



PRACTICE

Learning environments

Indoor and outdoor environments include physical, social, temporal, and intellectual elements that support children's learning, development, and wellbeing. These elements should be equally considered as the environment is essential to the teaching and learning program.

- **Physical elements** include safe, accessible spaces for children to work alone or engage in group interactions. A thoughtfully arranged design incorporates both fixed and flexible equipment, resources, technologies and materials.
- **Social elements** include opportunities for children to build relationships, collaborate, and communicate with peers and adults, while also supporting the development of emotional development, self-identity and self-regulation.
- **Temporal elements** refer to the timing, sequence, and pace of routines and activities throughout the day, and how the space is used to support these rhythms.
- **Intellectual elements** support children's thinking, curiosity and their ability to make meaning from the world around them. Engaging materials and experiences stimulate exploration, critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity to challenge children and support development of 21st century skills.

All learning spaces should be inclusive, safe and reflective of children's identities, cultures, capabilities and ideas. Co-designing the learning environment with children and families fosters a sense of belonging and ownership and the creation of meaningful, familiar spaces. This provides opportunities to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives throughout the curriculum and work collaboratively with culturally and linguistically diverse children and families.

A dynamic and intentional learning environment supports children's ideas and interests, alongside curriculum and learning outcomes. Children have opportunities to engage in deep, uninterrupted learning which can be revisited. Educators play an active role as children practise skills and new concepts in a variety of ways by observing and scaffolding learning through open-ended questions and sustained shared conversations.

Reflective Question 1

How do you intentionally plan for the physical, social, temporal and intellectual elements of the indoor and outdoor environments to support each child's learning, development and wellbeing?

Reflective Question 2

How do your indoor and outdoor environments foster curiosity, problem-solving and the development of 21st century skills?

Reflective Question 3

How do your learning environments reflect and respond to the diverse identities, cultures, and capabilities of the children and their families to promote a sense of belonging?

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