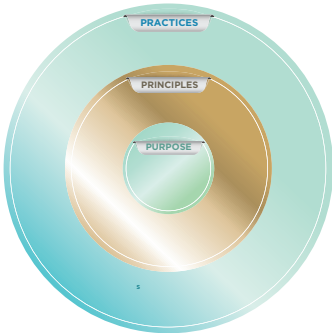


LEADERSHIP

Leadership is a holistic, intentional and shared process that involves all staff and the approved provider. Leadership emerges through improvement focused activity by individuals and groups that reflects our vision, advances our goals and responds to external influences.

Our people are enabled to meet the expectations and responsibilities of their role, demonstrate agency in performance and are recognised for their contribution. It is recognised that all positions throughout the centre, whether paid or voluntary, have associated responsibilities for which they are accountable, rather than extending power over any other person or position.



PURPOSE

LEADERSHIP

- Provides direction to all our stakeholders that informs decisions and actions that align with our purpose, vision and goals in the best interests of children.
- Achieves long-term sustainability for the centre and develops social capital for the benefit of the community.
- Maintains a culture that enables people to feel safe and engage confidently as an active community of learners in all aspects of the centre's operation.

PRINCIPLES

CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

People need certainty to act with confidence individually or when working with others. Expectations will be clear about what needs to be done and how positions and roles will be enacted, including engaging in leadership practices. Written guides and regular explicit feedback enable people to meet their responsibilities and contribute positively to the work of others and the centre's vision.

ENABLING

People are active learners involved in meaningful leadership activity and gain satisfaction from their improvement focused efforts and achievements. They engage in regular professional development to increase knowledge and understanding of their work and become capable contributors to improvement towards the centre's goals. They are able to engage successfully with others and the centre's activity by being provided opportunities for professional development, clear information, encouragement, support, resources, limits, guidance and feedback to meet expectations.

DECISION-MAKING

Decisions are effective when they align with the centre's purpose, values and direction. Decisions are authentic when they are intentional, evidence-based and/ or are supported by authoritative sources. Shared understandings are achieved through processes that are transparent and outcomes are known and visible.

PROFESSIONALISM

Professionalism is not only about qualifications, but includes people acting with integrity and accepting individual responsibility for their own actions. People are responsible for the decisions they make related to their position or role. They are also accountable for making informed choices, enacting practices that align with our philosophy and contribute positively to the work of others. Professionals act in the best interests of the centre, engage positively with guidance and feedback as well as professional growth activities that align with the centre's direction and plans.

COLLABORATION

Collaborative practices provide an opportunity for knowledge, experience and ideas to be shared in making decisions that contribute to the centre's purpose, improvement focussed activity and effective teaching and learning practices. Collaboration and clear goals and expectations contribute to shared understandings that build confidence and support professional relationships.

KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge is the foundation of evidenced based decisions and practices and increases the likelihood of achieving the outcomes that are sought. What is known changes over time, so it is important that knowledge is current and reliable to inform better decisions, practices and effective collaboration. We can generate our own knowledge about the centre and our work as well as access other authoritative sources in the sector so that our decisions are authentic and respond to the purpose and goals of the centre. Knowledge should be shared in a meaningful way to achieve better understandings for all our stakeholders.

ADAPTABILITY

The early childhood sector is constantly changing including public policy and what we know about good teaching and learning. The centre needs to be change ready to be able to adjust to how it meets its purpose and goals as well as responding to the impact of external changes in the sector. Individuals and the centre as a whole need to adapt in order to implement internal planned improvements and adjustments and to respond to external influences. People are more able to adapt when the reasons and projected benefits are known and they have been able to contribute to the process.

PRACTICES

OPENNESS

Actively listen to, consider and discuss the thoughts and ideas of others. Be ready and willing to critically reflect on your work and be professional in receiving feedback. Discuss your own thoughts and ideas and those of others within an environment of multiple perspectives. Share information and reasoning in decision-making to provide transparency, support understanding and effective implementation.

RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Accept responsibility for your own actions and decisions with accountability for their impact on the centre and others.

COMMUNICATION

Engage in respectful and intentional communication that has benefit and outcomes that align with the centre's purpose and philosophy. Advocate for the rights of children, families and the goals of the centre. Interact with others with integrity and in an ethical, open and honest manner.

INVOLVEMENT

Initiate and contribute to discussions and decisions that will improve outcomes for children, families and the operation of centre. Generate and share ideas and understandings in a genuine and authentic manner.

AUTHENTICITY

Communicate the basis for your positions and understandings, drawing on authoritative internal and external sources and experience. Ask questions that will expand your understanding of the ideas and positions of others.

RECOGNITION

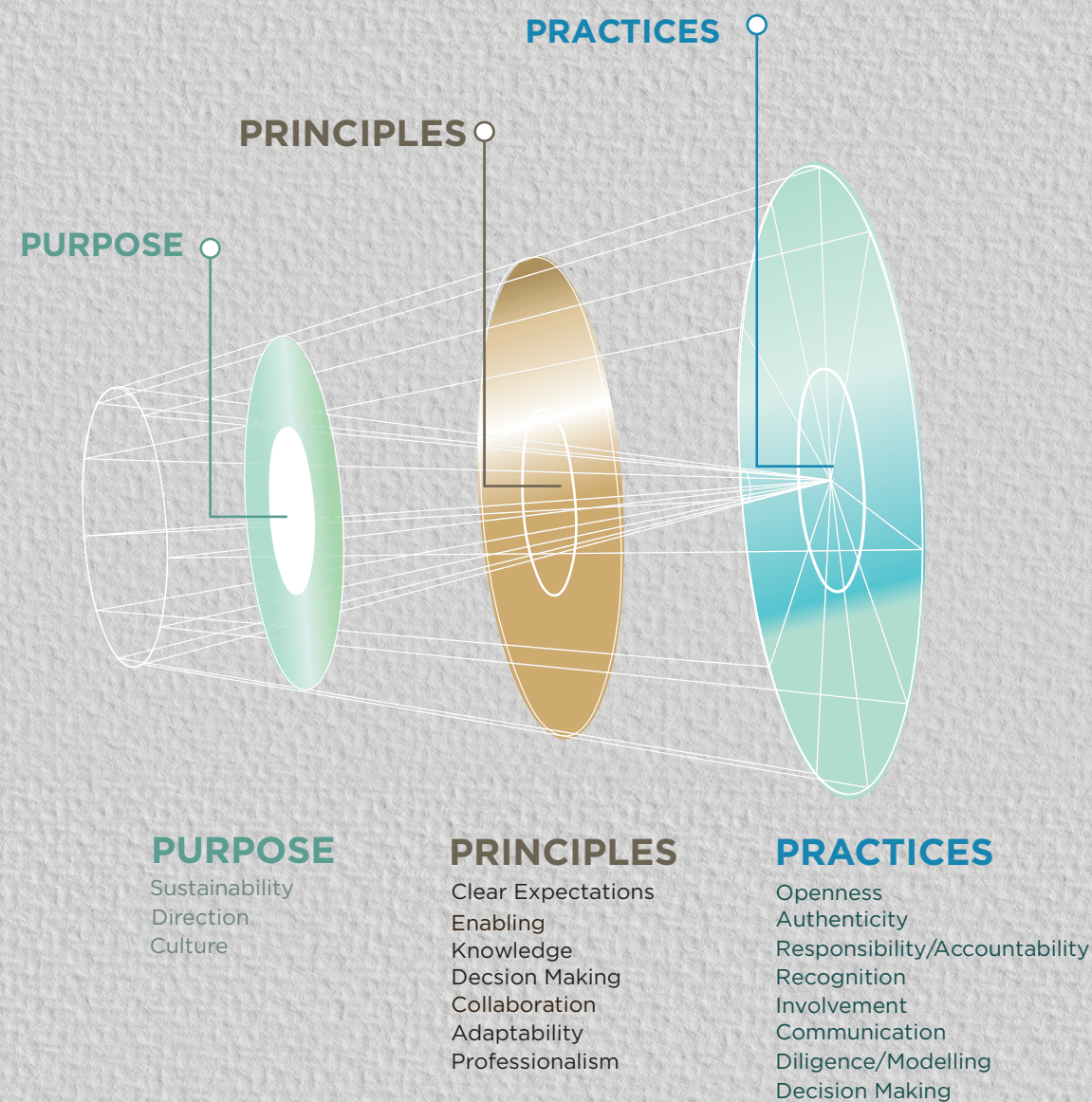
Show and give voice to the appreciation for the contribution, achievements and practices of others that align with and contribute to positive outcomes for children, families and advance the goals of the centre. Demonstrate empathy for others.

DILIGENCE/MODELLING

Perform tasks and responsibilities with care and attention and contribute to others being able to do the same. Contribute ideas and methods that might result in yourself or the centre being more efficient and effective. Take responsibility for your own professional development that can also advance the plans of the centre.

DECISION-MAKING

Decisions are made in the best interests of the centre, support quality provision and organisational sustainability, the community with outcomes that can be described and assessed. Decisions reflect and respond to the principles of this framework, the current goals and values of the centre and support quality and organisation sustainability. Decisions and their reasoning are communicated clearly and with respect. Decisions are able to be questioned in a professional manner to enable a shared understanding to be achieved.



This framework was developed drawing from findings and concepts that emerged from research that applied a holistic approach to leadership and management utilising systems theory that positioned leadership as an important resource for which the organisation is responsible. Systems theory was integrated with complexity theory to respond to the diverse influences on leadership in the early childhood system, and activity theory to gain a deeper understanding of leadership enactment.

Holistic Leadership Framework for Early Childhood
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The author acknowledges this Leadership Framework was developed in collaboration with action research participants as part of a Western Sydney University research project.



Holistic Leadership **FRAMEWORK** for early childhood

This framework adopts an organisational view of leadership to provide a common language and shared understanding of leadership processes and practices. It views leadership holistically to enable everyone at all levels of responsibility to be involved in leadership conversations, considerations and activity.

The framework partners with the philosophy to form a foundation for a positive culture and learning community in which leadership can flourish to set direction, deliver continuous improvement and long-term sustainability.

The framework was developed to be used by staff, the approved provider and other stakeholders. It is intended to be familiar to people in the Australian early learning context.

The framework draws on research findings and concepts to provide clear principles and practices that shares leadership and makes visible how it is enacted. It guides decision-making at all levels of responsibility and values everyone's knowledge and experience in asking for their involvement in leadership processes that benefit children, families, the community and the centre itself.