

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

AIM

This policy will provide guidelines to assist Forbes Children's Centre in taking an active role in caring for the environment, and promoting and contributing to a sustainable future. This policy aims to assist children to develop positive attitudes and values about sustainable practices and learn to live interdependently with the environment.

IMPLEMENTATION

Leadership will:

- Collaborate with educators, staff, families, children and others to identify environmental sustainability strategies for implementation.
- Ensure the identified strategies are implemented at the service.
- Allocate necessary resources to implement identified strategies.
- Ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities outlined in this policy.
- Ensure families are aware of, and have access to, this policy.
- Ensure environmental education and practices are incorporated into the curriculum.
- Provide families with information about environmentally sustainable practices e.g. through displays, fact sheets and local community resources, and by ensuring that they have access to this policy.
- Seek and apply for grants, where appropriate, to support the implementation of strategies within this policy.
- Communicate with Forbes Primary School about sustainable strategies for the whole site and implement shared strategies where possible (e.g. Solar panels installed at Forbes Primary School).

Educators will:

- Promote a holistic, open ended curriculum which explores ideas and practices for environmental sustainability and help children understand the interdependence between people and the environment.
- Collaborate with Leadership team, other educators and staff, families and children to identify environmental sustainability strategies for implementation.
- Engage in experiences that support the Centre to become more environmentally sustainable as part of their daily routine (e.g. recycling, gardening, energy conservation, water conservation).
- Plan opportunities for children to connect with nature and the natural world, including excursions and other service events.
- Incorporate celebrations of environmental awareness into the program e.g. National Tree Day, National Recycling Week, Clean Up Australia Day and Nature Play SA.
- Connect children to nature through art and play and provide opportunities for children to experience the natural environment through natural materials like wood, stone, sand, recycled materials, loose parts and plants including native vegetation.
- Provide information to families on sustainable practices that are in place at the Centre and encourage implementation of these practices in the home environment.
- Undertake professional development which focuses on aspects of sustainability.
- Reduce the amount of plastic and disposable equipment that is purchased and select materials that are made of natural materials and fibres.
- Role model energy and water conservation practices of turning off lights, air-conditioning and other electronic appliances and machines when a room is not in use, empty water play containers onto gardens.
- Include recycling as part of everyday practice. Recycling containers will be provided throughout the Centre. The concepts of 'reduce, reuse and recycle' will become part of everyday practice for both children and educators to build lifelong attitudes towards sustainable practices.

- Use a worm farm or composting bin to reduce food waste. Children will be encouraged to place food scraps into separate containers for use in the worm farm or compost. Educators will discuss with children and families about which foods worms can eat and which foods can be composted. The children will be involved in maintaining both projects. A worm farm is located in the River room yard for food scraps and the worm urine that is produced is used on the garden.
- Explore and discuss the lifecycles of plants, insects and animals with children.
- Encourage children to participate in good environmental practices such as using both sides of paper, recycling and watering the garden.
- Discuss and explore with children the ways different cultures engage with the environment including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customs.
- Provide resources such as games, puzzles, figures, books and Literacy/Numeracy packs that discuss aspects of sustainability

Families will:

- Collaborate with the Centre to identify environmental sustainability strategies for implementation.
- Follow the strategies identified and outlined in this policy.
- Encourage children to adopt environmentally sustainable practices at both the Centre and at home.
- Model appropriate sustainable practices to their children.

Admin staff will:

- Use alternate forms of communication such as phone calls or email instead of paper notes where possible.
- Order supplies as needed, ensuring that materials that are ordered have a purpose and are used.

EVALUATION:

This policy is viewed to be working effectively when :

All people on-site are aware of the many elements of sustainability and take steps to ensure educators, children, families and the wider community will learn together and embrace environmentally friendly practices.

National Quality Standards:

Quality Area 3: Physical Environment

Standard 3.3. The service takes an active role in caring for its environment and contributes to a sustainable future.

Element 3.3.1. Sustainable practices are embedded in service operations.

Element 3.3.2. Children are supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment.

Record of Policy Adoption and Amendment:

Version	Date	Details	Author	Approver
1.0	June 2015	Policy drafted and adopted	D. Wilden	Kim Cook
1.1	June 2015	Policy edited. Repeated statements removed.	P. Murray	Governing Council

Implemented: September 2016

Reviewed: To be reviewed annually.

Next Review: September 2018

Source:

National Quality Framework

Environment Protection Act 1993

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, 'Sustainability Curriculum Framework'

Resource:

Department of Education and Child Development, 'DECD Policy 2007'

Small Green Steps Program

NRM Education, www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au