

INTRODUCTION

As an education and care community, we can 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 BDCS service and involve educators, children and families in order to be successful.

OVERALL GOALS – What are we going to do?

BDCS 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 each service. Educators, children and families will be encouraged to become advocates for a sustainable future.

OVERALL STRATEGIES – How will it be done?**The Approved Provider will:**

- 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.
- Reduce waste, incorporate Green Cleaning ideas, and create an eco-friendly environment.
- Endeavour to equip the service with and implement water-saving strategies, green cleaning and recycling. Where applicable, grants will be applied to aid in the implementation of these effective environmental strategies.
- BDCS define the aims of this policy through specific environment policies. These individual policies will guide practices within the education and care service. These are:
 - Animals in the Environment
 - Cleaning and Maintaining the Environment
 - Smoke Free Environment
 - Safe Storage of Dangerous Goods

Educators will:

- Include reuse and reduce as part of everyday practice at each service. Scrap containers will be provided throughout the service.
- Role model sustainable practices.
- Discuss sustainable practices with the children as part of BDCS education and care curriculum.
- Provide information to families on sustainable practices that are implemented at BDCS 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 and or have chickens to reduce food waste at each service. Children will be encouraged to place food scraps into separate containers for use for the chickens, in the worm farm or the composting bin. Educators will discuss with the children and families which

scraps chickens, worms can eat, and which foods can be composted. The children will be involved in maintaining the chickens, 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,
- 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 where possible.
- Seek to embed sustainable practice in each BDCS 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 BDCS. These may include water tanks, grey water systems, converting toilet cisterns to dual flush and converting to water saving taps.
- Educators will make sustainable practices a part of the daily routine where possible. These include:
 - Reduce and reuse
 - Gardening
 - Energy conservation
 - Water conservation
 - Sustainable equipment purchases
- Educators will keep up to date with the latest research on environmental education through journals, resource agencies and professional development. This information will be shared with families and children

EVALUATION

The BDCS environment reflects sustainable practices, ‘Green Cleaning’ and eco-friendly choices. Educators, children, families and the wider community will learn together and embrace environmentally friendly practices.

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every 18 months. Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family’s ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

RELATED LEGISLATION

- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Guide to the National Quality Framework

A leader in the delivery of sustainable, creative and culturally appropriate early childhood services in North Western NSW.

- Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- Energy Efficiency Opportunities Act 2006
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998

LINKS TO:

- National Quality Standard, 3.2.3, 6.1.1

SOURCES

- NSW Government Office of Environment and Heritage – <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/>
- Department of the Environment and Energy – <http://www.environment.gov.au/>
- Early Childhood Environmental Education Network – <https://eceed.org.au/>
- ACECQA - Guide to the NQF - <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about/guide>

Policy Revision History

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Authorised By</i> | <i>Description of Amendments</i> | <i>Sections affected</i> |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Jan 2021 | P. Ritchie – GM | | |
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