Leadership and lollipop moments

Leadership and the National Quality Framework assessment and rating process

Everyday leadership and lollipops

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Speaking at the TED innovation conference in 2010, Drew Dudley challenged listeners to think about leadership in a different way. In his address, Dudley speaks of everyday leadership and we no longer recognise everyday acts as opportunities for leadership. We need to recognise, celebrate and make lollipop moments happen again and again in order to improve our own lives and the lives of others.

At our kindergarten this provocation got the staff at Aspley East Kindergarten: Words of wisdom from Centre Director Marie White

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With our newfound knowledge of leadership and in the spirit of ‘lollipop moments’, our team would like to offer the following reflections for other educators upon our initial assessment and rating visit. We hope that this wisdom will prove useful to others on their journey of self-reflection and preparation for assessment.

Words of wisdom from the staff at Aspley East Kindergarten:

Don’t be afraid of the whole process of being so judgemental on you personally... it’s easy to feel insecure about your own knowledge, however, every single day you are performing your job and you do know your job.

...we have made leadership bigger than ourselves and we no longer recognise everyday acts as opportunities for leadership.

Have confidence in yourselves that what you do every day is right. It was not as daunting as I thought it would be as I felt prepared to answer questions about our processes. The assessors were very easy to get along with and showed us, by way of their feedback, that we were doing well and ultimately made their job easier.

Being assessed within the first six months of the implementation of the NQF was very daunting, scary and overwhelming. Our notice and subsequent assessment came during a very busy time where we had experienced staff changes and a major refurbishment project. We all had faith in our practices, based on relationships and needed to work together to support each other, collaborate and work cooperatively.

Don’t ‘over think’ the process. Just be yourself as we already know what we are doing. I was terrified as I thought if I said the wrong thing that I would let my centre down. On the day of the assessment, the assessor started chatting to me, it wasn’t until she had moved on that I realised that I had ‘passed the test’. What I was chatting, I realised that I was actually being assessed without realising it.

The self-assessment process helped us to review our programs and practices and think about why we do things the way that we do. It helped us to solidify our values and beliefs and learn to articulate them more strongly. Some things we actually disagreed with in discussion with the assessors, but from the self-assessment process, we were able to justify why we did things a different way to what the NQS was suggesting.

Marie White
Centre Director
Aspley East Kindergarten

References


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