

# QUALITY AREA 3

## Physical Environment

	Revisited	Review date
Environmental sustainability	23/8/2019	5/8/2023
Providing a child safe environment	23/8/2019	5/8/2023
Cleaning and maintaining the environment	23/8/2019	5/8/2023
Environment statement	23/8/2019	5/8/2023
The indoor and outdoor environment	23/8/2019	5/8/2023

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# ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

National Quality Standard 3.2.3, (Environmentally responsible)  
Education and Care National Regulations current version

## **INTRODUCTION**

As an Early Childhood Education and Care service, we encourage an increased awareness of environmental responsibilities and implement practices that contribute to a sustainable future.

Why? "One of the most significant responsibilities that (early childhood) professionals have is to support children to retain the sense of awe and wonder that they are born with, to add to that a desire to nurture and protect what is beautiful and to encourage them to appreciate that there are many possibilities for honoring life and wonders that the world holds." (Stonehouse, A. (2006) NSW curriculum framework for Children's Services).

Current research confirms that experiences in the early years help establish lifelong behavior and values. This reinforces the need for children to be supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment. We know that environmentally sustainable practices should be embedded into the operations of our service and involve educators, children and families in order to be successful.

## **GOALS - What are we going to do?**

The Moama & District Preschool Centre Inc, will ensure the environment is safe, clean and well-maintained. Children's awareness of the environment will be promoted through daily practices, resources, activities, experiences and interactions. Sustainable practices will be encouraged and promoted within the curriculum. Educators, children and families will be encouraged to become advocates for a sustainable future.

## **STRATEGIES- How will it be done?**

### **The Approved Provider will:**

- Ensure the service leader joins NSW Early Childhood Environmental Education groups to liaise with other education and care services and keep up to date on practices 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.
- Ensure Staff and Educators follow this policy.
- Revise this policy as new information comes to hand.
- Provide the Centre with budgets and resources to support this. This is particularly important in the purchase of sustainable and natural cleaning products that often cost more money.
- Provide hand dryers in the children's bathrooms.
- Where possible source items that are sustainable to use.

**Staff and Educators will:**

Educators will make sustainable practices a part of the daily routine. This includes following and abiding by the preschool's philosophy and practices at all times.

This includes but is not limited to;

- Recycling
- Gardening
- Energy conservation
- Water conservation
- Sustainable equipment purchases
- Selecting and/or providing sustainable resources.
- Eco friendly laminated pouches used.
- Include recycling as part of everyday practice at the Preschool. Recycling containers will be provided throughout the service.
- Role model sustainable practices.
- Discuss sustainable practices with the children and families as part of the services curriculum.

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- The use of less colour in photocopier and using recycled paper when producing large quantities eg handbook.
- The inclusion of loose parts for play experiences indoors and outdoors.
- Provide information to families on sustainable practices that are implemented at the Centre 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, face book, through emails, newsletter, daily diaries and conversations.
- Use a worm farm to reduce food waste in the Centre or give scraps to staff or families to feed their chickens/ animals. Children will be encouraged to place food scraps into separate containers for use in the worm farm or the chook scraps. Educators will discuss with the children and families which food 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 when room not in use or children are outside.
- Turning off air-conditioning when a room is not in use if efficient.
- Emptying water play containers onto garden area.
- 
- Role modelling the concept through play experiences.
- 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 where possible.
- 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.
- Use local Council and Government departments as sources of information on sustainable practices used in the local community. They will liaise with the Council and Government departments for possible grants available to put in place water and energy conservation practices in the education and care service. These may include water tanks, grey water systems, converting toilet

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cisterns to dual flush and converting to water saving taps include these concepts in any future buildings.

- Collaborate with the Approved Provider, parents/guardians, children and others at the service to identify environmental sustainability strategies for implementation at the service, including this in any fundraising also.
- Engage in any activity that supports the Centre to become more environmentally responsible.
- Role model sustainable practices to the children and using appropriate language with regards to this.
- Incorporate environmental education and sustainable practices within our curriculum and not just a tourist approach.
- Ongoing reflection about everyday practices and their impact on the environment and tie this in with our Aboriginal ancestors who were very good at having little impact on the environment.
- Provide families with information about environmentally sustainable practices eg through displays, play experiences, curriculum plans.
- Use natural resources where possible such as drying the washing outdoors in the sun.
- When using washing machine use cold water where possible.
- Work with children and families to research and respect the native wildlife around us.
- When printing use black and white where possible (ensure any new photocopiers purchased in the future have recyclable cartridges).

## **EVALUATION**

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The Moama & District Preschool Centre Inc environment and actions reflects

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010.: No.165 & No.167  
Education and Care National Regulations 2011: 99. 158-159, 168, 76  
Link to National Quality Standard: Safety, 2.2 Supervision 2.2.1, Child  
Protection 2.2.3.

Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012, Design 3.1, Fit for  
purpose 3.1.1, Upkeep 3.1.2

Child Protection (Working with children) Regulation 2013  
Crimes Act 1900

sustainable practices, 'Green Cleaning' and eco-friendly choices within the educational program practice and other aspects. Educators, children, families and the wider community will learn together and embrace environmentally friendly practices.

### **Statutory Legislation & Considerations**

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Guide to the National Quality Framework

Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

Energy Efficiency Opportunities Act 2006

Sources

**NSW Government Office of Environment and Heritage –**

**[www.environment.nsw.gov.au](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au)**

**Department of the Environment and Energy – [www.environment.gov.au](http://www.environment.gov.au)**

**Early Childhood Environmental Education Network – [www.eceen.org.au](http://www.eceen.org.au)**

**ACECQA - Guide to the NQF - [www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about/guide](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about/guide)**

Acknowledgements:

Community **Early Learning Australia (CELA)** sample policy **Dec 18.**  
Providing a Child Safe Environment

# Providing a child safe environment

## Statement:

**Our preschool has a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that the rights and best interests of the children are paramount and that we will provide training, resources, information and guidance to support this in order to;**

- Ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected at all times;
- Ensure that Staff educating children at the service act in the best interests of the child;
- Protect and advocate the rights of all children to feel safe, and be safe at all times;
- Maintaining a culture in which children's rights are respected;
- Encouraging active participation from families at the service, supporting a partnership approach and shared responsibility for children's health, safety, wellbeing and development. When active participation is interrupted in its physical form (families excluded due to infectious disease) we will find other ways.

## Goals – What are we going to do?

- All children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment that promotes opportunities to thrive with adults who safeguard and advocate for their health, safety, security and wellbeing including the right to;
- Be asked to express their views and wishes about matters affecting their lives and to have those views appropriately considered by adults;
- Feel and be safe in their interactions with adults and other children and young

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- people; and
- Understand, as early as possible, what is meant by 'feeling and being safe'.

## **Strategies – How will it be done?**

### **The Physical Environment**

In order to promote a safe physical environment we will;

- Ensure all equipment and material used at the service meet relevant safety standards.
- Remove, repair or replace worn and damaged buildings, structures, equipment and resources which may provide a safety risk to children in a timely manner.
- Ensure learning environments are established that provide appropriate child groupings, sufficient space, and include carefully chosen and well-maintained resources and equipment.
- Organise indoor and outdoor spaces to ensure risks to the health and safety are minimized.
- Conduct monthly service reports to determine any risks to children's health and safety (Committee of Management)
- Conduct prior to session checklists daily in the morning to determine any risks to children's health and safety (staff)
- Conduct end of day checklists to ensure all children have left the building.
- Analyse and evaluate the risks associated with identified hazards.
- Review risk assessments after any serious incident report is made to the Regulator Authority
- Ensure smoking is banned within the grounds of, and within four meters of any entrance of the preschool
- Adopt policies and procedures to protect children being educated and cared for by the Preschool from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury. Eg, locks on doors and cupboards that have hazardous materials or equipment,

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and sign on this, equipment is not located close to fences (scaling hazard), Material and Safety data sheets stickers to be kept on items used that are considered hazardous, items kept out of children's reach such as disinfectant sprays etc.,.

- Ensure all equipment that needs to be test and tagged is done within the correct timeframe.

## **Staffing and Supervision**

### **The Approved Provider will:**

Ensure that sufficient numbers of educators are employed to ensure adequate supervision of children at all times, and;

- Ensure screening and suitability of staff, volunteers as per the legislation and policy at the time of employment and as part of an ongoing process;
- Respond proactively to emerging staff performance concerns.

### **The Nominated Supervisor will:**

- Draw up rosters to ensure that adequate number of educators are on duty to meet ratio and qualification requirements and to ensure adequate supervision of children at all times;
- Engage casual staff as appropriate;
- Ensure staff are aware of the need for adequate supervision of children at all times. This includes a supervision chart for outdoor spaces where children playing may be difficult to supervise, and;
- Adopt policies designed to protect children being educated and cared for by the Preschool from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury are implemented and that all staff are aware of these policies and procedures.
- Ensure there is an outdoor supervision plan on display in prominent areas. This is to inform educators of the hard to see places within the outdoor environment that educators do need to rely on sound rather than sight, if not within this vicinity.
- Ensure all staff adhere to the policies and legislations in NSW and appropriate performance management follow ups if not.

### **The Educators will:**

- Adequately supervise children within their room/group at all times both indoors and outdoors; and
- Follow all policies to protect children who are being educated and care for are safe from harm or any hazards.
- Inform the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person whenever supervision is inadequate within their group to ensure the health and safety of all children at all times.
- Develop a plan of who completes this within each room and document this to ensure that daily prior to session checklists and end of day checklists are completed and stored correctly.
- Be aware of this policy and remove any unsafe equipment or materials.
- Fill in Hazard Register report and report this to Nominated supervisor or Responsible person for that day.
- Complete new risk assessments as needed for materials or equipment.
- Ensure material and safety data sheet stickers are kept on materials used within the Centre;
- If materials are purchased that do not have a materials safety data sheet, request this from the Office manager and use after this has been completed.

### **Organisation of Rooms and Environments**

#### **The Approved Provider will:**

- Make sufficient allowance within budgets to allow for the purchase of equipment and supplies and also replacement of worn and damaged equipment and resources which may provide safety risks for children, and;
- Make sufficient allowance within budgets to allow the adequate maintenance of all indoor and outdoor environments.

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- Complete monthly checklist to ensure any safety concerns are reported and acted upon.

### **The Nominated Supervisor will:**

- Organise rooms and groupings to enable adequate supervision of children and so to minimise the risk to children; and
- Organise repairs and maintenance to equipment and environments in a timely manner.
- Ensure educators and staff are supported to fill in risk assessments, and made aware of nominated risk assessments in induction, as well as share any new risk assessments made at monthly staff meetings.
- Ensure staff participate in policy development and are abiding by any new policies.

### **Educators and staff will:**

- Organise indoor and outdoor spaces to ensure risks to the health and safety are minimised; this includes but is not limited to for example indoors not blocking exits or access to fire extinguishers etc., as well as ensuring children do not have access to unauthorized named areas eg store rooms that contain cleaning products etc.,.
- Have plans of the indoor and outdoor spaces documented. Ensure there is a documented process for each team of how this is done, where it is stored and reflections on this.
- Inform the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible person for that day of repairs and maintenance needed within the service to ensure the health and safety of children by recording this on the Maintenance Register sheet on the noticeboard in the main office.
- If this is considered an immediate risk this will be removed immediately and clearly labelled broken.

## **Risk Assessment**

### **The Approved Provider will:**

Conduct a monthly indoor and outdoor inspection report prior to each general meeting and ensure any action is taken if needed from this. This will be

presented at the monthly general meeting.

### **The Nominated Supervisor will:**

- Conduct a risk assessment of the service environment on a regular basis to determine any risks to children's health and safety;
- Store all risk assessments in a clearly labelled folder.
- Analyse and evaluate the risks associated with identified hazards;
- Determine appropriate ways to eliminate or control identified hazards; and
- Review risk assessments after any serious incident report are made to the Department of Education and Communities.
- Sign off on any reported risks on the maintenance register when completed.

### **Educators and staff will:**

- Report and remove if necessary any risks or hazards within the Preschool that are named on a risk assessment and not believed to be safe to the Nominated Supervisor as soon as possible and record on the Maintenance Register in the noticeboard in the main office.
- Ensure new risk assessments are filled in, if this is known and a planned new material, experience or piece of equipment.

### **Evaluation**

By adhering to the above the children are healthy and safe at our service and the number of serious health and safety incidents is reduced over time. If there is a rise in incidents this will be critically reflected as needed.

# Cleaning and maintaining the environment

Educational and Care Services National Regulations; Regulation: 103, 168  
Link to National Quality Standard: 2.1.3. 2.1.4

## INTRODUCTION

Children have the right to an education in an environment that provides for their health and safety. Good cleaning and maintenance of the environment ensures that illness and unintentional injuries are avoided. Environmental responsibility also encompasses the cleaning and maintenance of the education and care service in ways that are sustainable and environmentally friendly.

## GOALS - What are we going to do?

Follow procedures and schedules that ensure the buildings, premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.

Promote awareness of environmental sustainability through daily practices and information sharing.

Involve children in discussions about health and safety issues and support children to develop guidelines to keep the environment safe for all.

Encourage eco-friendly practices and encourage staff, children and families to use chemical free options for cleaning.

## STRATEGIES - How will it be done?

### **Approved Provider will:**

- Arrange for the education and care service to be cleaned by professional cleaners at the end of each day.
- Allow in the budget for one off cleans when needed such as infectious disease.
- Ensure that written policies and procedures regarding child safe environments are developed.
- Develop systems to ensure that daily checks and risk assessments of the environment are documented and that where repairs, cleaning or

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maintenance issues are identified, they are attended to promptly.

### **The Nominated Supervisor will:**

- Develop systems to ensure that the daily cleaning of the service is carried out to a satisfactory standard.
- Ensure that educators are familiar with policies related to cleaning and maintaining safe environments for children.
- Ensure that daily checks and risk assessments of the environment are conducted and documented
- Respond to any identified risks, repairs, cleaning or maintenance issues promptly.
- Support educators to research and consider alternative and sustainable cleaning options and arrange for regular professional development to ensure a clean and safe environment for children.

### **Educators will:**

- Ensure that cleaning duties do not compromise care and supervision of children at any time but at the same time ensure that children's and other staff safety is not compromised either. Staff are following documented routines for how this will happen and times when 'cleaning' can occur eg group times if not needed etc, or other transition times such as relaxation the floor can be swept. This will be determined in each team.
- Identify when the building, premises, furniture or equipment require cleaning or maintenance. The identified issue will be dealt with immediately.
- This will be done by cleaning as required or by removing the damaged furniture or equipment to be repaired or discarded as decided by the Nominated Supervisor and the Approved Provider. The educator will complete required documentation and refer this to the Nominated Supervisor for attention.
- Involve children in discussions about health and safety issues and support children to develop guidelines to keep the environment safe for all.
- Role model good cleaning practices for the children and encourage

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children to be involved in the cleaning of the environment where appropriate.

- Support children to have an active role in caring for their environment and to contribute to a sustainable future.
- Be responsible for spot cleaning the education and care service to ensure cleanliness and hygiene standards are maintained throughout the day.
- Minimise the use of chemicals in the education and care environment.
- Research natural cleaning alternatives for use in the education and care environment and use the Tripure cleaning disinfectant.
- Chemical-free options that are sensitive to the needs of educators and children with allergies will be utilised when possible. Eg hand sanitizers natural options will be available.
- Consider sustainable practice when they are cleaning. Using washable cloths for wiping tables and not paper towel. Encouraging children to use hand dryers. They will reflect on their practices and access professional development, journals and the Internet for more ideas on eco-friendly cleaning options.
- Use Tripure cleaner or soapy water for daily cleaning of tables, nappy change surfaces, mouthed toys and general spills both indoors and outside. The soapy water can be made from pH Neutral detergent diluted in water and stored in a labeled spray bottle out of reach of children.

Consider using the following:

- Using natural alternatives for furniture eg beeswax as opposed to other polishes.

### **Aim to minimise waste by:**

- Encouraging recyclable materials to be placed in labeled recycling containers rather than garbage bins.
- Encouraging nude food lunchboxes.
- Recycling food scraps at meal and snack times. Children and educators can place food scraps into these containers which will then

be placed in composting or worm farm containers. The kitchen will have containers for food scraps and recycling for educators to use.

- Involving children in the education of the damage that paper towel does to the environment over the use of the hand dryer.
- Involving children and families in the education that non recyclable packaging does to the environment.

## **EVALUATION**

Our Education service is well cleaned and maintained to support children's health and safety.

- Children and educators work cooperatively to care for the environment in a sustainable manner.
- The environment reflects sustainable practices, 'Green Cleaning' and eco-friendly choices. Educators, children, families and the wider community will learn together and embrace environmentally friendly practices.

# Environment Statement

Educational and Care Services National Regulations; Schedule 1  
Link to National Quality Standard: 3.1.2, 3.2.3, 6.1.1.

## **Introduction:**

This statement has been developed to provide an overview of the areas of the environment covered by this policy. The promotion of healthy, sustainable environments where educators, children and families learn and share ideas about creating an environmentally friendly education service must be a priority within our service.

## **Goals: What are we going to do?**

Our education service will define areas of the environment through individual policies. These policies will incorporate practices that are achievable in the service. These practices will aim to provide a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable environment for educators, children and families, reflection through our implementation of the Early Years Learning Framework.

## **Strategies: How will it be done?**

Our education service will:

- Reduce waste, incorporate Green Cleaning ideas (such as washable clothes rather than one use cloths and natural cleaning products such as tripure and eucalyptus oil), and create an eco-friendly environment.
- Endeavour to equip the service with and implement water-saving strategies, green cleaning, sky lights, equipment that have timers so is used in the middle of the day, hot water with solar panels and recycling.
- Where applicable, grants will be applied to aid in the implementation of these effective environmental strategies.
- The service defines the aims of this statement through the specific environment policies.

These individual policies will guide practices within the service.

Educators will keep up-to-date with the latest research on environment education through journals, resource agencies, social media, newsletters and professional development. This information will be shared with families and children.

## **Evaluation:**

The environment will reflect sustainable practices, *Green Cleaning* and eco-friendly choices. Educators, children, families and the wider community will learn together and embrace environmentally friendly practices.

### Sources:

- Community Early Learning Australia – Sample policy
- Kidsafe NSW Inc – [www.kidsafe.nsw.org](http://www.kidsafe.nsw.org)
- Department of the Environment and Energy – [www.environment.gov.au](http://www.environment.gov.au)
- Early childhood Australia – [www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au)
- Early Childhood Environmental Education Network – [www.eceen.org.au](http://www.eceen.org.au)
- Gosford and Wyong Council (2007), climbing the little green steps: How to promote sustainability in early childhood services in your local area, Gosford, Australia.

# The Indoor and Outdoor Environment

Educational and Care Services National Regulations; 104-114  
Link to National Quality Standards/Elements: QA 3

## **Introduction**

The physical environment can contribute to children's wellbeing, happiness, creativity and developing independence. It can contribute to and express the quality of children's learning and experiences. The choices made in a service about resources, materials, spaces, layout, air and light quality and access to a range of experiences in the indoor and outdoor, have a direct impact on the quality of learning opportunities available to children.

## **Goals: What are we going to do?**

Our education service will ensure the environment is safe, clean and well maintained. Children's awareness of the environment and sustainable practice will be supported through daily practices, resources and interactions. The physical environment, both in and outdoor will support children's learning, safety, levels of engagement and access to positive experiences and inclusive relationships.

## **Strategies: How will it be done?**

### **Approved Provider will ensure that:**

- Fencing and barriers which enclose outdoor areas used by children in the education and care service are maintained to ensure they are of a height and design that prevents children of preschool age from going from going through, over or under the structure.
- Consideration about minimizing access to the service by unauthorized people and animals will also inform the height and design of fencing and barriers.
- Minimising visitors to the Service will also be included in procedure of opening playroom doors for a certain time period and locking these afterwards.
- To gain access people will need to ring the doorbell and staff will check using the monitor they are a 'safe' person.
- The Centre also has a duress alarm featured at the front desk should a staff member feel there is a threat to the service.

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- Sufficient furniture, materials and developmentally appropriate equipment are provided and maintained in the service in order to support all children to engage and access the program and develop their developing skills and independence.
- The laundry facility in the premises is located and maintained in a way that does not pose any risks to children. The is an area that the door is labelled and is kept locked.
- Each room has its own storeroom to keep cleaning products, craft supplies etc.,.
- Adequate space requirements are maintained in both the indoor and outdoor environments and in office areas.
- Where there is risk of spread of infectious diseases staff will be reminded to socially distance in office spaces also and breaks will be at different times to ensure this is occurring.
- Toilet, washing and drying facilities are developmentally and age appropriate and are located and designed in a way that support safe use and convenient access by children.
- The nappy change areas supports safe access and hygienic nappy change routines and that educators and children have ready access to handwashing facilities. The nappy changing policy is kept near by. As this is hydraulic change table this area has limited access and only for adults to enter with the children.
- The indoor and outdoor environments are well ventilated and have adequate natural light.
- Indoor temperatures are maintained at levels that support children's safety and wellbeing.
- The play spaces in the service provide children with opportunities to explore and experience the natural environment. Just as much time is spent indoors as is spent outdoors.
- The outdoor environment has adequate shaded areas to protect children from ultraviolet radiation from the sun and has natural surfaces such as grass, rock and sand as well as areas where risky play can occur such as tree climbing, hanging, jumping from safe heights etc.,.
- The environment seeks to support convenient access to both indoor and

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outdoor play activities and for toilet and nappy change facilities according to supervision requirements, children's independence and developmental needs.

- The gardens reflect the local natural habitat and water conservation and encourages native wildlife into the education and care environment and vegetable patches are able to support children is growing their own vegetables and learning the benefits of this. The outdoor environment will also have high and low areas, quiet spaces, small spaces and safety soft fall etc.

### **The Nominated Supervisor will:**

- Ensure that plants (indoors and outdoors) and trees are selected to minimize risks to children. No poisonous or dangerous plants will be included in the environment. See fact sheet on *Poisonous Plants* – [https://www.kidsafensw.org/imagesDB/wysiwyg/GROWMESAFELY-PlantstoAvoid\\_2014\\_1.pdf](https://www.kidsafensw.org/imagesDB/wysiwyg/GROWMESAFELY-PlantstoAvoid_2014_1.pdf).
- Collaborate with educators to carefully select and provide adequate numbers of resources in order to contribute to children's sense of belonging and to provide new learning opportunities that extend and challenge children's learning and development.
- Ensure that all groups are spending the same amount of time in the indoor and outdoor environment.

### **The Educational Leader will collaborate with educators to:**

- Equally value both the outdoor and indoor learning environment as places that support children's learning, creativity, social engagement and sense of belonging.
- Seek and develop learning environments that are secure and predictable and that support children to take increasing responsibility for their health, hygiene and personal care.
- Design learning environments that are welcoming and accessible for all children and families, considering cultural diversity, social and physical inclusion.
- Design environments that reflect children's different cultures, interests, abilities and learning styles.
- Design environments that support small group work in ways to minimize the risk of injury, minimize disruption between activities, minimize conflict

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between children and reduce prolonged exposure to excess internal and external noise.

- Design outdoor learning experiences that complement and extend the indoor activities and learning experiences.
- Ensure that outdoor environments provide opportunities to learn through play, enabling access to materials that simulate investigation and reflection, and enriched with natural resources and opportunities to connect with nature.
- Design indoor environments that are enriched by natural resources and opportunities to engage with nature.
- Offer children opportunities to be active, messy and noisy and play on a large scale.
- Encourage and nurture children's interest in the world around them. By providing children with materials, resources and information, educators can help children to appreciate and respect the beauty of their natural and built environments.
- Always seek to select resources and design learning environments that foster children's connections with the natural environment.
- Select natural materials and fibers if possible, when purchasing new equipment and resources. These include items such as wooden shelving and natural materials. Such resources enhance the look and feel of nature within the environment. This also includes the purchase of craft items and including this into everyday conversations with children when using craft items, particularly those made in factories using up emissions and not having good consequences on the environment.
- Natural and flexible play materials such as sand, leaves and water will be available for children and will always be preferred over processed items. eg educators sourcing real leaves to complement a learning experience.
- Encourage children and families and themselves to collect and bring recycled equipment and natural resources into the environment.
- Encourage children to care for plants by growing plants from seeds and seedlings.
- Design areas for appreciation of nature, where educators and children can observe the natural play environment and reflect on nature. This will include the introduction of indoor plants into indoor area. Educators and children will be responsible for the care of these plants ensuring they

have enough sunlight and water. As in the outdoor gardens, plants will be selected to minimize the risks to children, children will be educated on caring for these.

### **Evaluation:**

- Our Educational service has aesthetically pleasing, safe, flexible and functional play and learning environments.
- Educator's, children and families are supported to promote environmentally sustainable practices.
- Children's emotional, physical, social, cognitive and spiritual wellbeing are supported by the design and functions of the indoor and outdoor environments. The environment complements and reflects the educational and care philosophy of the service, supporting children to have a strong sense of being and belonging, as well as facilitating their growth and development.
- When envisioning a new preschool there will be a huge influence on importance of a natural and sustainable indoor and outdoor environment.
- We are also committed to continually critically reflect on our environments and our policies.