

Document Title	NQS3.21 Sustainability Policy	Version	3a
Date Approved	January 2024	Date for Review	March 2023
Warning - Ensure you are using the latest version of this policy.			
DCC Network/All Organisation Information/DCC Policies/Quality Area 3 – Physical Environment			

1. Policy Statement

River Region Early Education aims to help children learn about and implement sustainable practices and foster respect and care for the living and non-living environment.

2. Rationale

River Region Early Education encourages and increases 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 education and care service and involve educators, children and families in order to be successful.

3. Definitions

Nil

4. Guidelines

Children develop positive attitudes and values about sustainable practices by engaging in learning experiences, joining in discussions that explore solutions to environmental issues, and watching adults model sustainable practices. Children learn to live interdependently with the environment.

a) Environmental Sustainability and our Curriculum

Our educators will promote a holistic, open ended curriculum which explores ideas and practices for environmental sustainability and helps children understand the interdependence between people and the environment by:

- connecting children to nature through art and play and allowing children to experience the natural environment through natural materials like wood, stone sand and recycled materials, plants including native vegetation, trickle streams or ponds, nesting boxes, a potting bench with gardening tools and watering cans.
- developing education programs for water conservation, energy efficiency and waste reduction.
- celebrating childrens' environmental knowledge and sustainable activities.
- involving children in nature walks, education about plants and gardening and growing plants and flowers from seed.
- engaging children in learning about the food cycle by growing, harvesting, and cooking food for our service kitchen.
- using resource kits and information on environmental issues from the Better Business Partnership or resources targeted at early childhood services such as "The Little Green Steps" Resource kits on Water, Waste and Wildlife.

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- enlisting the help of groups with expertise in environmental issues, for example Yarkuwa and Landcare
- acknowledging and celebrating environmental awareness events like Clean Up Australia Day and Walk to School Day.

b) The role of the approved provider

- Ensure the service joins The NSW Early Childhood Environmental Education Network to liaise with other education and care services and keep up to date on practice and ideas for sustainability.
- 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. has resources which may assist Early Childhood Services
- Ensure the service conducts a yearly sustainability audit. The tool is located in the network- \\DCC-Network\Deniliquin_Childrens_Centre\NQFAudits\Sustainability

c) The role of educators

Our educators will model sustainable practices by embedding sustainability into all aspects of the daily running of our service operations including:

- Include recycling as part of everyday practice at the education and care service. Recycling containers (including paper, and mixed recyclables will be provided throughout the service.
- Role model sustainable practices.
- Discuss sustainable practices with the children and families as part of the services education and care curriculum.
- Provide information to families on sustainable practices that are implemented at the education and care service 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.
- Reduce or reuse food scraps through composting, worm farms or families taking home for their own use.
- Children will be encouraged to place food scraps into separate containers for use in the worm farm, composting bin or for families to take home.
- Discuss with the children and families which scraps, worms can eat and which foods can be composted. The children will be involved in maintaining the 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.
- Seek to embed sustainable practice in the education and care 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.

d) Partnerships with Families and the Community

Our educators will facilitate collaborative partnerships with local community groups, government agencies and private companies to enhance and support childrens' learning about sustainable practices. We will share their brochures and fact sheets on sustainable practices like recycling, saving water and power and green cleaning with our children and their families. Families will be encouraged to participate in decision making and information sharing about environmental sustainability through our newsletters, wall displays and information day/s evenings.

Any important information that needs to be included to provide context. This can include some procedure but should be general in scope and not include process.

5. Sources

- CELA
- Centre Support
- The NSW Early Childhood Environmental Education Network
- Inspired EC

6. Relevant Legislation, Regulations and Standards

Legislation	
Education and Care Services National Regulation	
National Quality Standards	
3.2.3	The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.
Child Safe Standards	
Early Years Learning Framework Learning Outcomes	
2	Children are connected with and contribute to their world
Early Years Learning Framework Principles	
	Sustainability
Early Years Learning Framework Practices	
	Holistic, integrated, and interconnected approaches
	Responsiveness to children
	Play-based learning and intentionality
	Learning environments

7. Related Documents

Doc #	Attachments
NQS3.21 A1	Sustainability Audit Tool

Doc #	Intersections with other key documents

8. Document Control

Doc #	Doc Title	Version	Approved	Next Review
NQS3.21	Sustainability Policy	1	August 2012	May 2016
NQS3.21	Sustainability Policy	2	May 2018	May 2020
NQS3.21	Sustainability Policy	3	March 2020	March 2023
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