
ARANDA AFTERS ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED



SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Implemented	Updated/Reviewed	Next Review Due By
May 2015	February 2016	May 2017

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1 REFERENCES

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS

3.3	The service takes an active role in caring for its environment and contributes to a sustainable future.
3.3.1	Sustainable practices are embedded in service operations
3.3.2	Children are supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment.
6.1.2	Families have opportunities to be involved in the service and to contribute to service decisions.
6.3	The service collaborates with other organisations and service providers to enhance children's learning and wellbeing.
6.3.1	Links with relevant community and support agencies are established and maintained
6.3.4	The service builds relationships and engages with their local community.

MY TIME, OUR PLACE

LO2	Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment.
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2 AIM

Our service aims to help children learn about and implement sustainable practices and foster respect and care for the living and non-living environment.

3 IMPLEMENTATION

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. This will assist children to learn how to live interdependently with the environment.

4 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, and plants including native vegetation.
- Developing education programs for water conservation, energy efficiency and waste reduction.

- Celebrating children’s 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.
- Enlisting the help of groups with expertise in environmental issues, for example: Greening Australia; Clean Up Australia; wildlife rescue groups; and bush care groups to support, and/or deliver, elements of our sustainability and education programs.
- Acknowledging and celebrating environmental awareness events like Clean Up Australia Day and Walk to School Day.

5 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:

- Recycling materials for curriculum and learning activities.
- Minimising waste and effectively using service resources.
- Turning off equipment and lights when not in use.
- Using the least hazardous cleaning substance appropriate for the situation, for example, ordinary detergent for cleaning dirt from tables and other surfaces.
- Composting and/or maintaining a worm farm.
- Maintaining a no dig vegetable/herb garden.
- Incorporating water wise strategies such as drip irrigation and ensuring taps are turned off and leaks fixed.
- Using food that we have grown in meals on our weekly menu.
- Implementing environmentally friendly pest management.

6 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 children’s 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 meetings.

As at May 2012, the NSW Early Childhood Environmental Education Network is developing a tool to assist Early Childhood Services to identify and work towards an Environmentally Sustainable Service with the NQS.

The Network's website has links to many organisations and Government agencies that provide information on sustainable practices at <http://www.eceen.org.au/links.htm>

7 SOURCES

- National Quality Standard
- My Time Our Place
- Climbing the little green steps 2007: Gosford and Wyong Councils
- NSW Early Childhood Environmental Education Network
- Aranda Primary School "Working With Potting Mix" procedure.

8 APPENDIX 1 – WORM FARMING

MY TIME OUR PLACE [MTOPE] OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

1.2	Children develop their autonomy, interdependence, resilience and sense of agency.
2.4	Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment.
4.3	Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another.
4.4	Children use a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, hypothesis and investigating.
5.3	Children collaborate with others, express ideas and make meaning using a range of media and communication technologies.

LINKS TO NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS

2.1	Each child's health is promoted
3.3	The service takes an active role in caring for its environment and contributes to a sustainable future.
5.1	Respectful and equitable relationships are developed and maintained with each child.
5.2	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults.
6.2	Families are supported in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about child rearing are respected.
7.2	There is commitment to continuous improvement.
7.3	Administrative systems enable effective management of a quality service.

LEARNING GOALS FOR CHILDREN

- 1 Children participate with others to develop governance tools to support and implement sustainable practices.
- 2 Children demonstrate increasing awareness of the rights of others by being open to new challenges and discoveries.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN

- Why are worms important to the environment?
- What sort of environment do they prefer?
- What do they eat; what should we not give them; and how much do they eat each day?
- How long do worms live?
- How frequently do they reproduce?

“WORM FACTS” FOR CHILDREN

- Worms weigh about 250 grams per 1000 worms (4000 = 1kg).
- Worms can eat up to their own weight every day.
- Worms will NOT eat anything that is alive.
- Worms will turn any dead organic matter into castings (manure).
- Worms are good for the environment in that they use up waste products and turn them into a useful product, saving space at the local landfill.
- Worms are within themselves both male and female (Hermaphrodites).
- Worms can start producing young at 3 months of age. Worms can lay sufficient eggs to double their own population about every 6-8 weeks.
- Worms can lay eggs every 10 days, which contain from 1-28 baby worms. They take 21-28 days to hatch.
- Worms live about 3 years, but have been known to survive for 15 years.

9 APPENDIX 2 – WORKING WITH POTTING MIX

Potting mixes may contain bacteria that can be harmful to adults and children. When using potting mix Kidsafe NSW recommends:

- Purchasing a product that complies with the Australian Standard (AS 3743).
- Reading the manufacturer’s instructions printed on the bag before using the mix.
- Being careful not to inhale airborne particles before exposing the potting mix to children. Wear a paper mask that fits over your nose and mouth.
- Opening the bag slowly prior to the children arriving.
- Dampening the mix with a light spray of water to reduce the risk of airborne particles.
- Placing the potting mix in a tray to enable children to scoop it into pots and on to plants.
- Always wearing gloves when handling potting mix. Rinse or dispose of gloves afterwards.
- If children are using the potting mix, provide children with adequate fitting gloves if available. Alternatively, encourage children to use tools (such as a trowel, spade or old spoon).
- Washing hands thoroughly with soap and water after using potting mix.
- Storing potting mix securely away from children.