

VCAA

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework

EARLY YEARS EXCHANGE

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WHAT'S IN THIS EXCHANGE?

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LINKS



[Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework \(VEYLDF\): For Children from Birth to Eight Years](#)
(PDF - 1.9MB)

The Early Years Exchange (EYE) is a series of online publications to familiarise you with the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (the Framework). The EYE is intended for everyone who works with children from birth to age eight.

We would like your feedback on how useful and user-friendly this publication has been to you as an early childhood educator. By completing the attached [short survey](#) (twelve questions) you are providing evidence for the VCAA on ways to further support the implementation of the Framework.

This sixth issue focuses on the **Practice Principle of high expectations for every child** to support your thinking, discussions and practice with families, colleagues and children.

Guest appearance

Sharryn Clarke (Bachelor of Early Childhood Education, Honours) is the director at The Merrell Kindergarten, North Balwyn, Eastern Metropolitan Region. She leads a team of early childhood educators, including a bilingual early childhood educator. Together they provide education and care for two groups of three year old children and two groups of children in the funded kindergarten program. Sharryn stays involved in ongoing professional development programs like those offered by the Barlow Institute of Educational Leadership (<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/earlylearning/eyldef/profdevel.htm>). She also stays connected to other early childhood professionals through the 'Early Years Collaborating Together' social network which she established.



“Evidence from the Queensland Prep study (Thorpe, Tayler et al. 2004) revealed that the kind of curriculum and pedagogy matter to child outcomes, especially for children at risk. The combination of a play-based pedagogy, high expectations and focused interactive teaching benefited all children but especially closed the gap for the most disadvantaged.” (Tayler 2008)

‘Babies’ and children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others and children’s communications, both non-verbal and verbal.’

(Anne Stonehouse, 2004)



Snapshots

Snapshot 1

A snapshot from the under two years old room inspired by Nada Rowan, Room Leader (Hume City Council, Homestead Child and Family Centre) focusing on the **Practice Principle: high expectations for every child.**

NOTICING

One day as I was engaged with a small group of children playing and building with blocks, I noticed that even though each child could only say a few words, they were effectively communicating with one another through pointing and eye contact. I was involved in their play, talking about what they were doing and posing questions about their thinking. I recognised that the children’s play provided an opportunity for educators to acknowledge the importance of listening to the voice of the child and support the different ways in which children develop their sense of agency.¹

REFLECTING

At Homestead Child and Family Centre, we aim to put into practice our philosophy that children are capable and active participants in their own learning. At our team meeting, I commented on the children’s skill in non-verbal communication and someone suggested that we could build on this strength and create opportunities for sustained shared conversations and thinking. As a team, we discussed how we would support and guide the children’s communication to make choices of play equipment to be taken from the storeroom.

RESPONDING

The educators in the babies’ rooms decided to take photographs of the play equipment that is kept in the storeroom. We printed the photographs, laminated and stuck them onto the storeroom door. We explained to the children that this space would be called the Meeting Space.

We modelled how each child could lead the educator to the Meeting Space and choose the play equipment they wanted. This provided an opportunity to demonstrate the relationship between

¹ Agency: being able to make choices and decisions, to influence events and to have an impact on one’s world (EYLF 2009, page 45)



‘Adults create the environments in which play takes place ... The key things for the adult to learn about the role they have in the play of a young child is when to join in, when to hold back, when to help and when to watch.’ (Lally 2009)



oral and visual representations, engage in sustained shared conversations with each child, model expanded language as well as indicate our commitment to respectful relationships and responsive engagement.

WHAT NEXT?

To make the learning visible, we are in the process of creating social stories using photographs to illustrate the step-by-step sequence of leading the educator to the Meeting Space, indicating their choice, the educator presenting the equipment and engaging in discussion with the child playing with the equipment.

We are also considering creating a photo timeline of the progress of the daily activities to strengthen children’s sense of identity.

VEYLDF principles:

- High expectations for every child
- Respectful relationships and responsive engagement
- Reflective practice

VEYLDF/ EYLF outcomes:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are confident and involved learners.
- Children are effective communicators

National Quality Standard Areas:

- Educational program and practice
- Relationships with children

Snapshot 2

NOTICING

In the kindergarten room, a small group of children were building in the block corner. I noticed that Oliver (five years) who has only been at the service for six weeks had been involved in small-group block play throughout the morning. I thought about ways of capturing and extending the ideas as I observed the play. My particular interest was in talking with Oliver about his work using blocks, small felt pieces and Lego figures.

REFLECTING

I initiated a conversation: ‘You’ve been working here for a long time. I would be very interested to hear about your ideas about this construction. If you tell me the story, we could record your ideas together.’

Oliver responded, ‘This is the steps section that my Mum has been making in our back yard. We’re building this together. We went to the quarry and picked out some slabs of slate. I helped Mum load the slate in the back of the car. It was very dusty and some bits were heavy. I chose some small bits in a bucket. When we got home I helped Mum dig out the shape of the steps and then we fitted the slate over the dirt.’

I listened and we talked about how Oliver had sorted the small, medium and large pieces so that his Mum could fit them together. We talked about how it was similar to making a mosaic or a patchwork.

RESPONDING

I asked Oliver about drawing a picture of this work. He didn’t think he could do it. We agreed to do it together so I repeated the story Oliver had told me and carefully drew each section of the steps as he described it. We worked in pencil and I rubbed things out and reworked it based on Oliver’s comments. Oliver gave me directions, suggesting more details as I worked on the drawing.

I talked with Oliver’s mother about this experience at the end of the session. Oliver’s mother, Megan, said that Oliver liked construction work at home, but did not draw very much. We talked about providing a clipboard and some thick pencils at home alongside his constructions and talking with Oliver about his work.



WHAT NEXT?

After a couple of weeks and many experiences of talking about his block building and working with me to sketch his ideas, Oliver became quite skilled at drawing the details for himself. We created an Ideas Book and he began to use this to sketch ideas and plans. We helped Oliver write descriptions under his sketches.

We are now encouraging Oliver in shared tasks with other children in his favourite area. Our conversations together in a small group have been about castles with ramparts and ballasts and large oak doors wide enough for chariots and cart. We are using the Internet to download architectural drawings and sketches. A group of two to three children (including Oliver) have begun to work from these designs to create structures.

We are introducing props to support shared engagement and leaving the space undisturbed for two to three days to provide the opportunity for the children to extend on their ideas over time.

VEYLDF principles:

- High expectations for every child
- Integrated teaching and learning approaches
- Reflective practice

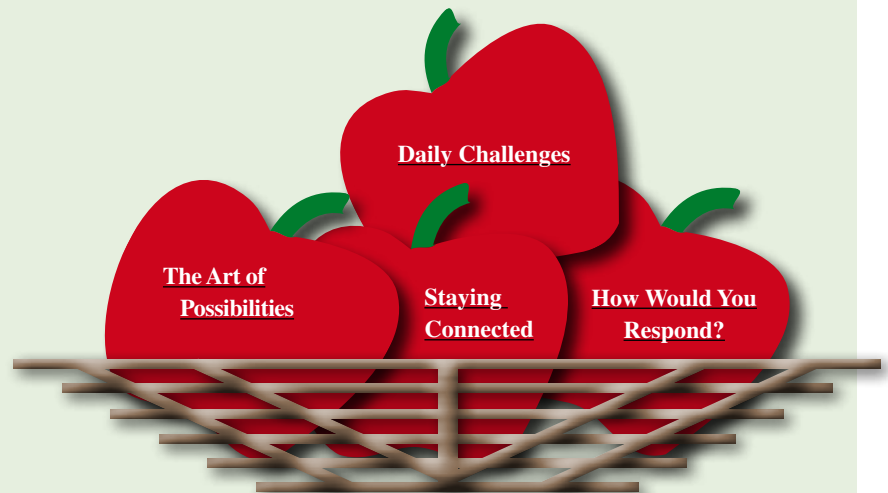
VEYLDF/ EYLF outcomes:

- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

National Quality Standard Areas:

- Educational program and practice

Links to reflective tools



Exchanges and changes

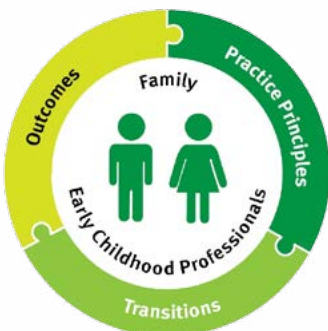
The Early Years Unit is keen to hear from you regarding:

- questions about implementation
- changes and adaptations you have made
- interesting discussions in your workplace about the Framework
- what's happening in your community.

We would also like to invite comment regarding:

- feedback about the EYE
- suggestions/requests for articles that will support your team.

Simply email: veyldf@edumail.vic.gov.au



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Mythbuster

'I've read the frameworks and I don't have to change anything I'm doing at my preschool.'

In 2010 early childhood educators are making a space to:

- understand the need for change
- implement the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)¹
- interpret the learning frameworks with colleagues and access professional learning, resources and networks to support one another with the implementation of the frameworks
- begin the process of planning to put the new National Quality Standard into practice.



What is the National Quality Standard?

The National Quality Standard (NQS) outlines seven areas that have been identified by research as critical to the provision of quality early childhood education and care.

From 1 January 2012, all long day care, family day care, outside school hours care services and preschools will be assessed and rated against the NQS.

The seven quality areas are:

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements, including staff-to-child ratios and qualifications
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Leadership and service management.

It is expected that all early childhood services will need to:

- provide evidence of their use of the EYLF and VEYLDF in designing and delivering early learning programs
- underpin all their practices and policies on the holistic wellbeing of every child.

Information about the NQS is available at:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Policy_Agenda/Quality/Pages/QualityStandards.aspx

¹ The EYLF and VEYLDF are companion documents. They are key components of the Australian and Victorian Government's quality reform agenda for all early childhood education and care settings.