

Environmentally Responsible

Our Service encourages the awareness of environmental responsibility and implement practices that contribute to a sustainable future. Children are supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment. We practice and promote sustainability through reducing waste, minimising consumption, and protecting and conserving wildlife and natural habitats.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 3: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT		
3.2	Use	The service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning.
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.
3.2.2	Resource' support play-based learning	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.
3.2.3	Environmentally responsible	The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.

RELATED POLICIES

Physical Environment Programming Policy	Animal and Pet Policy
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PURPOSE

We believe in educating children about being environmentally responsible which is promoted and supported through daily practices, resource and interactions. Sustainable practice is encouraged within the Service and community, assisting children and families to become advocates for a sustainable future.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Teaching and learning about being environmentally responsible starts with everyday practice. We believe being environmentally responsible should be embedded into the operations of the Service, rather than being a tokenistic 'theme' that is investigated every now and then. Our Service is committed to protecting our environment to ensure a sustainable future for our children. This involves Educators, children and families working together to protect our environment as we educate children about the importance of being environmentally responsible within our everyday practice.

Management will:

- Network with the local community to keep up to date with current practices and ideas for being environmentally responsible. This may include installing water tanks, grey water system, converting toilet cisterns to dual flush, and converting to water saving taps.
- Encourage educators, families and children to engage in sustainable practices and appreciate the natural environment.
- Ensure the Service remains current on research on practices and ideas for being environmentally responsible.
- Where relevant, review policies and procedures within the Service to achieve more sustainable outcomes
- Use electronic communication where possible to reduce paper use within the office and in each room for newsletters, billing, and other communication needs.
- Conduct environmentally responsible audits to ensure consistency and continuous improvement.
- Source resources and materials from Reverse Garbage or second-hand stores to use within the Service.
- Ensure sustainable practices are incorporated into the daily routine.

- These will include:

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE	IDEAS
RECYCLING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycle paper and all recyclable rubbish. • Use recycled water (e.g. for watering gardens).
GARDENING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant vegetables, herbs. • Establish a worm farm. • Give food scraps to worms. • Educate children and have them participate in ‘garden to plate’ activities. • Have children participate in experiences such as seed sprouting, vegetable gardens, cooking with what is grown, and educate about weeds.
ENERGY CONSERVATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install LED lighting where possible. • Turn off non-LED lights when not in use. • Turn off electrical appliances at the outlet when not in use. • Use natural ventilation and insulated blinds/drapes rather than air conditioning when temperatures are not extreme.
WATER CONSERVATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using half flush on the toilet. • Turn off the taps and ensure leaking taps are fixed immediately. • Encourage shorter showers. • Teach children to turn off tap when brushing teeth. • Collect rain water and use in the garden and for water/sand play. • Use water play water on the garden rather than tipping out at the end of the day.
NATURE AND WILDLIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use natural materials – trees, blocks, boxes etc. in arts and crafts and play. • Educate children about the natural decomposition cycle through exposure and participation in worm farms and composting food scraps. • Collaborate with wildlife educators to assist in educating children.
COMMUNICATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display the Service’s sustainability journey throughout the service for families and visitors via StoryPark and as activities and opportunities arise. • Provide families with hints and tips in newsletters about how they can become sustainable at home.

Educators will:

- Incorporate recycling as part of everyday practice at the Service. Recycling containers may be provided throughout meal times and experiences.
- Role model environmentally responsible practices.
- Discuss environmentally responsible practices with the children and families as part of the curriculum.
- Provide information to families on environmentally responsible practices that are implemented at the Service and encourage the application of these practices in the home environment.
- Share ideas between Educators, children, and families about environmentally responsible ideas, implementation, and resources. This will be supported through our communication strategies, including parent meetings, emails, newsletters, and informal conversations.
- Use a worm farm/composting bin/ to reduce food waste in the Service. Children may be encouraged to place food scraps into separate containers for use in the worm farm or composting bin. Educators will provide visual guides and discuss with the children and families which scraps worms can eat, , and which food scraps must go in the bin. The children will be involved in maintaining the worm farm and compost bin.
- Role model energy and water conservation practices: For example, turning off lights and air-conditioning when a room is not in use, emptying water play containers onto garden areas.
- Seek to purchase equipment that is environmentally friendly where possible. Educators will reduce the amount of plastic and disposable equipment they purchase and select materials that are made of natural materials.
- Use the concept of 'reduce, re-use and recycle', which will become part of everyday practice for both children and Educators to build lifelong attitudes towards environmentally responsible practices.
- Use 'green cleaning' products to replace chemicals where possible.

Source

Australian Association for Environmental Education (AAEE): www.aaee.org.au

Department of Environment and Energy: www.environment.gov.au

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011).

Kearns, K. (2017). *The Business of Childcare* (4th Ed.).

NSW Early Childhood Environmental Education Network (ECEEN): www.eceen.org.au

Queensland Early Childhood Sustainability Network (QECSN): www.qecsn.org.au

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

The Point Preschool: www.thepointpreschool.com.au

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	February 2019	NEXT REVIEW DATE	February 2020
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional information added to points. • Points added (Highlighted). • Sources checked for currency. • Department names corrected in Sources (due to departmental name changes). • Sources/references corrected, updated, and alphabetised. 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
February 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added 'related policies' list • Changed title from: Environmental Sustainability Policy to Environmentally Responsible Policy • Integrated new terminology through the document – environmentally responsible 	February 2019	
October 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated the references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard 	February 2018	
February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor adjustments made with further suggestions on how to embed sustainability into everyday practice 	February 2018	