



BOURKE AND DISTRICT CHILDREN'S SERVICES

QUALITY AREA 3: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

POLICY NAME: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

POLICY STATEMENT

BDCS encourages the awareness of environmental responsibility and implements practices that contribute to a sustainable future. Children are supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment. Environmentally sustainable practices are embedded into the operation of the services and we endeavour to promote sustainability to all staff, children and families.

BACKGROUND

We are committed to protecting our environment to ensure a sustainable future for our children. This involves staff children and families working together to protect our environment as we educate children about the importance of creating, promoting and maintaining sustainable communities. We believe environmental responsibility and sustainability should be embedded into the operations of our services, rather than being a theme that is investigated every now and then and therefore embed this learning through daily practices, resources and interactions.

OVERALL STRATEGIES / HOW WILL IT BE DONE?

Sustainable practices are encouraged within our services, and we encourage all staff, children and families to become advocates for a sustainable future. Some of the sustainable practices that we encourage within our service can include:

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE	ACTIVITIES
RECYCLING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using recycled water for watering gardens
GARDENING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planting vegetables, herbs, and fruit trees and using their produce for consumption
ENERGY CONSERVATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turning off lights and electrical appliances at the outlet when not in use Using natural ventilation rather than air conditioning when temperatures are not extreme
WATER CONSERVATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using half flush on the toilet Turning off the taps and ensure leaking taps are fixed immediately Using water play water on the garden rather than tipping down the drain
NATURE AND WILDLIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using natural materials (trees, blocks, boxes etc.) in arts and crafts and play Educating children in how to care for our wildlife
COMMUNICATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using scrap paper for art and craft activities Using both sides of paper when drawing

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/DIRECT SUPERVISORS WILL:

- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Ensure all staff (including casual staff) receive information and induction training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of the Environmental Sustainability Policy, their responsibilities in implementing it, and any changes that are made over time.
- Ensure students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy.
- Aim to create an eco-friendly environment.
- Consider the 'Sustainability' principle within the Early Years Learning Framework and endeavour to embed this in the educational program.
- Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders, where possible, to explore and share their own history, culture and rich sustainable practices.
- Encourage staff, families and children to practice sustainability and appreciate the natural environment, understand our impact on the natural world, and the interdependence between people, animals, plants, lands and waters.
- Where relevant, review policies and procedures within the service with staff, children and families, to achieve more sustainable outcomes and practices.
- Use electronic communication where possible to reduce paper use.
- Incorporate sustainable practices into the daily routine.



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- Seek to purchase equipment that is environmentally friendly and reduce the amount of plastic and disposable equipment that is purchased and instead select materials that are made of natural materials.
- Consider the concept of 'reduce, re-use and recycle', and encourage this to become part of everyday practice for both children and educators to build lifelong attitudes towards environmentally responsible practices.
- Purchase environmentally friendly cleaning products where possible rather than products containing chemicals.
- Equip the service with and implement water-saving strategies.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- Encourage children to take an active role in caring for the environment and think of ways they can contribute to a sustainable future.
- Role model environmental sustainability practices during play.
- Discuss sustainable and environmentally responsible practices with children and families as part of the curriculum.
- Provide information to families on sustainable and environmentally responsible practices that are implemented at the service and encourage the application of these practices home environment.
- 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.

ALL STAFF WILL:

- Endeavour to use environmentally sustainable practices where possible

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our Environmental Sustainability Policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance, or any incidents related to the policy. This review will be conducted in consultation with children, families, and staff.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Standard 1	Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture
Standard 2	Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
Standard 3	Families and communities are informed and involved
Standard 7	Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training
Standard 10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe

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	Resources 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.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS AND NATIONAL LAW

168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures must be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures

STATUTORY LEGISLATION & CONSIDERATIONS

[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 \(Amended 2023\)](#)
[Education and Care Services National Regulations \(Amended 2023\)](#)

SOURCES



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Acknowledgement to Community Early Learning Australia and Childcare Centre Desktop.

Australian Association for Environmental Education (AAEE): [Australian Association for Environmental Education \(AAEE\)](#).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). (2025).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). [Information sheet. Belonging, Being & Becoming. Sustainability.](#)

Australian Government Department of Education. (2022). [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.V2.0, 2022.](#)

Department of Environment and Energy: [Home - DCCEEW.](#)

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017). (Amended 2023).

Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2025). [Guide to the National Quality Framework.](#)

Revised National Quality Standard. (Amended 2025).

UNESCO. [Sustainable Development Goals- Resources for educators.](#)

RELATED POLICIES

- Educational Program Policy
- Physical Learning Environment Policy

RELATED DOCUMENTS

POLICY REVIEWED	NEXT REVIEW DATE	POLICY REVIEWED BY
OCTOBER 2025	OCTOBER 2026	Charlotte Parnaby
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual policy maintenance • Updated legislation and other links where necessary 	
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	POLICY REVIEWED BY
AUGUST 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New policy format • Child Safe Standards added • Regulation amendments incorporated 	Prue Ritchie
JANUARY 2021		Prue Ritchie