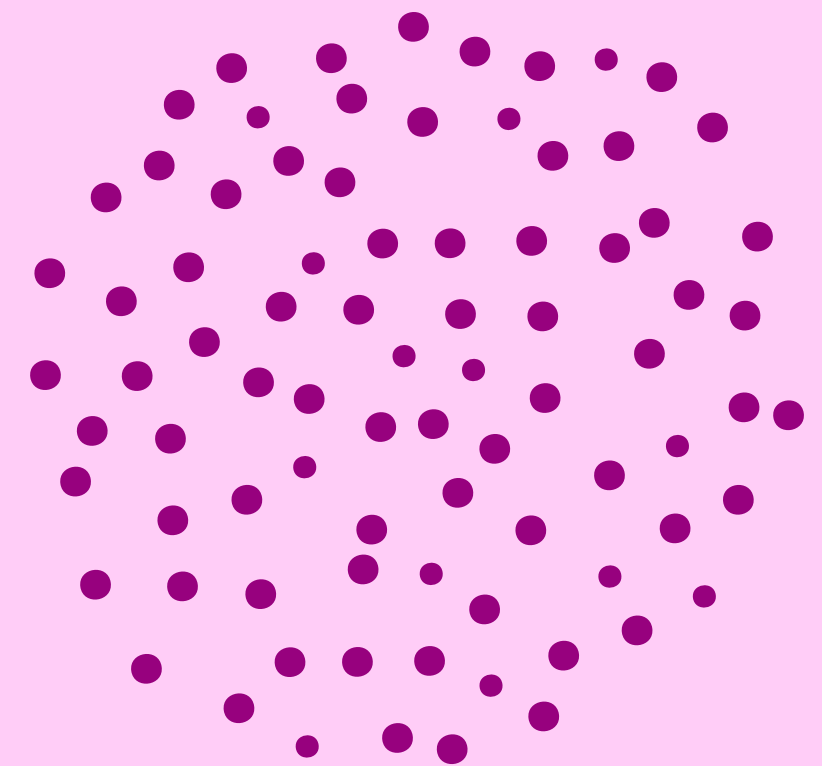




EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2021



Baringa's History

Baringa Early Learning Centre is a not for profit, community organisation and registered charity.

In 1979, the Baringa Gardens Community Association opened a playgroup and occasional child care centre at the Baringa Gardens Flats in Melba ACT. It was staffed by a nurse and volunteer mothers, to support single-parent families and low-income residents in the government housing complex.

A decade later in 1989, the centre was moved to its current location when the then Spence Primary School closed. In 1994, the organisation was renamed Baringa Child-Care Centre Association Incorporated. In 2019, the service rebranded as Baringa Early Learning Centre, to reflect the focus on early childhood education and professional recognition of educators.

Baringa has undergone changes throughout the years. The centre continues to blossom in its passion and professionalism, maintaining the core values of offering quality early childhood education and care.



BELONGING

We place great emphasis on connections for children and families within our service. We acknowledge each child and each family's unique background, culture, beliefs and prior experiences and skills to form practices that create a sense of belonging.

ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PERSPECTIVES

We work with children to explore concepts related to Indigenous worldviews to enrich their understanding of the place in which we reside and to which we are connected. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are embedded within our daily practice and planning with guidance from local Elders and Yunkaporta's eight ways of learning.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is an essential tool to help us plan for and support children's learning. Through assessment, we collect information to plan effectively, create rich educational experiences and generate pathways for children's ongoing learning and development..

RELATIONSHIPS

We encourage the formation of safe, secure and supportive relationships. We identify that relationships are essential to children's learning thus building connections and promoting the creation of bonds. We value rich, trusting and respectful partnerships with families and the community.

DISPOSITIONS OF LEARNING

We provide learning environments in a way where every child has the opportunity to experience curiosity, cooperation, creativity, persistence and enthusiasm.

SCAFFOLDING

We embed high-quality scaffolding within experiences to promote a deeper level of learning. This support is tailored to meet the needs of each child.

Our practice promotes learning that is, accessible to all.

BEING

We strongly support children's right to 'be'. We provide flexible, supportive and inclusive care where children are empowered to be present and deeply engaged in the world around them.

PEDAGOGY

Our pedagogy is based on a combination of core values, experiences and professional knowledge about child development and education. We utilise reflective practices to ensure that our pedagogy is relative and effective.

BECOMING

We take an active role in recognising and nurturing children's abilities. We support their future success and happiness and aim for each child to develop and realise their potential.

RESILIENCE

We create brave environments that promote perseverance positivity, confidence and a sense of self-belief thus enabling children to succeed when forced with adversity.

DIVERSITY

We ensure that everyone feels welcome, valued and accepted, irrespective of their age, culture, background or ability.

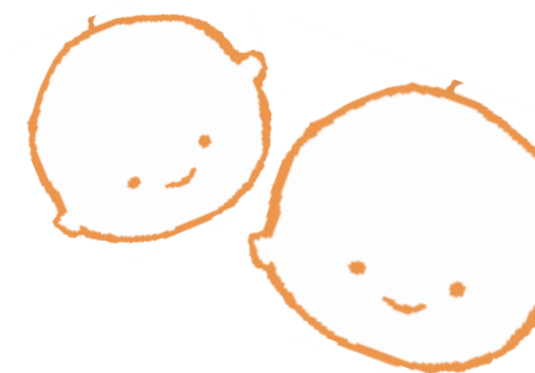
We acknowledge that children learn within their family/community groups and bring their rich knowledge, a range of experiences and identities to their learning.

AGENCY

We support the development of independence as each child discovers their abilities to make their decisions and to develop the confidence to explore and make sense of their surroundings. A sense of agency is an important part of a strong sense of identity.

PLAY

We facilitate play-based learning to empower children to make sense of their world, develop and explore their interests and ideas, develop curiosity, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Through play, we build relationship, develop social skills and expand language. While engaging in play we support, guide and extend children's learning and development.





About Baringa

NOMINATED SUPERVISOR

Betty Lam

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APPROVED PROVIDER

Baringa Board of Directors

Jolanta Moore (Chair)

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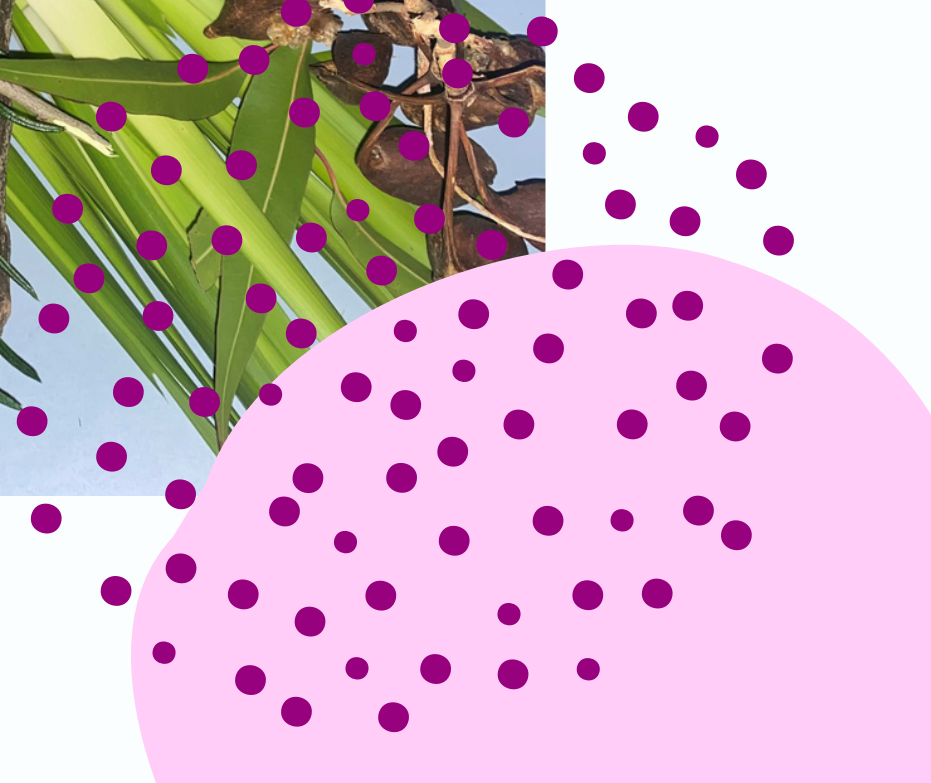
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- One week closure between Christmas and New Year
- Closed on Public Holidays
- Free parking on site for families, staff and community members
- Disabled access and facilities
- Part of the Spence/Mount Roger precinct

CHILDREN'S ROOMS

The names for our children's rooms were chosen in consultation with our educators and represent the beginning of our beautiful native gardens from our local environment. Children at Baringa are encouraged to understand the importance of our natural environment and learn ways to respect and contribute to its ongoing care.

- Melaleuca Room
- Hakea Room
- Acacia Room
- Banksia Room
- Grevillea Room
- Hibiscus Room



Strengths

Consultations with children, parents and educators highlighted key strengths...

- Educational program
- Outdoor playspace
- Warm work environment
- Genuine relationships with children
- Collaborative partnership with families
- Supportive management



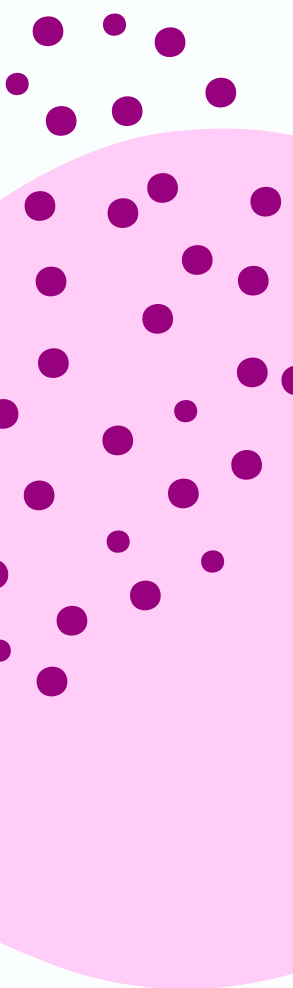
Educational Program

QUALITY AREA 1

- Grandparents day initiative
- Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives within the program
- Sustainable practices embedded into the children's daily routine
- Sign language incorporation
- "Travelling the world in ten days" vacation care program during COVID restrictions
- New perspectives from newly recruited experienced educators
- A program that supports children to explore, learn and develop at a rate that suits the individual child

"We have grown with including Aboriginal perspectives and our Acknowledgement of Country. I like seeing the key word sign, the children know it." - an educator

STRENGTHS





STRENGTHS

Outdoor Education and Playspace

QUALITY AREA 3

- New playground upgrades
- Forming a staff outdoor committee
- Utilisation of various play space environments in the outdoor setting





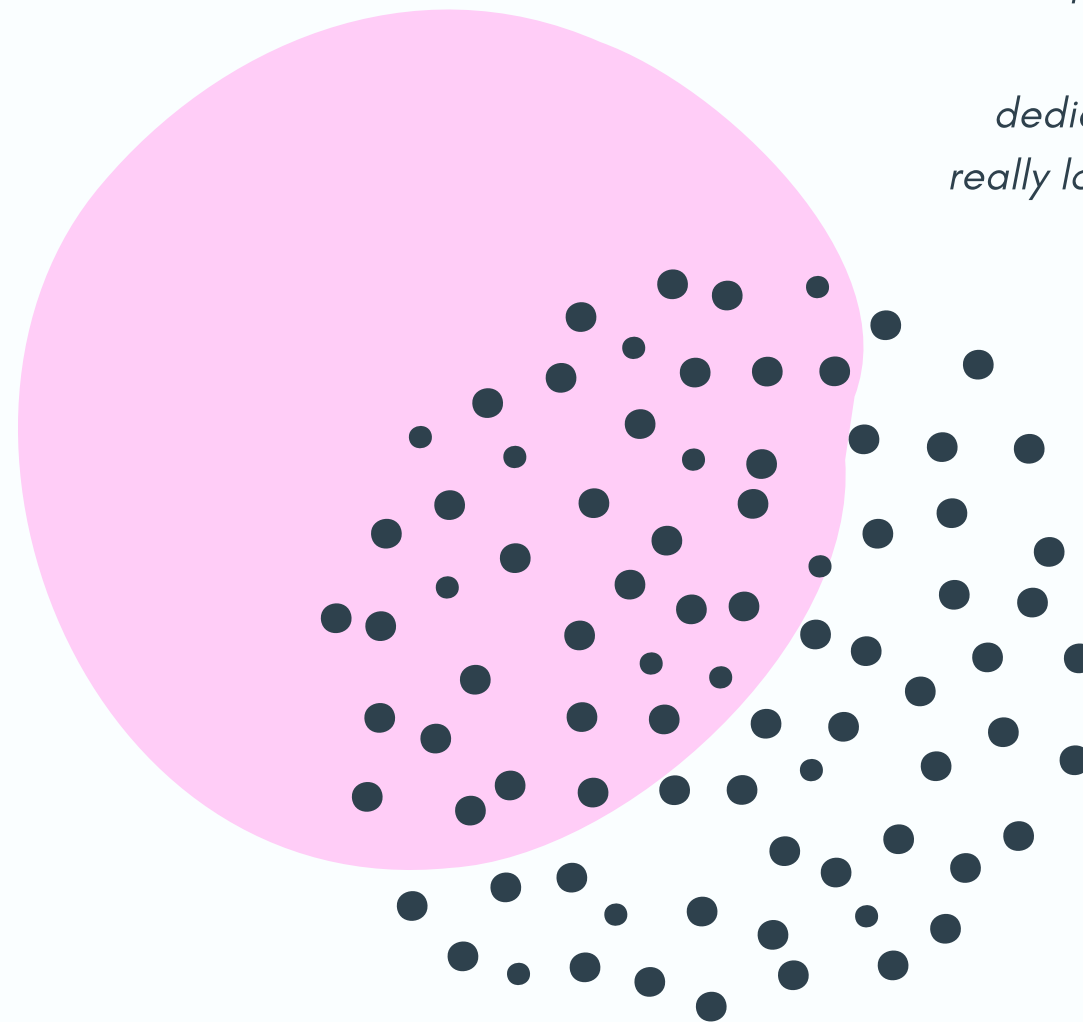
Welcoming work environment

QUALITY AREA 4

- Raised professionalism within the workplace
- External recruitment rounds incorporating experienced educators from the profession
- Genuine relationships amongst colleagues that supports building people up
- Investment in committed educators dedicated in early childhood

"How much my confidence has grown, especially when talking to families. I use to struggle and try and avoid talking with parents. I feel my knowledge has grown from my Diploma which has helped me with what I do at work with the children." - an educator

"I've only just started at Baringa so I don't have a lot of experiences at the centre to draw from but in the few months I've been here, something that has really stood out to me is the passion and dedication the staff show / demonstrate towards the children it's really lovely to see that everyone who works in the centre seems like they genuinely enjoy their jobs." - educator



STRENGTHS

Relationships with children

QUALITY AREA 5

"The personalised care by the Hakea staff. They feel like part of our family as they genuinely love and care about our child." - a parent

"The love, care and support the educators give my child. I love to see the special relationships formed when educators really care about the children" - a parent

"I love the child carers. They are an amazing bunch of young people that use their skills and knowledge about children to keep them happy and comfortable when mummy and daddy have to leave them there in the morning." - a parent



"I love the positive relationships the educators have formed with my son. He is always warmly welcomed and genuine interest is shown in his well-being. He is well supported to try new activities and undertake challenges with confidence. We always feel he is well cared for and his belongings are looked after too. There seems to be great systems in place in the Hakea room." - a parent

"Have really loved the staff - making Joshua feel safe and secure as he commenced his Baringa adventures; and how they have created a great program to help all of the room children explore, learn and develop at a rate that suits the individual child" - a parent



"The staff all talk so kindly to and of the children and during all group and play times, the staff are really engaged with the children ... less time seems to be spent following the children around picking up every little mess they make as soon as they make it, rather the staff spends quality time with the children and then help them and encourages them to tidy later which I think is so much better." - an educator

Collaborative partnership with families & community

QUALITY AREA 6

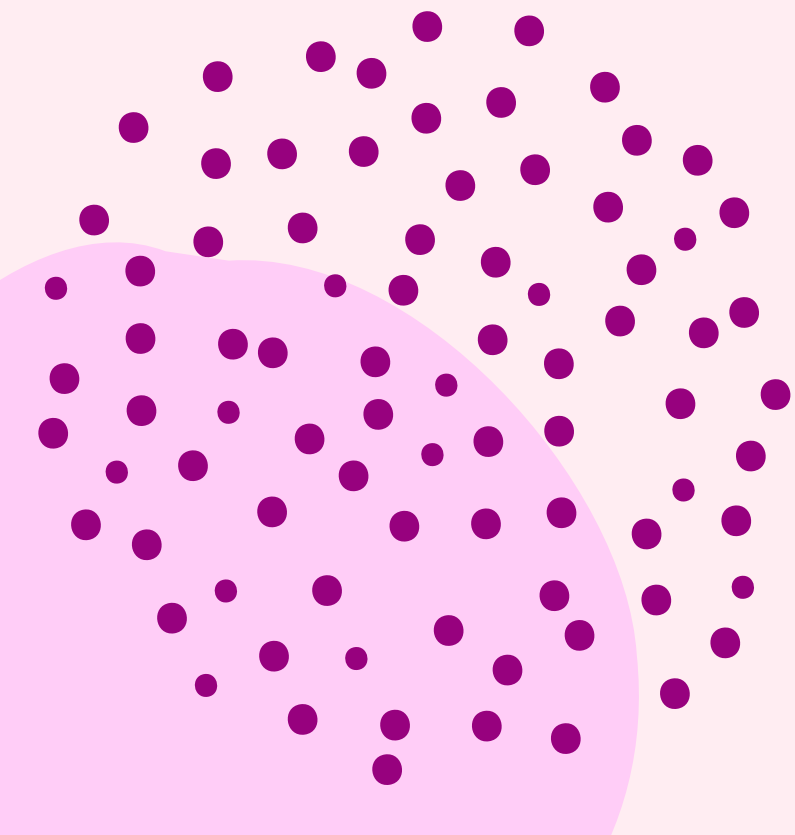
- Utilisation of difference means of communication to connect with families about their children's day (i.e. Facebook, Storypark, newsletter)
- Genuine relationships are formed with families to support each child's care and education
- Use of Child Connect platform to support more families in education and care for their children
- Building relationships with local ministers and politicians



"The educator relationships. They have been much more talkative and engaging to parents. It's so heart-warming when they refer to parents by name. It really shows they value the relationships with the parent community ... so keep it up!" - a parent



"This year Baringa has been my family's constant source of stability and I cannot thank you for that. It has been an incredibly hard year in the world and having a second home and family in Baringa has meant the world to us!" - a parent





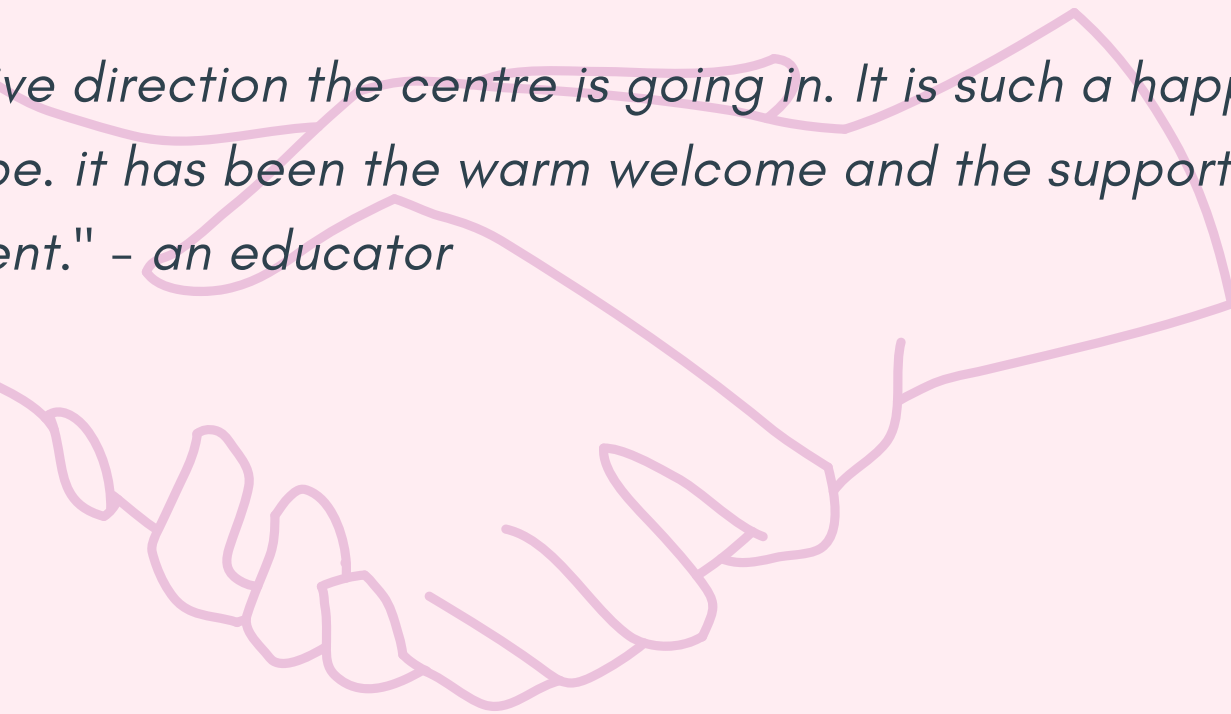
Leadership & Management

QUALITY AREA 7

- Responsiveness with taking on feedback and managing concerns with families
- Supportive towards educators, staff and families
- Innovative direction in leading Early Childhood Education
- Diverse skill-set Board of Directors
- Educational Leader and Early Childhood Teachers are being encouraged and supported to further develop their qualification



"I love the positive direction the centre is going in. It is such a happy and warm place to be. It has been the warm welcome and the supportiveness from management." - an educator



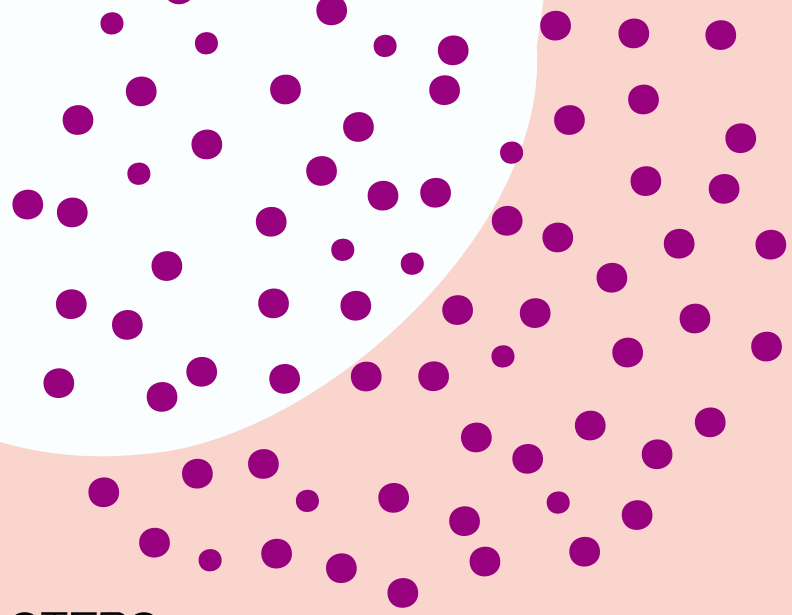
Baringa Priorities

We will focus on the following THREE PRIORITIES in the next 12 months...

- Passionate and Professional Culture
- The Environment and Resources
- Healthy Wellbeing



Quality Improvement Plan



IDENTIFIED IMPROVEMENT

Our program requires educators to further knowledge and ability to ensure the delivery of our education and care program can best support our children's development and learning.

STEPS

Utilise a more effective performance appraisal process which includes:

- identifying areas of helpful skills desired
- finding areas of how to improve
- having individual learning plans for our educators to identify their current knowledge and what they would like to further learn
- assess day to day practice of educators and identify areas that would benefit
- reflecting on their professionalism within the organisation
- utilisation of the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement terms
- providing benefits for those upskilling their studies above and beyond the requirement
- encouragement of further education

SUCCESS MEASURE

When educators feel equipped in delivering a planned activity with an informed understanding of the purpose and able to execute it

When families ask any educator about their child's development, the educator is confident and able to provide the relevant information

When educators are able to identify through their interactions with children if the child requires further support in specific areas including additional needs



Passionate and Professional Culture

QUALITY AREA 1; ELEMENT 4.2.2 : HIGH PRIORITY : ONGOING



GOAL

Our educators:

- know and understand the planning cycle
- are able to identify and support children with additional learning and developmental needs
- can deliver a program that enhances every child's learning based on the program and their knowledge
- are confident within their roles
- are feeling supported and are provided with opportunities to upskill areas of improvement

THE ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES

QUALITY AREA 3
MEDIUM PRIORITY
ONGOING

IDENTIFIED IMPROVEMENT

Our existing environment requires a lot of educator involvement and restricts a lot of children's agency to engage in.

It can be more inviting for children to engage in.

To have sufficient resources for children to engage with.

GOAL

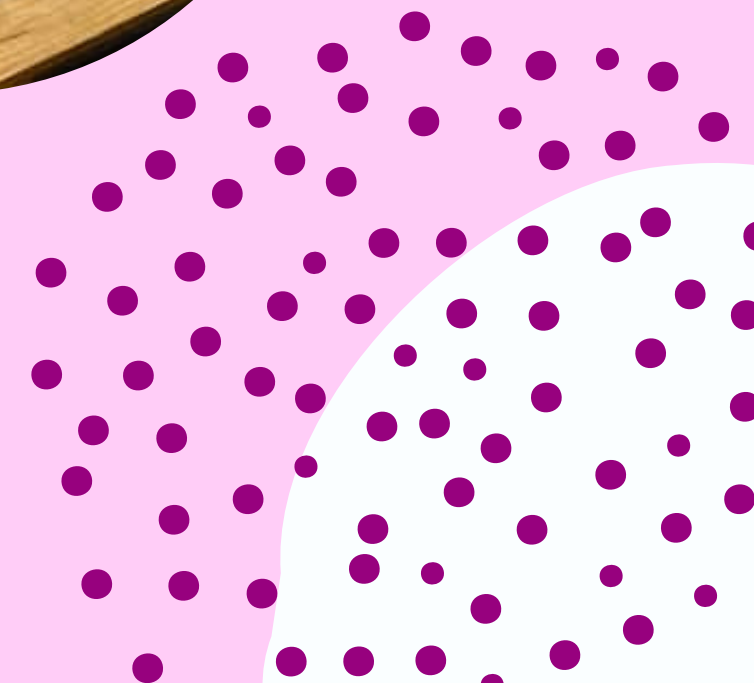
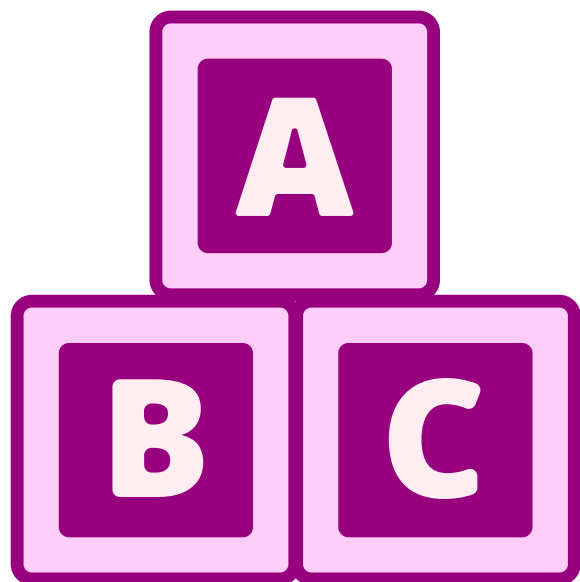
To provide an environment that supports children's growth and learning. Allowing the learning environment and resources to support intentional learning with open ended resources and a more natural environment to sustain.

STEPS

Seek ideas that support the above by visiting other centres; consultation with all stakeholders; application of grants for funds; collaboration with professionals for opinions; acquiring appropriate resources for the children.

SUCCESS MEASURE

An environment that supports children's growth and learning
The learning environment act as the third teacher for our children



Healthy Wellbeing

STANDARD 4.2 | MEDIUM PRIORITY | ONGOING

IDENTIFIED IMPROVEMENT

At the service, our children, families and educators can improve their knowledge, understanding, practice and awareness of healthy wellbeing, physically and mentally.

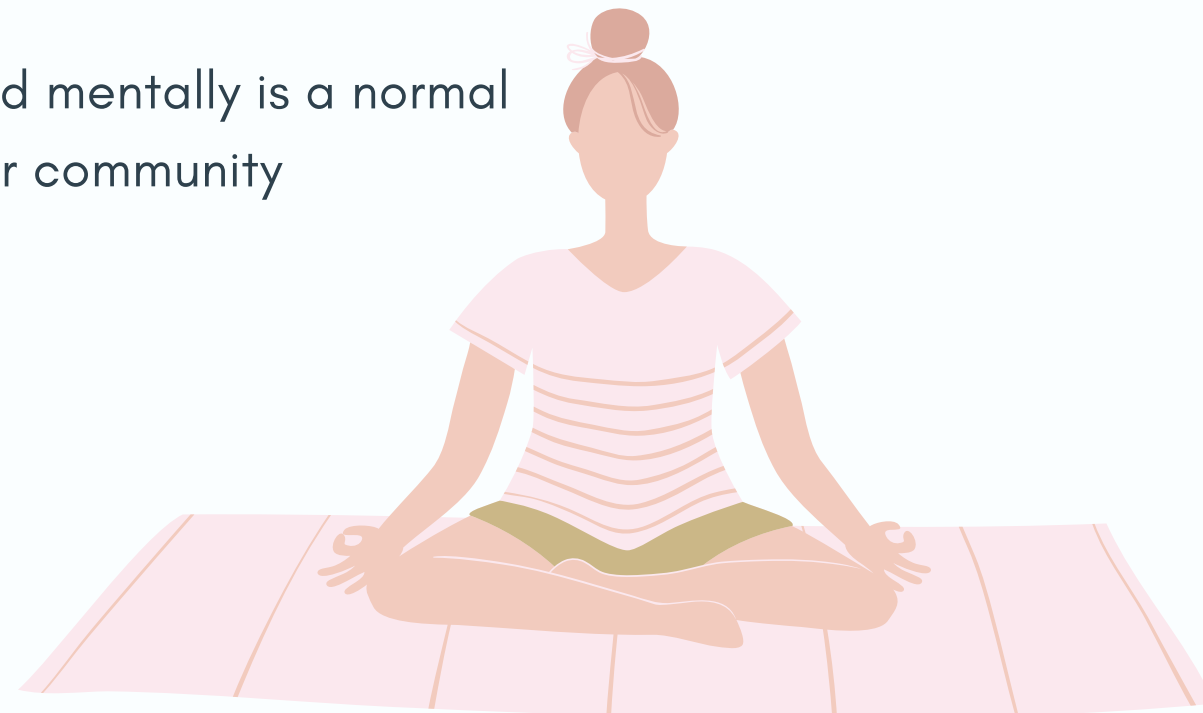
GOAL

To embed the practice of healthy wellbeing within the children's program, daily routines and the educators' practice.
To engage with families with their interest in order to provide a holistic approach to the centre and the community.

SUCCESS MEASURE

When healthy wellbeing, awareness is apparent to educators, children and their families.

When healthy wellbeing, physically and mentally is a normal discussion and viewed positively in our community



STEPS

- Engaging health/allied health professionals for staff PD, parent information nights (or Zoom Q&As)
- Advice on how we can review/implement practices within Baringa
- Link with existing Early Childhood Education programs, such as Kids at Play, Nourishing Little Minds, Paddock to Plate and resources to incorporate into education programs
- Partnering with local fitness/health providers, e.g. gym/studio/physio community partners who can give Baringa staff & parents discounted memberships in exchange for promotions/marketing
- Look at opportunities on how healthy lifestyles can be made accessible to staff, both physical and mental health, e.g. mindfulness/meditation, promote Benestar (coaching and crisis support), fund staff to do Accidental Counselling course, supply of healthy foods, etc.
- Identify Canberra events and invite staff/parents to join in/enter a team, e.g. Australian Running Festival, NAIDOC Week Indigenous Marathon Foundation Festival, Breast Cancer Mothers Day Classic
- Review/adapt incremental changes to menu, to be led by Centre Cook