protection.
	7.2.1	Educators and other staff engage in interactions, behaviours and endeavours that reflect the Montessori philosophy and the complementary centre philosophy. Families are informed of our philosophy through the website and parent handbook. Our mission statement is displayed at the entrance. Staff are informed through the staff handbook.
	7.2.2	Yearly performance reviews give the approved provider and the educational leader the opportunity to discuss the efforts, contributions and achievements of all educators and staff. Professional development needs can be outlined or requested. Every educator is supported to update his or her knowledge and skills. Feedback on performance is also given informally.
	7.2.3	Information is collected from a range of sources and filed in NQF folder. This data is used to inform us on how to improve the process of planning and review of our QIP. This review takes place annually. However any improvements outlined in the QIP to be achieved are done in a timely fashion.
	7.3.1	Educators and other staff take every care in the storage of confidential records. Information is updated each term or as required. Records are archived according to policies and stored appropriately. Disposal of such records is done according to policy.
	7.3.2	The nominated supervisor and educational leader ensure that information technology is available for administration purposes. For communicating to families through emails and newsletters. Computers are available for educators for planning, record keeping of children's development and observations and the development of resources.

Strengths cont.	7.3.3	The nominated supervisor has the responsibility to advise the Regulatory Authority of any changes to the service. This is usually done in February or March when the directors on the committee change. There are written notes on the procedures needed to be followed. It is also her responsibility to advise the Authority should any serious accident occur. An example would be, if a child had to be taken to hospital, or an intruder came onto the premises.
	7.3.4	We have a grievance and complaints management procedure. Families are aware of the procedure as it is outlined on the noticeboard and in the policy folder. The nominated supervisor is responsible to see that any complaints are dealt with in a timely manner.
	7.3.5	Information about our policies and procedures are available to families prior to their child starting through the parent handbook and the website. Families are encouraged to read the policies and procedures and review them from time to time. Families are informed of any changes to policies.

Improvements sought for QA7

Element 7.2.2	Regular evaluation of the performance of educators and staff members leads to individual development plans that provide a focus for continuous performance improvement.
Identified issue	Educators need to upskill to be able to self-reflect and identify their individual learning goals for continuous improvement.

Improvement Plan for QA7

Standard/element	What outcome or goal do we seek?	Priority (L/M/H)	How will we get this outcome? (Steps)	Success measure	By when?	Progress notes
7.3.1	To have our records and procedures in accordance with legislative requirements	M	-Nominated supervisor to review policies and bring to the attention of the committee any that need updating - This can be done by using the cccc website initially to check any that they have reviewed.	A checklist of all the necessary policies and procedures and their review dates.	June 2016	Completed
7.2.2	To have educators confident in self-reflection and be able to articulate their professional development goals.	M	-Principal to observe educators in their classrooms -Meet with educators to discuss how to self-reflect providing them with skills and tools -Meet individually to discuss self-reflections and to set goals for PD	All educators can self-reflect how they interact with students and set learning goals	Dec 2018	