

The Indoor and Outdoor Environment Policy

Policy Statement

The education and care 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 outdoors will support children's learning, safety, levels of engagement and access to positive experiences and inclusive relationships.

Regs	82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol- free environment
	98	Telephone or other communication equipment
	103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
	104	Fencing and security
	105	Furniture, materials and equipment
	109	Toilet and hygiene facilities
	111	Administrative space
	113	Outdoor space—natural environment
	114	Outdoor space—shade
	115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
	168	Education and care services must have policies
	170	Policies and procedures to be followed

NQS 3.1 The Physical Environment

Procedures:

All Educators will ensure that:

- Fencing and barriers which enclose outdoor areas used by children in the OOSH service are maintained by the local school, to ensure they are of a height and design that prevents children of school age from going through, over or under the structure. Considerations about minimising access to the service by unauthorised people and animals will also inform the height and design of fencing and barriers.
- 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.
- Adequate space requirements are maintained in both the indoor and outdoor environments.
- Education and care 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 education and care service provide children with opportunities to explore and experience the natural environment.
- The outdoor playground has adequate shaded areas to protect children from ultraviolet radiation from the sun.
- Ensure that plants are selected to minimise risks to children. No poisonous or dangerous plants will be included in the environment. See fact sheet on Poisonous Plants - www.gtp.com.au/kidsafeqld/inewsfiles/inews.5250.1.pdf

- Educators will carefully select and provide adequate numbers of resources in order to contribute to children's sense of belong and to provide new learning opportunities that extend and challenge children's learning and development.

The Educational Leader will collaborate with educators to:

- Equally value both the outdoor and indoor learning environments as places that support children's learning, creativity, social engagement and sense of belonging.
- Seek to 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 that minimise the risk of injury, minimise disruption between activities, minimise conflict 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 stimulate 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 children to care for plants by growing plants from seeds.
- 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 the indoor area. Educators and children will be responsible for the care of these plants ensuring they have enough sunlight and water.

All Educators will ensure:

- The Service's indoor environment will be smoke free. The Service will only enroll the number of children in the Service, which can comfortably fit into the building space and in accordance with the National Standards.
- Where children are indoors for long periods together due to weather conditions, special activities will be planned and the whole undercover area attached the hall will be utilised.

Separate areas in the indoor environment will be provided for:

- Parents to sign their children in/out of the Centre on the online system.
- Staff to answer phones, and maintain daily records.
- Staff and parents to talk in confidence.
- Children to store their bags and belongings.
- Storage of equipment, food, dangerous materials, and family records.
- Preparation of food and drinks.

- Kitchen and other refuse.
- Cleaning of equipment.
- Male and female toilet, hand basins and hand drying facilities.
- Creative and other activities.
- Large and small group activities.
- Display of children's activities and work.
- Quiet space for children to retreat to, or do homework or lie down if unwell.

The indoor area is to be set up to allow children to participate in a variety of activities with easy access to equipment. Easy access to areas should be maintained by making clear easily definable passageways and walkways through the building.

Staff will ensure that children properly store their bags and those bags and other items are not thrown into walkways or play areas. All items obstructing areas are to be removed and placed in the correct storage areas.

Access for families with disabilities will be maintained ensuring all necessary requirements are considered in the building environment.

Areas must be set up to ensure that proper supervision can be maintained at all times.

Access to the outdoor environment should be clear and easily accessible by the children and staff.

Educators will complete daily safety checks on the indoor and environment to ensure it is safe for children to enter the service. Any hazards that are the responsibility of the building manager such as the school will be reported immediately. Children will be located to safer areas of the school playground identified as Fun 4 U space, if a serious hazard is identified such as a dangerous object or person.

Risk assessments will be conducted yearly on the centre environment based on enrolments and past hazard identifications and the appropriate modifications to the building or environments will be made.

Sources:

<http://cccncsw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/indoor-and-outdoor-environment.pdf>

Comments:

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