

ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE POLICY

Related Quality Area	QA3: Physical Environment
Related Policies	Physical Environment Policy

PURPOSE

The Nightcliff Family Centre (the Centre) encourages 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, educating around food sources and protecting wildlife and natural habitats.

We believe in educating children about being environmentally responsible, which is promoted and supported through daily practices, resource and interactions. Sustainable practice is encouraged within the Centre and community, assisting children and families to become advocates for a sustainable future.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of the Centre.

IMPLEMENTATION

Teaching and learning about being environmentally responsible starts with everyday practice. We believe being environmentally responsible should be embedded into the operations of the Centre, rather than being a tokenistic ‘theme’ that is investigated every now and then. Our Centre is committed to protecting our environment to ensure a sustainable future for our children. This involves Educators, children and families working together to protect our environment as we educate children about the importance of being environmentally responsible within our everyday practice.

Management will:

- Ensure the principles of the approved framework- Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) V.20, 2022, underpin our educational program within the Service, including the new principle of Sustainability
- Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders, where possible, to explore and share their own history, culture and rich sustainable practices
- Encourage Educators, families and children to engage in sustainable practices and appreciate the natural environment, including the use of reusable wet bags.
- Where relevant, review policies and procedures within the Centre to achieve more sustainable outcomes
- Use electronic communication where possible to reduce paper use within the office and in each room for newsletters, billing and other communication needs.
- Conduct environmentally responsible audits to ensure consistency and continuous improvement.
- Encourage families to bring in materials from home, for children to use for arts and craft projects (boxes, tyres, and other household items no longer needed).
- Ensure sustainable practices are incorporated into the daily routine.
- Collaborate with families and the community for involvement in potential quality practice for the Centre. For example: [Take 3 for the Sea](#), [Food wise](#), [Planet Ark](#)
- Provide colour-coded bins for Landfill only, Organic waste, Paper recycling, Mixed recyclables.

These 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
GARDENING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant vegetables, herbs, and fruit trees (community garden) • Establish a worm farm • Give food scraps to worms • 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"> • Turn off the taps and ensure leaking taps are fixed immediately • Teach children to turn off tap when brushing teeth
NATURE AND WILDLIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use natural materials – trees, blocks, boxes etc. in arts and 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 Centre’s pets. • Educating children where food is sourced • Plant ‘bird attracting’ plants and install a birdbath • Plant ‘butterfly attracting’ plants (Fairy Garden) • Collaborate with wildlife educators to assist in educating children
COMMUNICATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display the Centre’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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use both sides of paper for drawing • Encourage families to bring in items from home no longer needed (old phones, keyboards, boxes, tyres etc.)
SUSTAINABILITY ROOM PROJECTS	
CUDDLY KOALAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bird feeding and bird encounter • Herb garden
JUMPING ROOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worm Farm
BUSY BEES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chicken coop • Greenhouse

Educators will:

- Incorporate recycling as part of everyday practice at the Centre. Recyclable containers will be provided 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 Centre 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 Centre. 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 'green cleaning' products to replace chemicals where possible.

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Judy Rondon Room leaders	Director	February 2025
POLICY REVIEWED	February 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	February 2026

MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy reviewed as per review cycle • Sources checked for currency • Sustainability room projects added to the Policy
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POLICY REVIEWED BY	Judy Rondon Room leaders	Director	
POLICY REVIEWED	February 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	February 2028
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Ensure the principles of the approved framework- Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) V.20, 2022, underpin our educational program within the Service, including the new principle of Sustainability” • “Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders, where possible, to explore and share their own history, culture and rich sustainable practices” <p>ADDED</p>		