

SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Policy Statement

This Policy describes how the Service incorporates sustainability into its practices, routines and educational program so that children develop an understanding and respect for the environment and its finite resources throughout their lives.

Strategies and Practices

- The *Sustainability Policy* is available to families upon enrolment and staff upon induction.
- The Service seeks to provide a physical environment that includes natural features such as plants, trees, edible gardens, sand, rocks, mud and water, and to allow children unhurried time in that environment.
- Sustainability is incorporated into the Service's everyday routines and practices. Some of these practices include:
 - Recycling and the use of recycled resources
 - Energy efficiency
 - Water conservation
 - Re-purposing shopping bags for bin liners
 - Purchasing of recycled and biodegradable products; and
 - Composting.
- The Service promotes energy conservation by ensuring that air conditioning, lights and other electrical equipment are turned off when not in use.
- Water conservation is promoted by:
 - Emptying water used in water play onto gardens
 - Discontinuing water play during water restrictions, and explaining the reasons for this to the children
 - Using left over drink bottle water to water the gardens and plants
 - Educators encouraging and educating children regarding water wise practices such as turning off taps to avoid wastage
 - Bathroom taps, outdoor taps and bubblers installed are run on timers
- Rain water stored in tanks under the ground is used for flushing toilets.
- When purchasing equipment and supplies, the Service chooses items that are as eco-friendly as much as practicable. Preferred items are:
 - Made from natural materials and fibres (e.g. wood, cotton, cardboard, metals)
 - Local or Australian made
 - Biodegradable
 - Made from renewable, reused, or recycled materials
 - Repairable
 - Durable, and able to be washed or wiped clean.

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- The Service embraces green cleaning when possible and without compromising health and safety, replaces chemical cleaning agents with eco-friendly cleaning products.
- The Service uses cloth face washers to clean children's faces. These are then washed and reused. Chux cloths are used, washed and reused for cleaning purposes.
- The children at the service sort their waste at mealtimes into separate containers. Green waste, soft plastics, and general rubbish. Cardboard and paper bins are available in other areas of the service.
- The green waste that is collected is placed in the green bin supplied by the local council. Alternatively, staff are permitted to take the food scraps home for their animals.
- The service recycles soft plastics in accordance with the REDcycle recycling program. Each room of the service takes turns in delivering the waste each week to the collection point.
- Educators intentionally teach children about caring for the environment (e.g. energy efficiency, water saving), and involve them in planned experiences that develop life skills such as growing and preparing food, waste reduction and recycling.
- The service has two 'Sustainability Champions' who work in collaboration with educators across the service to promote and embed environmentally responsible practices. These champions are also responsible for guiding the implementation of the 'Get Grubby' program.
- Educators remain alert to teachable moments (e.g. feeding birds, rainbows, sun showers, cloud patterns) to share the awe and wonder of the natural world with children
- Environmental issues are discussed at team meetings, and resources from recognised authorities are introduced and discussed.
- The service is a part of the Green Leaders Program and the local Sustainable Schools Network.

References

- *Education and Care Services National Law*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
- Early Years Learning Framework
- Community Early Learning Australia. The Little Green Spade <https://www.cela.org.au>

Policy Review

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities, where necessary, as part of the review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.