

2024

# Quality Improvement Plan for Keith War Memorial Community Kindergarten and Childcare Centre

Site number: 6519

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Keith War Memorial Community  
Kindergarten and Childcare Centre



## Service name

Keith Community War Memorial Kindergarten and Childcare

## Service address

7 Anzac Terrace; Keith SA 5267

## Service approval number

SE-00010522

## Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the **Bindjali** people as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters where our centre is located and recognise their continuing connection to country. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal peoples.

## Service context

- KWMCKCC is an integrated site providing preschool, long day care, after school care and vacation care to children from B-12 years of age living in the rural community of Keith and surrounding districts.
- We are located behind the park (visible from the Duke's Highway) and adjacent to the main shopping street in Keith. Currently over 100 children attend the centre to access one or more programs each week. In 2024 there are 22 children enrolled to start their preschool time at the beginning of the year and 9 in the term 3 intake. During the 4 school terms (40 weeks per year) preschool operates on Mondays and Tuesdays from 8.30am -3.15pm and on 9 Wednesdays over the year, to ensure children can access their preschool entitlement of 600 hours per year. The daily preschool times cater for children who travel on the buses. Some children in preschool also access before/and after kindy care and childcare on other days of the week. With the highest percentage of these children accessing care on other days.
- The part-time preschool is staffed with a .6 teacher, Director and .5 ECW.
- The Learning Improvement Goal for 2024 is: To strengthen children's understanding around positive and respectful relationships with people and the environment.
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## Statement of Philosophy

We believe in celebrating diversity and different cultures, including the history, present, and future of First Nations people. We understand how important this is. This is reflected in the environment and the curriculum.

We see children as capable learners. Their rights and well-being are always at the heart of our decisions, and we respect and honour them through nurturing relationships and meaningful interactions.

We believe that play is how children learn best, and our environment is like a third teacher. We provide open-ended activities that encourage exploration, curiosity, experimentation, communication, and engagement. We work alongside children to build on their interests and potential.

We value positive partnerships with families to support children's development. We understand the importance of maintaining the connections children have with their families and communities while they're with us.

We hope for a sustainable future for children therefore, we continue to find opportunities to incorporate sustainability into our daily practice and curriculum.

We value collaboration among our staff, which is why we communicate effectively and work together as a team. We also share information and stay up to date with the latest research to ensure that each child receives the best possible learning experiences

*Updated February - 2024*

## Strengths

### Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice

Keith is an integrated site; therefore, educators have reflected on the need for children to have access to all spaces, not just the designated 'age' space. On arrival, parents/carers bring their children to the outdoor space where all children start their day. This way, siblings are not separated on arrival, and children can settle with their friends. As a result, children experience peaceful separations from family. Educators of the B-2 children; on that day, 'read' the group to decide when to take those children to the smaller space. This practice is embedded as a daily ritual, and families appreciate leaving their children happily in one place. Reflecting on this practice, we have come to realise that it also contributes to children 'transitioning' from the 2-3 group to the 3-5 group, as they are already connected with spaces and educators. Because of this, children have agency in their transition, being able to spend time in both spaces.

Quality relationships are at the core of young children's wellbeing and agency. It is important that all staff get to know all children in the centre. The 2/3-5 year old children, whether in the preschool or childcare program, choose which space they want to be in, and educators respond to their bids from their knowledge of child development and learning. With this particular age group, there is much child-initiated movement throughout the space throughout the day. This embedded practice has resulted in an extended sense of belonging for children as they are connected with educators and spaces across the centre. For children in their eligible preschool year, they already have relationships with the educators and the spaces, so they will be more than ready to dive into extended learning. Therefore, the learning environment will be constructed thoughtfully with 'invitations for play' and flexibility where children can access the resources they need to initiate, develop, and drive much of their play. Because the educators are connected with the children, they will be ready to 'recognise their strengths and provide stretch.'

The OSHC program builds on the interests of school-aged children, many who have spent up to 5 years in the centre before starting school. This lovely cycle of connectedness means children don't leave behind relationships with significant adults and beautiful natural spaces just because they now learn for most of their day in school. It's a unique opportunity in this rural community. Children are able to play with siblings and each other in what is their leisure time. Seeing younger and older children playing together reflects real life and the community. Some amazing learning happens in OSHC as children are able to follow their interests (sometimes passions) and resource their play. One child, who came to the centre as a baby and is now 8 years old, is a passionate cook. OSHC respects and values this and so staff provides access (safely) to the resources the child needs as she experiments, creates, tests, and records original recipes. Her family appreciates that she is able to 'cook' after a day at school, and during vacation care.

The introduction of an Educational Leader in the childcare space has allowed for consistency and continuity in the way educators program and plan for the children who access our centre. Weekly opportunities are given to staff to talk about their observations and possible opportunities to stretch or support children in their play-based learning. The Kindergarten too reflects this same way of looking at planning and programming and when possible are given the opportunities to connect, especially when those children are moving from childcare into preschool. This means their learning can still be supported, allowing them to continue on the same path and trajectory.

## Strengths

### Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Compliance to health and safety guidelines are important for the safety and well-being of everyone in our centre. Although, at times having regulations in place makes it tricky to carry out spontaneous activities, as educators we need to use this as a learning opportunity, communicating with children the 'why' around why we can't do something and then look to think outside the box to provide an experience and opportunity which matches.

As we continued to learn together about co-regulation we reflected on the place of 'risky play' in children's mental health. How could we recognise, understand and consider that nexus between keeping physically safe and children using their agency to extend their boundaries, take on challenges and learn skills for their individual regulation. What are the risks and what are the benefits? How does this impact children? We also reflected on our language and undertook some 'language rehab' where we checked each other when we said habitual phrases such as, 'be careful' and 'don't do that you might hurt yourself.' Instead we practiced asking ourselves 'what might the child be seeking?' and considered the risk. We intentionally positioned ourselves proximal to the child to 'be there' if needed for safety. We began naming what we were seeing such as 'I see you're climbing the steps and walking across the board.' We checked our own internal anxiety as we watched children take risks – and celebrated when we saw their satisfaction with their achievements. We also comforted and encouraged when mastery didn't happen straight away. This learning impacted on how we thought about the environment as the 3<sup>rd</sup> teacher and how we were planned and set up for risky play. Learning happens in that zone of proximal development so we absolutely have to consider health and safety in this way.

We believe in equity of access to our programs at the centre and the rural context we are in can mean challenges for some families to access services. That is why we incorporate bus transportation as part of the curriculum. Our preschool day is linked to the bus timetable at the school. Where possible, we staff for a teacher to walk to school and collect the children from the bus and take the children to the bus at the end of the day. We require written consent from parents to walk their children to and from school on preschool days. We have reflected on this option and driven by a commitment to equitable access we changed the 'every other Wednesday morning' preschool time to 9 full day Wednesdays per year so children who rely on bus transportation were not disadvantaged. This model was suggested to families and families were surveyed them and everyone wanted this change to the timetable (for various reasons). In those conversations, safety was an essential part. The 'bus children' learn about road safety and much more on their daily walks to and from the bus. This situation has again embedded critical reflection as a practice to explore quality areas beyond compliance and as 'live' and meaningful components to our daily work.

Everyone has been impacted by COVID over the past couple of years, and for parents, carers and staff at this centre, we noticed there was developing confusion about other illnesses and whether children could attend. There seemed to be an attitude of 'oh well it's not covid so it's ok to bring children to childcare/preschool.' 'I've done a RAT and it's negative.' So in essence, one of the unforeseen outcomes of covid was the masking of excluding children for other illnesses. We talked with staff and agreed that staff were not medical practitioners and therefore not the ones to diagnose illness. How could we take the pressure off staff to do that while supporting parents and carers to make the best decision for their children? We researched (mainly the SA Health website) to develop a 'traffic light' system for many common symptoms and illnesses which we presented in an easy access tri-fold for parents and staff – ILLNESS GUIDE. The purpose of the guide is to 'support families and staff to do what is best for the wellbeing of individual children and all children at KWMCKCC.' The guide states 'There are two things to consider when wondering whether to send your child to preschool or care: - are they infectious and are they well? Beyond that there are 3 questions for parents to ask themselves: Is my child well enough to comfortably take part in the day's activities; will my child pass on the illness to other children or staff; will my child's educators be able to care for my child without it impacting on their ability to care for other children? Parents could 'check' their child's symptoms and make an informed decision about whether or not to send their child to care, and staff could have the conversations with parents using the guide. This way everyone is using the same consistent information and there is no room for personal interpretation

or pressure. Families are given a copy of the 'illness guide' on enrolment and there are copies around the centre. This practice is now embedded and staff are confident to use the guide to have conversations with parents/carers where necessary. Anecdotally we have noticed less 'grey' area and families readily keeping children away if they are not well enough to be here.

## Strengths

### Quality Area 3: Physical Environment

We refer to the physical environment as the 3rd teacher, a term used in the Reggio Emilia Project Approach. Reflecting on the meaning of this we asked 'how do we need to consider the physical environment so it supports children to resource their own learning and, what are the aspects of an active learning environment (Reflect Respect Relate) that enable children to be exploratory, social, friends, problem solvers, constructors and artists? How do we construct the indoor/outdoor environment to support children regulate? How do we 'see' and honour the learning inside and outdoors? We are fortunate to have a lovely natural outdoor environment with shady trees, spaces for building cubbies and running. We have chooks, a worm farm and a garden. But we wanted to make our sandpit more challenging and interesting where children could do heavy work (part of self - regulation) like transporting sand and using water to challenge thinking. Rather than just doing things ourselves we extended our thinking and partnered with the local area school in their community projects curriculum. We challenged them to design and build a pulley system as well as a 'water wheel' where children could experiment and investigate possibilities. Many of the students had attended the centre as young children or were connected to children currently attending, so it was a community effort where the students had to design, present, negotiate, collaborate, cost, build and evaluate. Now children have access to resources to support their thinking and construction with sand and water.

## Strengths

### Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements

By embedding reflective practice, over time all staff have come to understand the importance of working in ratio but in a way that honours the intention of 'across the site.' This has required a focus on communication and seeing children at the centre of what we do. Staff more responsive to individual and groups of children, therefore being able to more effectively meet their needs and follow their interests. Educators consider how children's agency is supported and give 'preference' to that. It means more quality interactions with children coming from a deeper understanding of relational learning. Educators communicate and 'move' to where the need is. They are in tune to the needs of individuals and move them across the centre; with support of an educator, as they seek different experiences, such as, more adventure in a bigger outdoor space, or an opportunity to solidarity and quiet time, going back to the 0-2 space or providing opportunities to do this in the 3-5 space.

Given the current shortage of educators and the fact that we are located in a rural community, we are actively seeking to engage trainees to undertake a certificate 111 in early childhood education and care. We do this by liaising with the school and the work place support agency. We are also supporting certificate 111 staff to undertake their diploma. This will ensure a level of quality staff now and in the future. Having educators involved in study at the same time develops a 'professional learning community' that can support each other.

Staff are working together to communicate and support each other in turn supporting the best outcomes and quality for children in our centre. The transition process is embedded in our practice and is valued and carried out by staff who are responsive to their needs.



## Strengths

### Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children

Educators respect and understand that quality relationships with children are at the core of the work we do. The decision for children to attend the centre is made by families so it is critical that children feel safe, heard, respected and loved by every person employed in the centre. Educators make quality relationships with children aged from Birth-12 years old across childcare, preschool after school care and vacation care programs. Educators do not just work with one age group in this centre so they need to intentionally make relationships with all children, as at any time they could be working with children in Birth-2, 3-5, after kindy care, after school care or vacation care. This is embedded in our practice and proved to be an advantage when we have to ask staff to cover other members due to illness, holidays or family reasons. It was one 'less new situation' to deal with on a daily basis. Relationships were already established with the range of educators.

This is also supported by how the environment has been set up for children to access all spaces. When children begin their eligible preschool year, they already have relationships with the environment (spaces) and the teachers and educators who deliver the preschool program, if they've been attending childcare. We see children confidently continuing their learning journey throughout their preschool year. This embedded social pedagogy is evident as a significant number of children utilise After School Care for several years of their school life so these relationships with children can be for up to 12 years. Families are trusting and confident for this long-term relationship- which in a small town, enables businesses and services to run.

## Strengths

### Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

Over the past few years, as has been true for most people, maintaining the same high level of partnership and connection with families has become more challenging. At times, even though the choice ultimately lies with families, they can feel anxious about how their child will 'cope' in care. We have observed many families taking up the opportunity to have 'visits' or 'short' days before their child starts long day care. These 'visits' arose after some parents and families appeared reluctant to leave their children. Staff and leadership discussed the possibility of allowing parents to stay with their child for visits as many times as they need to feel comfortable. This approach also works for those on a waiting list as it gives them the opportunity to become familiar with the space before attending. It is now embedded as part of our enrolment and orientation process to offer opportunities for 'visits' to each family.

It is evident that families have continued to feel connected to the centre and comfortable checking in on their child/children throughout the day. Staff intentionally connect with parents by sending them pictures when their child has had a sad start or by acknowledging and responding to messages as a form of communication throughout the day. Staff respect and honour families' requests when it is safe to do so. We offer positions in our preschool when children are eligible, providing parents with relevant information regarding enrolment and ensuring that no judgment is placed on them if they choose to wait the six months. If they seek advice, we offer them contacts for outside services and other resources to support them in their decision, acknowledging that all children are welcome.

We are once again considering providing opportunities for services such as, the local police and ambulance to visit our centre, and we are also exploring ways to connect with the community by organizing a walk to our local dentist. We collaborate closely with the school to support a positive transition during the term before school for those children moving into formal schooling.

## Strengths

### Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership

Keith is an integrated site with one approved provider, which is the Department for Education (SA). It comprises both community childcare and DfE preschool facilities. Maximising outcomes for children and educator learning in this local context requires collaborative partnerships and resource management. Most educators have received their training here and have exclusively worked in this centre. Therefore, maintaining a high quality of ongoing professional learning is crucial so educators can critically reflect on their practices in providing for children. It's also important to provide childcare and preschool educators with opportunities to network and connect with peers, preventing stagnation in the mindset of 'this is what we do'.

The role of Educational Leader was introduced to facilitate Professional Learning Communities, where staff configurations come together twice a week for programming/planning and to engage in critically reflective dialogue. This environment allows educators to ask each other questions about their practices without fear of offense or taking things personally. The director is involved in these opportunities at times, and the Educational Leader and director have regular meetings. It's common for one educator to ask another, 'what makes you say that?' or 'can you tell me why you do it that way?' As Diploma-trained staff intentionally improve their skills in this space, the quality of modelling for new or less-trained educators improves, and the professional culture of the centre focuses on children, learning, and well-being.

There is one Governing Council overseeing both the preschool and childcare centre. This council includes three staff members: the director, assistant director, and a staff member elected by their peers. The remainder of the Governing Council consists of family members. They convene twice a term to reflect on and discuss the needs of the centre. At times, when necessary, the Governing Council forms sub-committees, such as LEOS and a social/fundraising committee. The social and fundraising committee was established this year with the aim of engaging more with families and reinstating the community connection that was somewhat lost during the COVID period.

# Learning Improvement Plan – Goal 1



## STEP 1 Analyse and Prioritise

Site name: Keith War Memorial Community Kindergarten and Childcare Centre

**Goal 1: To strengthen children’s understanding of social skills, knowledge and dispositions to build positive and respectful relationships with people and the environment.**



## STEP 2 Determine challenge of practice

### Challenge of Practice:

If we model and intentionally plan for social skills, knowledge and dispositions then children will be able to build positive and respectful relationships with people and the environment across all aspects of the centre.

### Success Criteria (what children know, do, and understand):

Children participate in meaningful ways in group discussions and shared decision making about rights and responsibilities.

Children will advocate for themselves and others with empathy and care.

Children will take turns and wait so that others can have a turn.

Children recognise and name a range of feelings in themselves and others.

Children begin to understand their rights and responsibilities and the rights and responsibilities of others.

Children will feel safe, secure and supported.



## STEP 3 Plan actions for improvement




Actions	NQS Links	Timeline	Roles & Responsibilities	Resources
Educators’ will develop their own knowledge of social development for children.	QA 5: Relationships with children	10/12/2024	All staff	Same consistent language – group conversations around vocab. PLINK – Social domain – preschool resources.
Educators intentionally plan for and use spontaneous moments /opportunities to teach social skills, knowledge and dispositions.	Q1: Educational program and Practice	10/12/2024	Educational leader and preschool leader in conjunction with whole staff.	Prompting questions risk assessment resources. EYLF – Outcomes, focus on 1 and 2. ACEQA Website- supporting children to regulate their own behaviour.

				Save the children – rights and resource centre. <a href="https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net">https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net</a>
<b>Educators will read and have discussions using CPC stories about feeling safe, belonging and turn taking.</b>	Q5: Relationships with children	10/12/2024	Preschool staff	CPC books from the CPC library around feelings and emotions (many titles of books in the tub marked CPC books on the kindy shelf near the office door).
<b>Educators will provide opportunities for children to share and develop their ideas during interactions with peers and educators.</b>	Q5: Relationships with children.	10/12/2024	All staff	Rights of the child website. <a href="#">The Rights and Responsibilities of Children   Save the Children's Resource Centre</a>

**Goal 1:** To strengthen children’s understanding of social skills, knowledge and dispositions to build positive and respectful relationships with people and the environment.



**STEP 4 Improve practice and monitor impact** - Are we doing what we said we would do? Are we improving children’s learning? How effective have our actions been?

<p><b>Actions</b></p>	<p>  On track   Needs attention/work in progress   Not on track                      Date your notes to ensure you track and monitor adjustments and progress of your plan                 </p>	<p><b>Evidence</b></p> <p>Are we doing what we said we would do? Are we improving children’s learning? How do we know which actions have been effective?</p>	<p><b>What are our next steps? Potential adjustments?</b></p>
<p><b>Educators’ will develop their own knowledge of social development for children.</b></p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	
<p><b>Educators intentionally plan for and use spontaneous moments /opportunities to teach social skills, knowledge and dispositions.</b></p>	<p>Staff read the article from ACEQA Website and then had a group discussion around how we think this is embedded in our practice.</p> <p>After our staff meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> of June, educators are confident we are on track with this action.</p>	<p>Yes, the educators are actively engaging with children in various ways to foster emotional development and conflict resolution skills. The feedback from staff was, yes, we are having a number of impromptu conversations during conflict situations, encouraging children to express their feelings, and rethinking the concept of "sorry" to make it more meaningful and connective. These actions align with the goal of improving children's social-emotional learning and creating a supportive environment. Educators were able to give a range of examples of occasions when they have had these spontaneous moments. We are</p>	<p>Making more of an effort to record these observations and moments on our programs. Using these observations and recordings to purposefully plan for opportunities. Educators might also gather feedback from children, parents, and colleagues to understand the impact of their interventions. Tracking specific incidents or situations where these strategies were applied can provide insights into their effectiveness in real-world scenarios. Ongoing observation and feedback mechanisms can further refine and validate the effectiveness of these strategies. Tish – to investigate using book 2 of the Respect, Reflect, Relate resources to see if staffs</p>

	<p>working on continuing to also plan for these. These has been evident during songs and stories, where children have the opportunity to understand and relate concepts to real world experiences.</p> <p>Educators feel we are improving and extending children's learning around emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills, which are crucial aspects of children's learning and development. Educators are facilitating conversations about feelings, encouraging positive praise, and redefining apologies, educators are likely contributing to children's emotional awareness, communication abilities, and conflict resolution skills. These are foundational for overall learning and social development. This has been evident in the way educators have heard and witnessed children interacting with each other. An example was when a child, who has previously looked to educators for support indicated to another child to stop his action. The look on the other child showed reflection of his on behaviour and he did stop and the two continued playing. We have seen evidence of children being more open and willing to include a range of peers in their games and beginning to see some of the play be more inclusive. To assess effectiveness, educators have observed changes in children's</p>	<p>thinking and evidence aligns with daily practice.</p>
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		behaviour and interactions over time, such as the example above. Educators were given time to record these observations in their programming at staff meeting. They looked for indicators such as increased empathy, better conflict resolution strategies, and improved emotional regulation. Children are also beginning to role model these conversations in their interactions with others.	
<b>Educators will read and have discussions using CPC stories about feeling safe, belonging and turn taking.</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Educators will provide opportunities for children to share and develop their ideas during interactions with peers and educators.</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.



**Goal 1: To strengthen children’s understanding of social skills, knowledge and dispositions to build positive and respectful relationships with people and the environment.**



**STEP 5 Review and Evaluate** - Have we achieved our improvement goal? What have we learned and what are our next steps?

**What progress have we made? Have we achieved our goal?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Enablers: What factors have been critical for success?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Inhibitors: What factors have impeded progress? How will we work through this?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Recommendations: What are the next steps to take?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Learning Improvement Plan – Goal 2



### STEP 1 Analyse and Prioritise

Site name: Keith War Memorial Community

**Goal 2:** Click or tap here to enter text.



### STEP 2 Determine challenge of practice

**Challenge of Practice:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Success Criteria (what children know, do, and understand):**


Click or tap here to enter text.






### STEP 3 Plan actions for improvement


Actions	NQS Links	Timeline	Roles & Responsibilities	Resources
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Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap to enter a date.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

**Goal 2:** Click or tap here to enter text.

 **STEP 4 Improve practice and monitor impact** - Are we doing what we said we would do? Are we improving children's learning? How effective have our actions been?

<p><b>Actions</b></p>		<p>On track</p>	<p><b>Evidence</b></p> <p>Are we doing what we said we would do? Are we improving children's learning? How do we know which actions have been effective?</p>	<p><b>What are our next steps? Potential adjustments?</b></p>
		<p>Needs attention/work in progress</p>		
		<p>Not on track</p>		
	<p>Date your notes to ensure you track and monitor adjustments and progress of your plan</p>			
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**Goal 2:** Click or tap here to enter text.

 **STEP 5 Review and Evaluate** - Have we achieved our improvement goal? What have we learned and what are our next steps?

**What progress have we made? Have we achieved our goal?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Enablers: What factors have been critical for success?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Inhibitors: What factors have impeded progress? How will we work through this?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Recommendations: What are the next steps to take?**

Click or tap here to enter text.




## National Quality Standard priorities

Priority	NQS links	Key steps	Timeline	Resources	Roles & Responsibilities
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# Progress notes

## National Quality Standard priorities

**Improve practice and monitor impact** - Are we doing what we said we would do? Are we improving practice? How effective have our actions been?

Priority	Implementation (are we doing what we said we would do?) Enter your overall assessment of progress towards implementing actions for improvement.		Impact for children and families (Are we improving practice and learning outcomes?) Enter the evidence of impact of your actions for children and families	Next steps
	 On track			
	 Needs attention/work in progress			
	 Not on track			
	Date your notes to ensure you track and monitor adjustments and progress of your plan			
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**Review and Evaluate - Have we achieved our NQS priorities? What have we learned and what are our next steps?**

**What progress have we made? Have we achieved our priorities?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Enablers: What factors have been critical for success?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Inhibitors: What factors have impeded progress? How will we work through this?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Recommendations: What are the next steps to take?**

Click or tap here to enter text.



# Endorsements

Endorsed by director/principal

<b>Name</b> Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Date</b> Click or tap to enter a date.

Signature:

Endorsed by governing council chairperson

<b>Name</b> Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Date</b> Click or tap to enter a date.

Signature:

Endorsed by education director

<b>Name</b> Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Date</b> Click or tap to enter a date.

Signature:



**Government of South Australia**  
Department for Education