

# NQF Quality Areas

Director's Quick Reference — National Quality Framework, Education and Care Services National Law

## QA1 Educational Program & Practice

**Intent** *Each child's current knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.*

- **Meeting:** Program is documented, reflects all children, and is informed by the EYLF or MTOP.
- **Exceeding:** Program is highly responsive to each child's emerging strengths, interests and identities; critical reflection drives ongoing improvement.
- **Key evidence:** Learning stories, planning cycles, curriculum documents, educator reflections, EYLF/MTOP connections.
- **Director focus:** Ensure educators understand why they plan what they plan, not just what. Build reflection into the rhythm of the day.

## QA2 Children's Health & Safety

**Intent** *Each child's health is promoted, and every child is protected from harm.*

- **Meeting:** Risk assessments current; medication, allergy and health plans in place; supervision adequate.
- **Exceeding:** Health and safety are embedded in culture, not compliance — educators make proactive, child-centred decisions.
- **Key evidence:** Risk assessments, health action plans, supervision policies, incident records, WHS documentation.
- **Director focus:** Build a culture where near-misses are reported and discussed, not hidden. Review incident patterns quarterly.

## QA3 Physical Environment

**Intent** *The environment is inclusive, promotes competence, independent exploration and learning through play.*

- **Meeting:** Environment is safe, well-maintained, and provides varied play experiences inside and outside.
- **Exceeding:** Environment is purposefully designed to reflect children's identities and provoke deep inquiry.
- **Key evidence:** Environment audits, documentation of how space supports the program, family and child voice.
- **Director focus:** Involve educators in environment design decisions. Ask: does this space tell children they belong here?

## QA4 Staffing Arrangements

**Intent** *Staffing arrangements protect and enhance children's health, safety and wellbeing.*

- **Meeting:** Ratios met, qualifications verified, all mandatory training current, rosters comply with regulations.
- **Exceeding:** Staffing decisions are actively shaped by knowledge of individual children's needs and educator strengths.
- **Key evidence:** Qualification records, ratios documentation, staff-child relationship evidence, deployment decisions.
- **Director focus:** Think about who is with which children, not just how many adults are in the room. Intentional deployment matters.

## QA5

### Relationships with Children

#### Intent

*Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.*

- **Meeting:** Educators are warm, consistent, and responsive; children are treated with dignity.
- **Exceeding:** Deep, secure attachments are deliberately built; educators understand and respond to each child's communication.
- **Key evidence:** Observations of interactions, child voice in documentation, family feedback, continuity of care practices.
- **Director focus:** This is the QA most directly shaped by psychological safety — educators who feel safe build safer relationships with children.

## QA6

### Collaborative Partnerships with Families & Communities

#### Intent

*Collaborative relationships with families are fundamental to achieving quality outcomes for children.*

- **Meeting:** Families are welcomed, informed, and have meaningful opportunities to contribute.
- **Exceeding:** Partnerships with families are genuine, two-way, and shape the program and philosophy.
- **Key evidence:** Communication records, family engagement strategies, community partnerships, enrolment practices.
- **Director focus:** Ask: do families feel known here, not just informed? Review how family knowledge enters your program planning.

## QA7

### Governance & Leadership

#### Intent

*Effective leadership and governance of the service contributes to quality environments and sustainable service delivery.*

- **Meeting:** Philosophy, policies and procedures are current, understood, and implemented consistently.
- **Exceeding:** Leadership is distributed; continuous improvement is embedded in culture, not just documented.
- **Key evidence:** QIP, policy review records, leadership development, team meeting records, critical reflection evidence.
- **Director focus:** QA7 is about the conditions you create for everything else. A strong QIP is a living document, not a compliance exercise.