# 3.2.1 Inclusive Environment

*Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child’s participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.*

To build inclusive environments, our educators:

* organise and adapt indoor and outdoor spaces to support each child’s interests, preferences, self-confidence and participation
* use and arrange furniture, equipment, and materials in multiple ways to support children’s engagement with the built and natural environment.

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| To **MEET** QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) | To **EXCEED** the QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) |
| *Please give a recent example of how you’ve organised indoor or outdoor spaces to meet children’s interests or ideas.* | *Please explain how your approach to inclusive environments, including the way you organise and use service spaces, reflects your service philosophy.* |
| **Organising Indoor or Outdoor Spaces to Meet Children’s Interests or Ideas.** We organised our outdoor space to align with children’s interests by creating a vibrant obstacle course. This project stemmed from their enthusiasm for physical challenges and teamwork. The course included various elements like balancing beams, tunnels, and climbing structures. Additionally, I set up a gardening area where children could plant flowers and vegetables, fostering a sense of responsibility and connection to nature. Indoors, we created teepees for quiet reading and imaginative play, promoting creativity and a sense of adventure. | **Approach to Inclusive Environments Reflecting Service Philosophy.** Our approach to inclusive environments is embedded in our service philosophy. We design spaces that promote inclusive practices and participation, ensuring every child feels welcome and valued. Safety is a top priority, with careful consideration given to creating secure, accessible areas. We focus on high-quality learning outcomes by incorporating children's interests, ideas, and strengths into our activities. Our connection with the community is evident in spaces that reflect local culture and values, enhancing children's sense of belonging. |
| *Please give a recent example of how you’ve adapted the environment to encourage or support a child/group of children to participate.* | *Please give an example of a team reflection about improving the use of space, equipment, and resources to promote inclusion, for example, in creative and flexible ways.* |
| **Adapting the Environment to Encourage or Support Participation.** To encourage participation, we recently revamped our indoor environment to be more inviting and accessible. I introduced a range of loose parts, such as blocks and fabric, allowing children to explore and create freely. To accommodate children with sensory issues, I incorporated sensory-friendly materials like soft cushions and quiet corners. Outdoors, we rearranged furniture to create new activity zones, ensuring easy movement between spaces. This setup included areas for messy play and calm retreats, supporting diverse needs and fostering an inclusive environment. | **Team Reflection on Improving Use of Space, Equipment, and Resources.** Recently, our team reflected on enhancing our environment to better promote inclusion. We decided to introduce more accessible loose parts, allowing children of all abilities to engage creatively. We also reconfigured our indoor space to facilitate easier movement between areas, supporting spontaneous play and exploration. To accommodate sensory issues, we added quiet zones with soft textures and calming colours. Our ongoing adjustments to furniture and equipment ensure our environment remains dynamic and responsive to children's changing needs, fostering an inclusive atmosphere. |
| *Please give an example of the way you use indoor or outdoor spaces to promote positive relationships.* | *Please give an example of how you and your team have worked with families or the community to foster an inclusive and flexible learning environment.* |
| **Using Indoor or Outdoor Spaces to Promote Positive Relationships.** Our yarning circle and firepit area are central to promoting positive relationships. Recently, we used this space for a storytelling session where children shared their own stories, fostering empathy and cooperation. Indoors, we designated a corner for cooperative games, encouraging children to work together and build leadership skills. This space is also utilised for mindfulness activities, helping children develop self-awareness and emotional regulation. These environments support a culture of respect, sharing, and community bonding. | **Working with Families or Community to Foster Inclusive and Flexible Learning Environment.** Our team actively collaborates with families and the community to create an inclusive and flexible learning environment. We involved local tradespeople in refurbishing our play areas, ensuring they meet diverse needs. We also seek advice from specialists in child wellbeing and additional needs to inform our environmental design. This collaborative approach ensures our spaces are not only inclusive but also reflective of community values and expertise. By integrating family and community input, we create a supportive, engaging environment for all children. |
| *Give two examples showing how you or your team use spaces to support children’s engagement with natural and man-made environments.* | *Give an example showing how you or your team regularly adapt the indoor or outdoor environments to promote children’s participation and inclusion.* |
| **Supporting Children’s Engagement with Natural and Man-Made Environments.** We recently enhanced our garden area, engaging children in weeding, watering, and harvesting activities. This hands-on experience connected them with nature and taught sustainability. Additionally, we set up a construction zone with man-made materials like blocks and recycled items. This area encourages creativity and problem-solving, allowing children to build and explore structures. By balancing natural and man-made environments, we provide diverse learning opportunities that nurture curiosity and environmental stewardship. | **Adapting Indoor or Outdoor Environments to Promote Participation and Inclusion.** We regularly adapt our environments to enhance participation and inclusion. For example, we recently introduced mobile play stations that can be easily moved to different areas, allowing children to explore new activities without constraints. We also created a sensory garden with various textures, scents, and sounds to engage children with sensory processing differences. By continuously evaluating and modifying our spaces, we ensure they meet the evolving needs of all children, promoting a sense of belonging and active participation. |
| *Give an example showing how you set up spaces that enable children to engage social or solitary play depending on their preferences.* | *Give an example of how your excursions into the community provide environments that support children’s inclusion and participation in the program.* |
| **Setting Up Spaces for Social or Solitary Play Based on Preferences.** To cater to different play preferences, I created various play zones. We set up teepees for children who enjoy solitary play and need quiet time. These spaces offer a retreat for reading or imaginative play. For social play, we designed U-shaped areas for small group activities, fostering interaction and teamwork. Additionally, we provided equipment for risky play, allowing children to experience adventure safely. This balanced setup ensures that children can choose their play environment, supporting their social and individual needs effectively. | **Excursions into the Community Supporting Inclusion and Participation.** Our community excursions are designed to support children's inclusion and participation. Recently, we visited a local cultural centre where children learned about different cultures and traditions, promoting diversity and understanding. Another excursion to a nearby park allowed children to engage in physical activities, burning off excess energy and improving focus. These outings provide new information and potential interests, which we integrate into our service activities and projects. By exploring diverse community environments, we enhance children's learning and inclusivity. |