



FREMANTLE LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

National Quality Standards

Background

The National Quality Standard (NQS), developed in partnership with State, Territory and Commonwealth Governments, is intended to deliver higher standards for young children in the areas of education, care and health across Australia.

In November 2013, the Minister for Education, the Hon Peter Collier, informed all principals that early childhood programs to Year 2 in Western Australian schools will be required to meet the NQS.

The NQS is informed by research about elements that optimise children's learning and development. These elements are organised into a series of standards, which make up seven quality areas. These are:



Each of the seven quality areas are made up of 15 standards which are in turn made up of further elements that set out the requirements of each standard.

Schools are required to submit an annual NQS Audit each year. Schools may request an external verification of their National Quality Standard School Audit.

NQS at the Fremantle Language Development Centre

The Fremantle Language Development Centre (LDC) embeds the seven quality areas in its school planning, policies and practices. Each year the Fremantle LDC engages in a self-assessment process (audit) which involves rating the school against the NQS and gathering evidence to support these ratings.

In 2018, the Fremantle LDC requested an external verification of the school's NQS Audit. The NQS verifiers met with administration and the NQS team leader to discuss the ratings made against the NQS and spend time visiting classrooms at all sites to observe practice and provide specific feedback in relation to the quality areas.

The NQS verifiers confirmed that the Fremantle LDC is **meeting all seven quality areas**, which is the highest rating a school can receive. This means that the Fremantle LDC has met every element that makes up each of the standards. The Fremantle LDC is committed to maintaining its high standard of early childhood education.

Quality Areas

The NQS consists of seven quality areas.

Quality Area 1: Educational Program & Practice

Quality Area 1 focuses on ensuring that the educational program and practice of educators are child-centred, stimulating and maximise opportunities for enhancing and extending each child's learning and development. It recognises that a quality program that builds on children's individual knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests is likely to have long term benefits for children and for broader society.

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Quality Area 2 reinforces children's right to experience quality teaching and learning in an environment that provides for their health and safety. Educators support this when they promote each child's wellbeing and healthy lifestyle, and encourage each child's growing competence, confidence and independence. School administrators and educators have responsibility for supporting health, protection, safety and wellbeing of all children. In exercising their responsibilities, they must take reasonable care to protect children from foreseeable risk of harm, injury and infection.

Quality Area 3: Physical Environment

Quality Area 3 focuses on the physical environment. The physical environment is critical to:

- contributing to children's wellbeing, creativity and developing independence
- providing a diverse range of experiences that promote children's learning and development
- keeping children safe
- creating or organising spaces to reduce the risk of injury.

Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements

Quality Area 4 focuses on the professionalism of qualified educators who build warm, respectful relationships with children, create predictable environments and promote children's active engagement with the learning program. A collaborative and ethical culture where professional standards guide all aspects of practice is critical in high performing schools. School administrators and educators play a vital role in establishing effective and ethical practices.

Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children

Quality Area 5 focuses on school administrators and educators developing responsive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships with children that promote their wellbeing, self-esteem, sense of security and belonging. Relationships of this kind encourage children to explore environments and engage in play and learning.

Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

Quality Area 6 focuses on supportive and respectful relationships with families, which are fundamental to achieving quality outcomes for all children. Community partnerships that are based on active communication, consultation and collaboration contribute to children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.

Quality Area 7: Governance & Leadership

Quality Area 7 focuses on effective leadership and governance of the school to establish and maintain conditions required for high quality teaching and learning in the early years. Effective leaders establish shared values for the school that reflect its context and professional standing in the community and set clear directions for continuous improvement. Governance refers to the systems in place to support effective management and operation of the school consistent with Department policies and the school's statement of philosophy (or similar), which sets out the school's core values.