

# ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE POLICY

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	
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## PURPOSE

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

### Our commitment statement:

We are committed to taking an active role in caring for our environment and contributing to 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. Being environmentally responsible will 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 practices.

### 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 and converting to water saving taps.
- Encourage educators, families and children to engage in sustainable practices and appreciate the natural environment.
- 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 second-hand stores to use within the Service.
- Ensure sustainable practices are incorporated into the daily routine.

### Educators will:

- Incorporate recycling as part of everyday practice at the Service. Recycling containers will 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.

- 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. Using donated recycled resources in play activities.
- 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.

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES	IDEAS
RECYCLING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recycling paper and all recyclable rubbish.</li> <li>• Using recycled water (e.g. for watering gardens).</li> <li>• Using recyclable materials for art and craft and using some as loose parts during play.</li> <li>• Recycling toys- asking for donations, toy swap actions etc.</li> <li>• Collecting 10cents recyclable bottles/ cans</li> <li>• Resourcing toys/ materials from donations, OP-shops and second-hand shops rather than purchasing them.</li> <li>• Educational experiences for children to learn about recycling processes.</li> <li>• Using technology to research/ learn about sustainable projects and the environment.</li> </ul>
GARDENING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plant vegetable and herbs.</li> <li>• Educate children and have them participate in ‘garden to plate’ activities.</li> <li>• Have children participate in experiences such as seed sprouting, vegetable gardens, cooking with what is grown, and educate about weeds.</li> <li>• Modelling and encouraging appreciation of nature through nature walks and daily discussions.</li> </ul>
ENERGY CONSERVATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turn off non-LED lights when not in use.</li> <li>• Turn off electrical appliances at the outlet when not in use.</li> <li>• Use natural ventilation and insulated blinds/drapes rather than air conditioning when temperatures are not extreme.</li> <li>• Using clothesline instead of the dryer (weather permitted)</li> </ul>

<p>WATER CONSERVATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using half flush on the toilet.</li> <li>• Turning off the taps and ensure leaking taps are fixed immediately.</li> <li>• Using recycled water to use in the garden and for water/sand play.</li> <li>• Using water play water on the garden rather than tipping out at the end of the day.</li> <li>• Using the water tap mindfully- time restrictions (half an hour in the morning and half an hour in the afternoon)</li> </ul>
<p>NATURE AND WILDLIFE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using natural materials – leaves, sticks, bark, blocks, boxes etc. in arts and crafts and play.</li> <li>• Planting ‘butterfly attracting’ plants.</li> <li>• Collaborating with wildlife educators to assist in educating children.</li> <li>• Incorporating aboriginal perspective into our sustainable practices (using natural spaces for mealtimes/ play, cooking with native ingredients)</li> </ul>
<p>COMMUNICATE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displaying the Service’s sustainability journey in the foyer area for families and visitors.</li> <li>• Providing families with hints and tips in newsletters about how they can become sustainable at home.</li> <li>• Arranging the environment so that sustainable practices are clearly visible for children and families.</li> </ul>

### Source

Child Care Desktop

Australian Association for Environmental Education (AAEE): [www.aeee.org.au](http://www.aeee.org.au)

Department of Environment and Energy: [www.environment.gov.au](http://www.environment.gov.au)

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011).

Kearns, K. (2017). *The Business of Childcare* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.).

Queensland Early Childhood Sustainability Network (QECSN): [www.qecsn.org.au](http://www.qecsn.org.au)

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

The Point Preschool: [www.thepointpreschool.com.au](http://www.thepointpreschool.com.au)

### REVIEW

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