



Warooka School Based Preschool Cycle of Inquiry

Cycle of Inquiry – Research Questions

Educator Research: How does embedding opportunities for choice-making, decision making and self-reflection within daily rituals and learning experiences strengthen children's agency and self-regulation?

Children's Research: How do choices and decisions help us learn, manage our feelings and be in charge of our learning?

Public Education Strategy



Area of Impact:

Learner Agency

Success Criteria

What will our Learners know, do and understand:

- Children are observed actively making choices about their play, learning environments, rituals and materials.
- Children demonstrate increasing ability to set, monitor, and achieve their own small goals.
- Educators intentionally model, scaffold, and encourage self-regulation strategies such as pausing, naming emotions, and problem-solving.

Our approach to supporting agency and self-regulation

Our approach to supporting children's agency and self-regulation is informed by Louise Porter's Guidance Approach, which prioritises meeting children's needs, teaching self-regulation skills, and embedding choice and reflection within program design to strengthen children's learner agency and self-regulation.

Where do we want to get to:	NQS-Standard/Element	How we will get there:	What will we need:
Child outcomes Children demonstrate increasing agency and self-regulation by confidently making choices, expressing their ideas, managing emotions, and reflecting on their learning with decreasing reliance on adult support across daily rituals, play and learning experiences.	QA1 – Educational Program and Practice 1.1.1 Approved learning framework informs program 1.2.1 Intentional teaching 1.2.2 Responsive teaching and scaffolding QA5 – Relationships with children 5.1.1 Positive educator–child interactions 5.1.2 Dignity and rights of the child	Provide daily opportunities for children to make meaningful choices (e.g. materials, play partners, where and how to engage) Support children to set simple, achievable intentions or goals for their play and learning Explicitly teach and revisit self-regulation strategies (e.g. naming feelings, calming strategies, asking for help) Build in short reflection moments during and after play where children talk about what they chose, how they felt and what they might try next time	- Visual supports to scaffold choice-making and self-regulation - Time within the daily program for children to practise goal-setting and reflection. - Access to calming and regulation resources - Educator awareness of individual children’s self-regulation strengths and needs.
Program and practice Opportunities for choice-making, decision-making and self-reflection are intentionally and consistently embedded within daily rituals, transitions, play and	QA1 – Educational Program and Practice 1.1.1 Approved learning framework 1.1.2 Child-centred 1.3.1 Assessment and planning cycle	Audit daily rituals, transitions and group times to identify and intentionally plan for choice points Embed reflection prompts into learning experiences (e.g. “How did you decide?”, “What	- Time for collaborative planning to intentionally embed choice and reflection across routines and learning experiences. - Agreed reflection prompts to be used consistently across the program.

learning experiences, rather than taught as isolated skills.	QA3 – Physical environment • 3.1.1 Fit for purpose (Inclusive environment supports learning)	worked?”) Plan learning experiences that are open-ended and flexible, allowing multiple pathways and outcomes Use our planning cycle to intentionally document where and how agency and self-regulation are being supported	• Flexible planning formats that allow for documentation of agency and self-regulation. • Ongoing review of rituals and group times to ensure they are developmentally achievable.
Educator Practice Educators consistently use intentional teaching strategies, shared language and reflective practice to scaffold children’s agency and self-regulation, responding to individual strengths, needs and interests.	QA1 – Educational Program and Practice • 1.2.1 Intentional teaching • 1.2.3 Child-directed learning QA4 – Staffing arrangements • 4.2.1 Professional collaboration • 4.2.2 Professional standards QA7 – Governance and leadership • 7.2.2 Educational leadership (Continuous improvement)	Engage in professional learning focused on learner agency, self-regulation and intentional teaching in the early years Develop and use shared language across educators to promote consistency (e.g. language of choice, feelings, problem-solving) Use critical reflection in preschool meetings to discuss what is working and where adjustments are needed	• Professional learning aligned to Louise Porter’s Guidance Approach and early years self-regulation. • Opportunities for professional dialogue and critical reflection during preschool meetings. • Shared language agreements to support consistency in how educators guide children. • Time and support to reflect on educator interactions and adjust practice.

		Reflect on educator interactions to ensure children are being supported to do things for themselves rather than having decisions made for them	
Environment and relationships Learning environments, routines and relationships are designed to be predictable, flexible and inclusive, enabling children to take increasing responsibility for their learning, behaviour and emotional regulation.	QA3 – Physical environment 3.1.1 fit for purpose(Inclusive and flexible environment) 3.2.1 Inclusive environment (Environment supports self-regulation) QA5 – Relationships with children 5.1.1 Positive Child-Educator interactions 5.2.1 Collaborative learning QA6 – Collaborative partnerships with families 6.1.2 Parent views are respected	Design learning environments with clearly defined but flexible areas that support independent access and decision-making Provide visual supports (routine cards, emotion visuals, choice boards) to support predictability and regulation Ensure calming and regulation spaces are available and accessible for children to use independently Foster respectful, responsive relationships where educators listen to children’s ideas and honour their decisions	- Purposefully designed learning environments that support autonomy, movement and choice. - Visual cues to support predictability and emotional literacy. - Dedicated spaces for children to self-soothe and regulate emotions. - Strong, respectful relationships built on listening to children’s perspectives. - Ongoing communication with families to support consistent approaches to guidance.

Actions (Give it a go)	On track	Evidence	What are our next steps? Potential adjustments?
	Needs attention/work in progress		
	Not on track		
	Date your notes to ensure you track and monitor adjustments and progress of your plan		
25/2/26 Child outcomes – Educator practice Environment and relationships	On track	We are using some simple non-verbal cues to children to assist with rituals and routines. Short reflection moments – very in the moment at the moment but not in group time at the moment as we following children’s lead and shorter group times at the moment. Visuals for educators to acknowledge children’s behaviours not praise Reflected on where lunch boxes are and they are now more flexible in allowing children to eat when hungry rather than just at set lunch times. Visual reminders for staff already up. Some visual cues for children in place – more to add.	Introducing the visual cards on lanyards to see if that assists students. Continue to follow children’s leads Order the Louise porter book for all educators. Explore cubby for safe space.
1/4/26 Child outcomes	On track	Lanyards were tried – need to continue with trying to use these with rituals and routines. Learning rituals more as time goes on. Visual boundary of cones is really helping in terms of boundaries.	

Educator practice Environment and relationships		Zones of regulation – Have been using them with the children. Focus on child protection curriculum. Might be better during gym and during spontaneous moments. Ordered the Louise Porter book it should be here soon. We will then schedule to read the chapters. Lunch boxes are going really well as giving children a lot more agency and choice. We have found only in morning session as it is possibly due to no breakfast and hungry. We have discussed around the bowls whether they need them for fruit bowls – will monitor this and possibly start of next term. Talk about starting with a positive at the end of every day and during preschool meetings. Cubby was ordered and this has arrived and it has been really good in safe calm space for the children – book time.	
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NQS Priorities 2026

Public Education Strategy	Area of Impact:  Learner Agency
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Where do we want to go:	NQS-Standard/Element	How we will get there:	What will we need:
Build our understanding and implementation of culturally responsive pedagogies into our program and practice.	QA1 Standard 1.1 Program Elements: 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3 Standard 1.2 Practice Elements: 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3 Standard 1.3 Assessment & planning Elements 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3 QA3 Standard: 3.1 physical environment - design Elements: 3.1.1	• Use the critical reflection focus overarching our program to consider how we are bringing cultural responsiveness into our program and individual learning plans. • Consultation with our local families and community on how we can be culturally responsive in our program design and practice. • Cultural responsiveness as an ongoing agenda item in Preschool Meetings. • Review, reflect on and implement culturally responsive	• Intercultural Development Self Reflection Tool AITSL • ECA Resources • EYLF V2.0 Principles and Practices • Draw, talk, write, share • Cultural responsive training PLINK

	Standard: 3.2 physical environment - use Elements 3.2.1 QA5 Standard: 5.1 relationships between educators and children Elements: 5.1.1, 5.1.2 – Standards: 5.2 relationships between children Elements: 5.2.1, 5.2.2 QA6 Standard: 6.1 Supportive relationships with families Elements: 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3 Standard: 6.2 Collaborative partnerships Elements: 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.	pedagogies and culturally inclusive pedagogies. • Review, reflect on and Continue to implement draw, talk, write, share.	
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