Independent learning / Agency

Critical thinking / Problem solving

Creativity

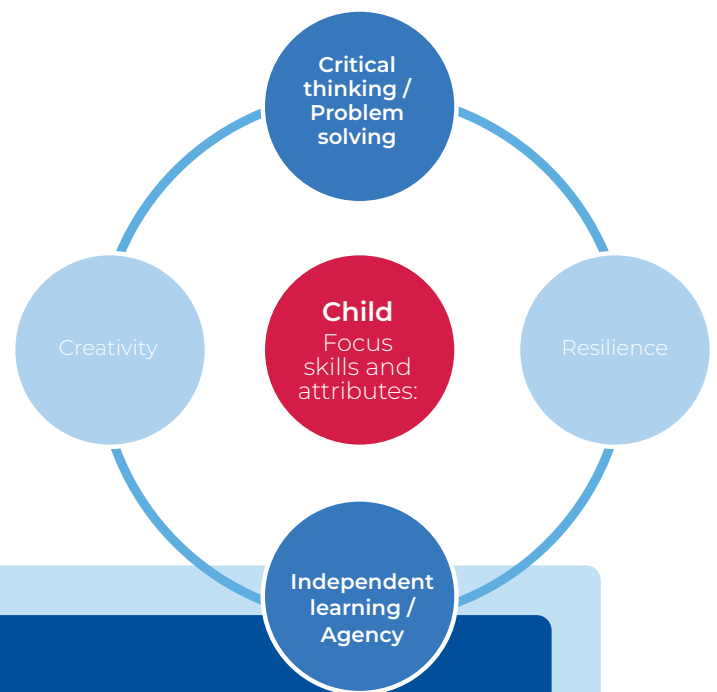**Child** Focus skills and attributes:

Resilience

Independent learning / Agency

Learning Goal

To develop a sense of agency within children, encouraging them to make their own choices and influence decisions that affect them.

Learning Objectives: (What will children learn?)

- To promote independence and build communication skills so children can express themselves confidently.
- To develop curiosity through meaningful opportunities for inquiry.
- To promote an inclusive, responsive and open-ended learning environment, facilitating autonomy and independence for children.

Suggested Activities

Genuine decision-making

- Trusting that children are competent decision makers can support children's agency.
- Engage children in developing the philosophy of the service.
- Involve children in discussions about service policies, procedures, practices and risk assessments.
- Provide opportunities for children to set learning goals.
- Consider a more democratic system of decision making.
- Consult children on matters that affect them, supporting children's voices.
- Engage children by using communication systems that support the involvement of all children.

Supporting agency: Involving children in decision-making

https://www.acecqa.
gov.au/sites/default/
files/2018-04/QA1_
SupportingAgencyInvolving
ChildreninDecisionMaking.
pdf

Suggested Activities

Responsive environments

Environments are set up in ways that provide children with a variety of resources to choose from and encourage independent choice.

- Include children in the design and layout of the physical space.
- Ensure play spaces are inclusive, safe and multi-functional.
- Have safe equipment shelving at child height, encouraging children to select the materials they would like to use.
- Assist children to function autonomously in distinct learning areas.
- Encourage free flow of activity throughout the day, including free movement between indoor and outdoor learning environments.

Fostering a sense of inquiry

Work closely with children, facilitating opportunities for learning and encouraging individual expression, problem solving and critical thinking.

- Initiate inquiries through questions, problems or ideas.
- Encourage children to hypothesise, theorise and wonder.
- Facilitate learning experiences that can be returned to and lend themselves to active engagement with children.
- Create an 'I wonder' chart to capture the questions children pose that can form the basis of an inquiry.

Open-ended learning

Open-ended resources are resources that have multiple uses and give children the freedom to explore. They inspire creativity and imagination in their own unique way.

Open-ended resources can include loose parts. Loose parts are materials that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, and taken apart and put back together in multiple ways. Examples include:

- Logs, sticks, branches, leaves, flowers, pinecones, feathers, bark, shells, tyres, crates, recycled materials, containers, tubes, material cut-offs, building materials, manipulatives, dramatic play props.

Consider each child's learning support needs, Individual Learning Plans and required adjustments when implementing transition to school activities.

Creating the perfect play space

https://www.ecrh.edu.au/docs/default-source/resources/ipsp/Create-the-perfect-play-space-learning-environments-for-young-children.pdf?sfvrsn=12

Links to Approved Learning Frameworks

Early Years Learning Framework:

1.2   Children develop emerging autonomy, interdependence, resilience and sense of agency.

1.3   Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities.

3.1   Children become strong in their social and emotional well-being.

4.1   Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.

5.1   Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes.

5.3   Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media.