

Reflection for Staff Meetings

Introduction

The National Quality Standard talks about educators establishing a culture of professional inquiry, collaboration and working together towards common goals.

Leaders need to think about opportunities to develop this culture in their service.

This resource provides some ideas and topics for reflection during staff meeting times. These suggestions encourage the use of staff meetings for professional conversations and reflection on practices.

QA4 Element 4.2.2: Educators, coordinators and staff members work collaboratively and affirm, challenge, support and learn from each other to further develop their skills to improve practice and relationships.



THOUGHTS ON COLLABORATION

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." Helen Keller

"The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team." Phil Jackson

"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success." Henry Ford

Initial Reflections

- ▶ What is the culture of meeting times at our service?
- ▶ Are our meetings strengths-focused or deficit-focused?
- ▶ Is each educator's opinion, encouraged and valued at meetings?



Reflection on Childhood Experiences

It is valuable for educators to reflect on their own early childhood experiences in order to focus their thinking on what the children in their care may enjoy or need most.

- ▶ Think about your childhood.
- ▶ What did you most enjoy doing?
- ▶ If you attended an early childhood setting as a child what memories do you have?

Personal Reflection

It is important to give educators opportunities to reflect on their own strengths and skills, as well as opportunities to know the strengths and skills of their colleagues.

- ▶ What do I most enjoy about my work?
- ▶ What are my strengths?
- ▶ What is my vision for the service?
- ▶ What do other people say my strengths are?

Team Reflection

- ▶ How do we ensure that everyone's voice is heard and considered?
- ▶ What makes our service a good place to work?
- ▶ How do we promote a sense of community within the service?
- ▶ How do we acknowledge the personal strengths, professional experiences and diversity that colleagues bring to their work?
- ▶ How is a culture of respect, equity and fairness encouraged in the service? How is this communicated to educators, children and families?

Show Appreciation

We can be far quicker to notice what's wrong than to celebrate what's right in others. It takes five positive comments to offset the impact of a single negative one.

Think about keeping a jar and writing down good news stories, something special that happened or an acknowledgement of a team member's strengths and achievements. These can then be read out at each staff meeting or at the end of the term.

Reflection on Practices

- ▶ Why we do what we do the way we do it?
- ▶ What do we believe about how children learn?
- ▶ How do our beliefs impact on our work with children?





Unpack the Service Philosophy

- ▶ How do we ensure that the service's statement of philosophy reflects our different views, beliefs and values?
- ▶ Does our practice reflect the beliefs outlined in our statement of philosophy?
- ▶ What does this look like in our everyday practice?
- ▶ How does the philosophy guide our interactions with children, families, each other?

National Quality Standard

- ▶ Focus on a Quality Area, a Standard, or an Element.
- ▶ Use the reflective questions in the Guide to the Standard as a starting point for reflection and discussion.
- ▶ Give opportunities for educators to discuss their practices and articulate quality in relation to the standards.

Sharing Professional Learning

Staff meetings can be an opportunity to share the professional knowledge of team members.

An educator may lead a discussion on:

- ▶ an article they have read
- ▶ a training session they have attended

EYLF

Unpack and explore terminology:

- ▶ Belonging, Being, Becoming
- ▶ Intentional teaching
- ▶ Reflective practice
- ▶ Cultural competence

Discussion Questions:

- ▶ What do these things look like in your everyday work with children, families and each other?
- ▶ How do we build our knowledge and understanding of the learning framework that we use in our service to ensure enhanced learning outcomes for all children?
- ▶ How do we help children, families and educators to feel that they belong in the service?



REFERENCES

- ▶ EYLF PLP Newsletter Thinking About Practice
- ▶ Guide to the National Quality Standard
- ▶ Early Childhood Australia Research in Practice Series Reflection as a Tool for Quality: Working with the National Quality Standard. [2012]

NQF will have changes legislated in October 2017, to come into effect February 2018. We will provide updated resources and guides to help you take advantage of the changes.

Review the QIP

Services need to develop a process for ongoing self assessment and continuing improvement. This includes reviewing the Quality Improvement Plan.

Add as a regular agenda item to ensure staff members are aware of the current goals and priorities.

Take these opportunities to acknowledge achievements and celebrate!



WHAT DOCUMENTS CAN WE REFER TO?

- ▶ The National Law and National Regulations
- ▶ The National Quality Standard
- ▶ Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics
- ▶ Service philosophy
- ▶ Service policies and procedures
- ▶ The Early Years Learning Framework
- ▶ UN Convention on the Rights of the Child



RESOURCES

- ▶ The Guide to the National Quality Standard has reflective questions to assist with examining practices against each of the elements.
- ▶ Team Resource Kit – Running a Staff Meeting
- ▶ Team Resource Kit – Speaking Out About Practices

