

TCH10519: LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Assignment 2:

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS put to the educational leaders

1. Describe your position as educational leader: How long have you been the educational leader? What is your qualification; What are the key roles and responsibilities for you as the leader?

As an educational leader your role is multifaceted. You work with families, staff, children, community and C&K to deliver on outcomes. I have been an educational leader since 2012 when appointed at C&K Coolangatta and obtained the qualifications B.Teach, B.Ed. Dip C. C.

The roles and responsibilities are to help staff assess the services educational program and care against the NQF exceeding practise. This happens in a multitude of ways; staff meetings, reflective practitioner questions, journal articles, QIP, staff appraisals. The assessment allows the team to validate their practice and to review how we can change things if required.

C&K also have a curriculum advisory team which provides reports on the service and staff. The advisors comments are also used to better improve quality care.

2. Can you talk about your leadership style and how is it demonstrated in practice?

I am a big believer in making use of time effectively, staff have families and lives outside of work and all thinking and doing should be done in work time. Hence, we make time at the beginning of our day to get together to discuss leadership, operational issues, children etc. These comments and reflections are recorded in our team leadership journal. It also allows me to follow up with readings or supportive information for staff is we are experiencing any challenges. It also allows us to share interest areas which I can follow up with as an educational leader.

3. Can you talk about the rewards of this position- and provide examples?

The rewards of this position lay in my ability to have a harmonious work environment where staff feel they can have a voice and are supported in their own teaching journey. A staff member has a keen interest in nature and the environment so we looked at how we could support this interest and sent her on a PD with her then bringing this information back to the centre. She then helped the staff to implement these ideas. We now have an area where children can build from loose parts in the service.

4. What challenges do you face in this role? Can you talk about how you are meeting these challenges?

There are a lot of stakeholders contributing to the development of the centre. A lot of pieces of paper that you are required to keep track of; PPR, Business development plans, QIPs, Staff appraisals, Leadership folders, Strategic management plans, assessment tools. All of them impact on what direction you take as a leader. Of course, families and community demographic also play a part and this needs to be factored in as well. Encouraging and supporting families to take part in the service is tricky as families are very busy. Our service conducts CAG meeting allowing parents a forum in which to discuss the operation of the service, we also have storypark (like facebook) where families can add ideas about the service. We have other areas inside the room where parents can add their ideas as well. We have put measures in place to gain their feedback but this still continues to be our biggest hurdle.

Parents do love the communication about the about the learning and how curriculum decisions are made. As an educational leaders it is very rewarding to see parents understand the learning process that their children take being involved in a kindergarten program.

5. How do you demonstrate quality practice through your leadership role?

In our journal we demonstrate best practice by linking it back to what we do in the classroom. We take a reflective question or assessment tool and we date what we do and how we do it to show that this practice is occurring in our service program.

Communication is the key to effective leadership. If you have established routines by which to share and exchange ideas with your staff and lead them in positive discussion then you will have effective leadership and care. Recently our staff came in for a zoom conference

for Sorry Day we discussed how we felt about this afterwards and how we would introduce this topic to the children. We recorded these thoughts in our collaborative teaching journal.

6. How has your role as educational leader influenced education outcomes for children; what are examples of this?

We are all better at delivering high quality care when we have the time to be intentional about our practise and what we offer to children. Having this time is crucial for staff to focus, plan and implement.

- An Educational Leader demonstrate a deep understanding of the requirements of each standard, concepts and commitment to high quality practice
 - Educational leaders promote learning and development to families through extracts in their newsletters and attachments to daily reflection sheets. Evidence provided.
 - The Educational leader sets readings for each staff meeting as a strategy of developing curriculum/teaching and learning goals.
 - Well established processes govern and drive continuous quality improvement
 - Risk assessments are conducted and kept on site for relevant activities
 - Staff recruitment and selection are conducted through HR
 - The service philosophy is reviewed regularly by staff, families and children
 - Staff appraisals are conducted annually and performance is evaluated. Individual developmental plans are completed and help support performance. Individual staff folders show evidence of these processes.
 - Handover practices are achieved for staff changes to ensure effective communication and smooth operation of the service.
 - Professional development logs are kept on file reflecting educators willingness to update their knowledge and skills. Log kept on file.
 - Induction procedures are comprehensive: Staff Handbook, Induction Checklist etc
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- Strategic Management Plan ensures the delivery of on-going improvements. This is documented in Quarterly service report and PAG are invited to answer questions and contribute to their vision of the service.
 - Parent Surveys are used to gain feedback from members. A parent survey action plan is completed.
 - Centre policies are reviewed regularly and parent feedback is sought through the PAG meetings and other forms of communication. PAG powerpoint explaining function of PAG.

Staff journal, staff meetings show evidence of staff sharing, reflecting and using decision making skills. These meetings affirm, challenge and support each other and align with the code of conduct and code of ethics. This is also a time used to reflect on pedagogical knowledge and curriculum delivery.

Staff regularly have opportunities to collaborate, support one another and discuss strategies. They analyse and reflect on pedagogical knowledge and curriculum delivery.

These include: contributing to collaborative journal, story park, informal discussions, 5 minute meetings, self assessment through QIP, educational leader feedback to articles.

Staff meetings and 5 minute meetings prior to work all staff the opportunity to discuss individual children and the children's learning goals.

Leadership folder is in kitchen and in storypark each educator is able to provide the team with an interesting article book or research paper to challenge our practices and approaches

Decision making processes are informed by professional standards, service code of conduct and ethics.

Decision making and problem solving is shared with the families via CAG and storypark seeing their informed voices
Educators build relationships with members of the community that included exchange of ideas and best practise. Regional Hub exchanges information about the regions goals.
All staff recognise diversity as a strength and work together to promote a culture of inclusiveness and belonging
All member of the service tam consistently identify culturally sensitive ways to communicate and engage with families.

- Staff professional development plan supports educators to build capacity through extended learning opportunities. The staff member is able to explain how the service performance evaluation process consistently supports their learning and development goals and growth
 - The educational leader is able to discuss and demonstrate how they are supported by the services leadership team and work collaboratively with educators
 - Staff are able to discuss and demonstrate how they are supported by the education leader to learn and grow professionally to consistently deliver on each child's learning.
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- The leadership team regularly reflect on the QIP
 - Members of the team regularly reflect on their own learning and development
 - Staff regularly reflect on their practise evaluating it against the exceeding expectations and goals. Suggested changes are implemented.
 - Children's service managers, Inclusion support officer and curriculum officer reflect on service operation providing a report. Suggested changes are implemented.
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- The QIP is discussed at each CAG meeting. It is displayed in the foyer for comment and it is uploaded into storypark for families
 - Families are encouraged and supported to share their child's goals and expectations for their child to inform the educational program
 - The service surveys families; maintaining partnerships that strengthen the Quality improvement process
 - Quality improvement processes contribute to a culture inclusiveness and a sense of belonging at the service.
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<p>2. Practice is informed by critical reflection</p>	<p>Staff journal, staff meetings show evidence of staff sharing, reflecting and using decision making skills. These meetings affirm, challenge and support each other and align with the code of conduct and code of ethics. This is also a time used to reflect on pedagogical knowledge and curriculum delivery.</p> <p>Staff regularly have opportunities to collaborate, support one another and discuss strategies. They analyse and reflect on pedagogical knowledge and curriculum delivery. These include: contributing to collaborative journal, story park, informal discussions, 5 minute meetings, self assessment through QIP, educational leader feedback to articles. Staff meetings and 5 minute meetings prior to work all staff the opportunity to discuss individual children and the children's learning goals.</p> <p>Leadership folder is in kitchen and in storypark each educator is able to provide the team with an interesting article book or research paper to challenge our practices and approaches</p> <p>Decision making processes are informed by professional standards, service code of conduct and ethics.</p>
<p>3. Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families, and/or community</p>	<p>Decision making and problem solving is shared with the families via CAG and storypark seeing their informed voices</p> <p>Educators build relationships with members of the community that included exchange of ideas and best practise. Regional Hub exchanges information about the regions goals. All staff recognise diversity as a strength and work together to promote a culture of inclusiveness and belonging</p> <p>All member of the service team consistently identify culturally sensitive ways to communicate and engage with families.</p>

