

Environmental Sustainability Policy

Aim

We encourage and increase awareness of environmental responsibilities and implement practices that contribute to a sustainable future. Children can be supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment. Environmentally sustainable practices should be embedded into the operations of the education and care service and involve Educators, children and families in order to be successful.

GOALS - What are we going to do? The education and care service will ensure the environment is safe, clean and well-maintained. Children's awareness of the environment will be promoted through daily practices, resources and interactions. Sustainable practices will be encouraged within the education and care service. Educators, children and families will be encouraged to become advocates for a sustainable future.

The Approved Provider will:

- Ensure the service joins the NSW Early Childhood Environmental Education Network to liaise with other education and care services and keep up to date on practices and ideas for sustainability.
- Encourage Educators, families and children to engage in innovative practices and appreciate the wonder of the natural world while protecting the planet for future generations.

Educators will:

- Educators will make sustainable practices a part of the daily routine. These include: » Recycling » Gardening » Energy conservation » Water conservation » Sustainable equipment purchases
- Include recycling as part of everyday practice at the education and care service. Recycling containers will be provided throughout the service.
- Role model sustainable practices.
- Discuss sustainable practices with the children and families as part of the services education and care curriculum.
- Provide information to families on sustainable practices that are implemented at the education and care service and encourage the application of these practices in the home environment.
- Share ideas between Educators, children and families about sustainable ideas, implementation and resources. This can be done at parent meetings, through emails, newsletters and conversations.
- Use a worm farm or composting bin to reduce food waste in the education and care service. Children will be encouraged to place food scraps into separate containers for use in the worm farm or the composting bin. Educators will discuss with the children and families which scraps worms can eat and which foods can be composted. The children will be involved in maintaining the worm farm and compost.
- Role model energy and water conservation practices of turning off lights and air-conditioning when a room is not in use, emptying water play containers onto garden areas.
- Cleaning and Maintaining the Environment
- Aim to purchase equipment that is eco-friendly where possible. Educators will reduce the amount of plastic and disposable equipment they purchase and select materials that are made of natural materials and fibres.
- Seek to embed sustainable practice in the education and care service. The concepts of "reduce, re-use and recycle" will become part of everyday practice for both children and Educators to build lifelong attitudes towards sustainable practices.
- Use local Council and Government departments as sources of information on sustainable practices used in the local community. They will liaise with the Council and Government departments for possible grants available to put in place water and energy conservation practices in the education and care service. These may include water tanks, grey water systems, converting toilet cisterns to dual flush and converting to water saving taps.

Review: This policy will be reviewed regularly when necessary. The review will be conducted by:

- Management and Employees
- Interested Parties (including Families, NSW Children's Services and Regulatory Unit, ACECQA etc)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Guide to the National Quality Standard (3) ACECQA (2011)
- Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- Energy Efficiency Opportunities Act 2006
- Sources
- NSW Department of Environment and Heritage –
www.environment.nsw.gov.au
- Department of Sustainability, Environment,
Water, Population and Communities –
www.environment.gov.au
- Early Childhood Environmental Education