



# Indoor-outdoor free play:

## Links to National Quality Standards and the Early Years Learning Framework

### Key links to National Quality Standards

Quality Area	Standard	Element	Guidance
2: Children's health and safety	2.1 - Health: each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted	2.1.3 - Healthy lifestyle: healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child	<p><u>Assessors may observe:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indoor and outdoor areas that are organised in ways to promote safe physical play and activity for children of different age groups and capabilities</li> </ul> <p><u>Assessors may discuss how the service:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintains a balance between spontaneous and planned physical activity, and passive and active experiences, for all children</li> <li>Manages risk while providing a stimulating learning and play environment for children</li> <li>Considers children's voices in planning physical activities, including opportunities for physical play that support the abilities, diversity and backgrounds of each child attending the service</li> <li>Provides appropriate resources to support children's interest and participation in physical activity</li> </ul> <p><u>Assessors may sight:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the planned program incorporates physical activity that meets each child's capabilities and extends their development, including how it balances quiet/passive play times with more energetic outdoor play</li> <li>Evidence that information about the importance of physical activity to children's health and development is communicated to families</li> </ul>
3: Physical environment	3.1 – Design: the design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service	3.1.1 - Fit for purpose: outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.	<p><u>Assessors may observe:</u></p> <p>Facilities that enable interaction and convenient access between indoor and outdoor spaces.</p>



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Key links to National Quality Standards

Quality Area	Standard	Element	Guidance
3: Physical environment	3.2 – Use: the service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning	3.2.1 - Inclusive environment: outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments	<p><u>Assessors may observe:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenging elements of outdoor and indoor environments that allow for experiences that scaffold children's learning and development and offer opportunities for appropriate risk taking and risky play</li> <li>• Children actively engaged in a variety of rich, meaningful, enquiry-based experiences in both indoor and outdoor environments, with appropriate levels of challenge to support exploration and experimentation.</li> <li>• Children initiating their own experiences using equipment and resources that they can access independently.</li> <li>• Educators setting up and adapting the indoor and outdoor environments to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ encourage a free flow of activity throughout the day.</li> <li>▪ support children to create their own games and experiences.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Educators supporting children to move between environments.</li> </ul> <p><u>Assessors may sight:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documented learning programs that:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pay equal attention to planning outdoor and indoor environments to support children's learning outcomes and extend on child-led learning.</li> <li>○ Outline opportunities for children to engage in outdoor and indoor experiences, such as dramatic play, construction, music and exploration.</li> <li>○ Incorporate opportunities for children to be active and wholly engaged for long periods of uninterrupted play.</li> <li>○ Indicate that the outdoor and indoor spaces are re-organised to continuously engage children.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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Key links to Early Years Learning Framework

Practice	Description and application of practice when increasing opportunity for outdoor play
Holistic approaches	When early childhood educators take a holistic approach they pay attention to children’s physical, personal, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing as well as cognitive aspects of learning. An integrated, holistic approach to teaching and learning also focuses on connections to the natural world.
Responsiveness To Children	Educators are responsive to all children’s strengths, abilities and interests. Educators are also responsive to children’s ideas and play, which form an important basis for curriculum decision-making.
Learning Through Play	(Early childhood educators) create learning environments that encourage children to explore, solve problems, create and construct.
Learning Environments	Outdoor learning spaces are a feature of Australian learning environments. They offer a vast array of possibilities not available indoors. These spaces invite open-ended interactions, spontaneity, risk-taking, exploration, discovery and connection with nature.
Assessment For Learning	(Assessment) is important because it enables educators in partnership with families, children and other professionals to evaluate the effectiveness of learning opportunities, environments and experiences offered and the approaches taken to enable children’s learning. When educators reflect on their role in children’s learning and assessment they reflect on their own views and understandings of early childhood theory, research and practice to focus on the experiences and environments they provide and how that links to the intended learning outcomes

Learning Outcome	This is evident, for example, when children:	Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:
<b>1. Children have a strong sense of identity</b>	a. Children feel safe, secure, and supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>confidently explore and engage with social and physical environments through relationships and play</li> <li>initiate and join in play</li> </ul>
	b. Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>take considered risk in their decision-making and cope with the unexpected</li> <li>persist when faced with challenges and when first attempts are not successful</li> </ul>



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Learning Outcome	This is evident, for example, when children:		Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:
<p><b>1. Children have a strong sense of identity</b></p>	<p>c. Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organise learning environments in ways that promote small group interactions and play experiences</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world</b></p>	<p>a. Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understand different ways of contributing through play and projects</li> <li>demonstrate a sense of belonging and comfort in their environments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that children have the skills to participate and contribute to group play and projects</li> </ul>
	<p>b. Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use play to investigate, project and explore new ideas demonstrate an increasing knowledge of, and respect for natural and constructed environments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide children with access to a range of natural materials in their environment</li> </ul>




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Learning Outcome		This is evident, for example, when children:	Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:
<p><b>3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing</b></p> 	<p>a. Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make choices, accept challenges, take considered risks, manage change and cope with frustrations and the unexpected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote children’s sense of belonging, connectedness and wellbeing</li> <li>• challenge and support children to engage in and persevere at tasks and play</li> </ul>
	<p>b. Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are happy, healthy, safe and connected to others</li> <li>• use their sensory capabilities and dispositions with increasing integration, skill and purpose to explore and respond to their world</li> <li>• manipulate equipment and manage tools with increasing competence and skill</li> <li>• show enthusiasm for participating in physical play and negotiate play spaces to ensure the safety and wellbeing of themselves and others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• plan for and participate in energetic physical activity with children, including dance, drama, movement and games</li> <li>• provide a wide range of tools and materials to resource children’s fine and gross motor skills</li> <li>• discuss health and safety issues with children and involve them in developing guidelines to keep the environment safe for all</li> <li>• engage children in experiences, conversations and routines that promote healthy lifestyles and good nutrition</li> <li>• provide a range of active and restful experiences throughout the day and support children to make appropriate decisions regarding participation</li> </ul>



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Learning Outcome		This is evident, for example, when children:	Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:
<p><b>4. Children are confident and involved learners</b></p>	<p>a. Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity</p> <p>b. Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating</p> <p>c. Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>express wonder and interest in their environments</li> <li>are curious and enthusiastic participants in their learning</li> <li>use play to investigate, imagine and explore ideas</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>explore their environment</li> <li>manipulate objects and experiment with cause and effect, trial and error, and motion</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use their senses to explore natural and built environments</li> <li>explore ideas and theories using imagination, creativity and play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide learning environments that are flexible and open-ended</li> <li>model inquiry processes, including wonder, curiosity and imagination, try new ideas and take on challenges</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>plan learning environments with appropriate levels of challenge where children are encouraged to explore, experiment and take appropriate risks in their learning</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide sensory and exploratory experiences with natural and processed materials</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Children are effective communicators</b></p>	<p>Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engage children in play with words and sounds</li> </ul>



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