

WCS Children's Services

PROGRAM DELIVERY – Environmental Sustainability Policy

Purpose

Education and Care services can provide many opportunities for children and families to learn about environmental sustainability. We will promote practices which are a foundation for a diverse, healthy and productive physical environment/world to live in. When educators create environments in which children learn life skills such as growing and preparing food, waste reduction and recycling, they are supporting children to take responsibility for a sustainable future.

Policy Statement

WCS Children's services programs will include sustainability in practices, routines and educational program so that children develop an understanding and respect for the environment. In addition, WCS will encourage educators, children and families to care and advocate for the environment throughout their lives. This is monitored in our Quality Improvement Plan which is reviewed on a regular basis.

Strategies and Practices

- The service will seek 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 embedded in the service's everyday routines and practices. These may include:
 - Recycling, and use of recycled resources
 - Energy efficiency
 - Water conservation
 - Worm farm/composting.
- Reused and recycled containers are accessible. Educators will role model using the containers and discuss the reasons for them with the children. They encourage the children to use these recycled materials and to bring reusable items from home.
- Services access recycling outlets for craft materials whenever possible.
- The service practices energy conservation as often as possible. These may include:
 - air conditioning, lights and other electrical equipment are turned off when a room is not in use
 - computers, printers and photocopiers are turned off at the end of the day.
- Water conservation is embedded in the service's practices
 - only the amount of water required to undertake programmed water play is used

- when water tanks are available, this water is used appropriately as often as possible
 - water used in water play is emptied onto gardens
 - water play is restricted to comply with water restrictions, and the reasons explained to the children
 - discussions are ongoing about water as a limited resource and therefore precious.
 - taps are turned off after use to avoid wastage. Refer to the *Water Safety Policy*.
- Whenever possible, services will purchase equipment and supplies that are eco-friendly. These may include (but are not limited to) resources:
 - made from natural materials and fibres (e.g. wood, cotton, cardboard, metals)
 - locally or Australian made
 - made from renewable, reused, or recycled materials
 - repairable
 - durable and able to be washed or wiped clean.
 - The services use environmentally friendly cleaning products wherever possible. We ensure that these products do not compromise health and safety (refer to service procedures).
 - The service will encourage composting and food waste in the service is disposed of sustainably. Educators talk to the children about materials that can be composted, and how compost can be used in the garden.
 - Educators intentionally teach children about caring for the environment (e.g. energy efficiency, water saving, recycling), and involve them in planned experiences that develop life skills, such as growing and preparing food, waste reduction and recycling.
 - Educators remain alert to teachable moments to share the awe and wonder of the natural world with children.
 - The services regularly share information and ideas with families. In addition, services actively seek ideas and resources on sustainability from families.
 - Environmental issues may be added to the team meeting agenda.

Responsibilities of parents/guardians

- To continue the service's sustainability message at home.
- To contribute ideas and resources.

Links to other policies

- Educational Program Policy
- Water Safety Policy

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2018

QA	1.1.1	Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.
	1.2.1	Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.
	3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
	3.2.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organized 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, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.
	3.2.3	The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.

Sources, further reading and useful websites

Sources

- Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, 2017
- National Quality Standard 2011, 2018
- Early Years Learning Framework 2009. My Time, Our Place Middle years Learning Framework 2011.
- Gosford and Wyong Council. (2007). *Climbing the Little Green Steps: How to promote sustainability in early childhood services in your area* <https://www.wyong.nsw.gov.au/.../Little-Green-Steps---Guide-for-educators.aspx> September 2016
- New South Wales. (2009). *Little Green Steps Sustainability Education for Childcare Centres: In Your Child Care Centre* <https://www.wyong.nsw.gov.au/.../Little-Green-Steps---Guide-for-educators.aspx> September 2016
- Climbing the little Green Steps - Imagine Education Australia www.imagineeducation.com.au/files/CHC30113/ClimbLittleGreenSteps.pdf September 2016
- Dr. B. Abbey and P. Maclean, NQS - the complete system of policies, procedures and forms, <http://www.childcarebydesign.com.au/> September 2016

Further reading

- McKay, G. (2009). *Going green in childcare* ncac.acecqa.gov.au/educator-resources/pcf.../Going_green_in_child_care_Mar09.pdf

- The Earth Charter
<http://earthcharter.org/discover/download-the-charter>
- ECA Environmental Sustainability Policy -
www.eeec.org.au/downloads/EEEC_Policy.pdf

Useful websites

- Department of Environment and Resource Management – www.derm.qld.gov.au/
- Planet Ark - <http://planetark.org/>

Policy Review

This policy is a living document and will be monitored and reviewed as issues are identified. Proposed changes will be circulated and discussed by all programs and any external stakeholders for approval.

Person Responsible for Review:

Manager, Children's Services

Implementation Date:	12 September 2016	Review Date:	September 2018
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Modification History

Date	Sections and/or Paragraphs	Source	Details
2016/12	Whole document		formatting
2018/02	Quality Areas	Revised National Quality Standard 2018	

Related Documents

Refer to HR Manual –cross reference to WCS documents such as: WCS Services Guide, WCS Values and Strategic Plan.

Approved by Susan Henderson, Manager, Children's Services.



Date: 16 January 2017