QUALITY AREA 2:
CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Cleaning and Maintaining the Environment

Review Date: 24/10/2027

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 reduces the risk of illness and unintentional injuries. 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 preschools to be cleaned by professional cleaners at the end of each day.
- 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 maintenance issues are identified, they are attended to promptly.

» Links to Education and Care Services National Regulations: 103, 168

»» Links to National Quality Standards/Elements: 1.1.3, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 3.1.2, 3.2.3

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.
- 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 (daily, weekly, termly, annual maintenance and safety checklist) and refer this to the nominated supervisor for signing and attention.
- A nominated staff member will be responsible for overseeing a maintenance schedule.
- 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 children to be involved in the cleaning of the environment where appropriate.
- Be mindful of maintaining an aesthetically pleasing learning environment free of clutter and actively promote pride and a sense of belonging within our learning community for children, educators and families.
- 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 preschool to ensure cleanliness and hygiene standards are maintained throughout the day.
- Seek to minimise the use of chemicals in the education and care environment.

Statutory Legislation & Considerations

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Guide to the National Quality Standard (3)ACECQA (2018)

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.

The NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the NSW Work Health and Safety Regulation (2011 51653) Version for 1 October 2020

Staying Healthy in Child Care - Fifth Edition

Sources

NSW Department of Environment and Heritage- www.environment.nsw.gov.au/households/EasyCleaning.htm

Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities - www.environment.gov.au

Clean and Green: Natural Cleaning Formulas by Loretta Wallace – www.nourishedmagazine.com.au/blog/articles/clean-and-green-natural-cleaning-formulas

Health and Safety in Children's Centres: Model Policies and Practices (2nd ed.) www.community.nsw.gov.au/docswr/_assets/main/documents/childcare_model_policies.pdf

- Research natural cleaning alternatives for use in the education and care environment. Natural or chemical-free options that are sensitive to the needs of educators and children with allergies will be utilised when possible.
- Consider sustainable practice when cleaning. Reflect upon practices and access professional development, journals and the Internet for more ideas on eco-friendly cleaning options.
- Aim to minimise waste by:
  - »» Encouraging recyclable materials to be placed in labelled recycling containers rather than garbage bins.
  - »» 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.
- Vermin will not be encouraged by food scraps being left in bins or bench tops overnight. Kitchen whitegoods, floors, etc. will be thoroughly cleaned.

Evaluation

The education and care 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 education and care 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.

» Links to Education and Care Services National Regulations: 103, 168

»» Links to National Quality Standards/Elements: 1.1.3, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 3.1.2, 3.2.3

Links to other policies

- Providing a Child Safe Environment
- Interactions with Children
- Hygiene and Infection Control
- Infectious Diseases
- Environmental sustainability
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Emergency and Evacuation
- Supervision
- Workplace Health and Safety

On behalf of the Management Committee:

Name: Aaron Kennedy (Treasurer)

Signature: .....

Date: 24/10/2025

REVIEW DATE: 24th October 2027

POLICY REVISION		
Reviewed	**Adopted by**	**Review date**
01/12/2016	Naomi Simpson (President)	01/12/2018
15/06/2021	Aaron Kennedy (Treasurer)	15/06/2023
24/10/2023	Narissa Cuskelly	24/10/2025
24/10/2025	Ashliegh Mitchell	24/10/2027

» Links to Education and Care Services National Regulations: 103, 168

»» Links to National Quality Standards/Elements: 1.1.3, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 3.1.2, 3.2.3

Appendix 1

Eco Friendly Cleaning Options for Educators' Consideration

- Use 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 labelled spray bottle out of reach of children.

- Consider the use of vinegar and water as an alternate to disinfectant for cleaning the bathrooms and nappy change mats throughout the day. The vinegar and water can be made in a labelled spray bottle with equal parts of white vinegar and water and stored out of reach of children.

- Consider using the following:

  »» Bicarbonate of Soda (made into a paste) – replaces Jif and Gumption.

  »» Lemon juice – an alternate to bleach.

  »» Borax – alternate to bleach, disinfectant and insect sprays.

  »» Bees wax – alternate to furniture and floor polish.

» Links to Education and Care Services National Regulations: 103, 168

»» Links to National Quality Standards/Elements: 1.1.3, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 3.1.2, 3.2.3