

Physical Environment

Environmentally Responsible Policy.

Our Vision.

To give every child **the best start in life.**

Our Mission.

To deliver high quality childcare and exciting learning opportunities for every child, giving them a head start as they prepare for school.

Our Values.

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|----------------|--|
| Care | We take care of the children entrusted to us and our dedicated staff. All are appreciated and diversity is valued. |
| Quality | We maintain the highest standards in care and safety and provide exceptional early years education. |
| Service | We provide exceptional service and are integral to supporting parents bringing up children. |
| Value | We provide outstanding value for our families. |



Environmentally Responsible Policy.

Busy Bees Early Learning Australia 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. We practice and promote sustainability through reducing waste, minimising consumption, and protecting and conserving wildlife and natural habitats.

| NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS (NQS) | |
|---|---|
| QUALITY AREA 2 – Children’s Health and Safety | |
| 2.1 - Health | 2.1.3 - Healthy Lifestyle |
| 2.2 - Safety | 2.2.1 - Supervision |
| | 2.2.2 - Incident and Emergency Management |
| QUALITY AREA 3 – Physical Environment | |
| 3.2 - Use | 3.2.1 - Inclusive Environment |
| | 3.2.2 - Resource support play-based |
| | 3.2.3 - Environmentally Responsible |

| EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS | |
|--|--|
| Part 6 | Operating an Education and Care Service (Law - 167) |
| Part 4.3 | Physical Environment (Reg - 113, 114, 115) |
| Part 4.6 | Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities (Reg - 155, 156, 157) |
| Part 4.7 | Governance and Leadership (Reg - 168, 170, 171, 172) |

| RELATED POLICIES | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Animal and Barnyard Policy | Child Safe Environment Policy |
| Educational Program Policy | Supervision Policy |

PURPOSE

Busy Bees Early Learning Australia aim in educating children about being environmentally responsible which is promoted and supported through daily practices, resource, and interactions. Sustainable practice is encouraged with our Services and the community, assisting children and Families to become advocates for a sustainable future.

SCOPE

This policy applies to Children, Families, Employees, Management, Students, Volunteers and Visitors.

POLICY

Teaching and learning about being environmentally responsible starts with everyday practice. Busy Bees Early Learning Australia believe being environmentally responsible should be embedded into the operations of the Service, rather than being a tokenistic ‘theme’ that is investigated every now and then.

Busy Bees are committed to protecting our environment to ensure a sustainable future for our children. This involves employees, children and Families working together to protect our environment as we educate children about the importance of being environmentally responsible within our everyday practice.

Children will be encouraged to participate in practices which may consist of, but are not limited to, recycling, gardening, energy conservation, water conservation, using natural resources and equipment.

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Management will ensure to:

- Network with the local community to keep up to date with current practices and ideas for being environmentally responsible
- Encourage employees, Families and children to engage in sustainable practices and appreciate the natural environment
- Provide professional development opportunities for employees to learn about integrating environmentally sustainable education into all areas of their program
- Use electronic communication where possible to reduce paper use within the office/Service for newsletters, billing and other communication needs
- Incorporate sustainable practices into the daily routine
- Provide appropriate bins designated to landfill, organic waste, paper recycling and mixed recyclables where possible

Employees will ensure to:

- Incorporate recycling as part of everyday practice at the Service
- Use recyclable containers throughout mealtimes 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
- Use a worm farm/composting bin to reduce food waste in the Service where possible. If using these, children will be encouraged to place food scraps into separate containers for use in the worm farm or composting bin. Educators will provide visual guides and discuss with the children and families which scraps worms can eat, which foods can be composted, and which food scraps must go in the bin. The children will be involved in maintaining the worm farm and compost bin
- 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
- 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 eco-friendly 'green cleaning' products to replace chemicals where possible.

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Sustainable Practices May Include:

| SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE | IDEAS |
|----------------------|--|
| RECYCLING | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide bins and signage for waste and recycled materials • Recycle paper and all other recyclable rubbish • Use recycled water (e.g., for watering gardens) |
| GARDENING | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant vegetables, herbs, and fruit trees • Establish a worm farm • Give food scraps to worms or Service pets, or to an employee to take home for their pet/s • Provide education to children about activities such as 'garden to plate' activities. • Provide opportunities for children to participate in experiences such as seed sprouting, vegetable gardening, cooking with what is grown, and provide education about weeds |
| ENERGY CONSERVATION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install LED lighting where possible • Turn off non-LED lights when not in use • Turn off electrical appliances at the outlet when not in use • Use natural ventilation and insulated blinds/drapes rather than air conditioning when temperatures are not extreme |
| WATER CONSERVATION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using half flush on the toilet • Turn off the taps and ensure leaking taps are fixed immediately • Encourage shorter showers • Teach children to turn off tap when brushing teeth • Collect rainwater and use in the garden and for water/sand play • Use water play water on the garden rather than tipping out at the end of the day |
| NATURE AND WILDLIFE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use natural materials – trees, blocks, boxes etc. in arts, crafts and play • Educate children about the natural decomposition cycle through exposure and participation in worm farms and composting food scraps • Educate children in how to care for pets, letting them actively participate in caring for the Service pets. • Plant 'butterfly attracting' and 'bird attracting' plants and install a birdbath • Create a lizard lounge • Collaborate with wildlife educators to assist in educating children |
| COMMUNICATE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use electronic communication where possible to reduce paper use within the office/Service for newsletters, billing and other communication needs • Display the Service's sustainability journey in the foyer area for Families and visitors to view, provide feedback and offer suggestions • Provide Families with hints and tips in newsletters about how they can become sustainable at home • Use scrap paper for art and craft • Use both sides of paper for drawing |

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SOURCES

[ACECQA](#)

[National Quality Standard](#)

[Education and Care services National Regulations](#)

[Education and Care Service National Law Act 2010](#)

[Early Childhood Australia](#)

[Australian Environmental Education](#)

[Department of Environment and Energy](#)

[Department of Education – International Journal of Early Childhood Environment Education](#)

VERSION CONTROL

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years and/or in line with legislation and organisation requirements.

| Version | Date | Owner | Responsibility | Change Description |
|---------|------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | 01/10/2023 | Chief Pedagogy & Safeguarding Officer | Policy Development Officer | Replace all previous versions |
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