

# Environment Policy

<b>Policy Number:</b>	12   TWELVE
<b>Purpose:</b>	To ensure the environment is safe for all stakeholders now and into the future
<b>Scope:</b>	All Staff will ensure the environment is always safe and secure. The centre culture will role model and educate children to appreciate and care for the environment.

## Relevant Legislation

### National Law

- 167 Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards

### National Regulations

- 41 Service waiver—prescribed elements
- 44 Temporary waiver—prescribed elements
- 82 Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
- 83 staff members and family day care educators not to be affected by alcohol or drugs
- 103 Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
- 104 Fencing
- 105 Furniture, materials and equipment
- 106 Laundry and hygiene facilities
- 107 Space requirements—indoor space
- 108 Space requirements—outdoor space
- 109 Toilet and hygiene facilities
- 110 Ventilation and natural light
- 113 Outdoor space—natural environment
- 114 Outdoor space—shade
- 115 Premises designed to facilitate supervision
- 168 Education and care service must have policies and procedures
- 170 Policies and procedures to be followed
- 171 Policies and procedures to be kept available
- 172 Notification of change to policies or procedures

### National Quality Standard

- Element 3.1.1 – Fit for purpose – Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
- Element 3.1.2 – Upkeep – Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.
- Element 3.2.1 – Inclusive environment – Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.

- Element 3.2.2 – Resources support play-based learning – Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.
- Element 3.2.3 – Environmentally responsible – The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.

### **Supporting Documents / References:**

- Revised National Quality Standard
- Education and Care Services Regulations and Laws
- Sustaining Community - Facebook Community
- <https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/our-services/queensland-poisons-information-centre/plants-mushrooms/>

### **Related Policy or Documents:**

- Hygiene Policy
- Safety Policy

<b>Attachment One:</b>	
<b>Attachment Two:</b>	
<b>Attachment Three:</b>	

## Contents

Flora and Fauna.....	4
Plants.....	4
Compost.....	4
Gardening.....	4
Weeds .....	4
Pets .....	5
Visiting Animals.....	5
Stray Animals .....	5
Animal Waste.....	5
Substance Free.....	5
Stakeholders Responsibilities .....	5
Management of Person Under the Influence .....	6
Programming .....	6
Experiences .....	6
Care of Resources and Equipment.....	6
Use of Resources and Equipment .....	6
Enough Resources and Equipment .....	7
Safe Resources and Equipment .....	7
Recycled Materials.....	7
Opening and Closing Centre .....	7
Opening.....	7
Closing.....	8
Checklists .....	8
Responsible Person.....	9
Electrical Equipment .....	9
Use Of.....	9
Maintenance .....	9
Safety .....	9
Child Use .....	9
Tagging.....	10
Sustainability.....	10

Education .....	10
Embedding Practices.....	10
Definitions:.....	11
Policy Details:.....	11

## **Flora and Fauna**

### **Plants**

All plants within the Birralee environment will be safe for children to touch and explore. All new plants will be checked to ensure they are nontoxic before being planted. Children will be monitored and educated about the effects of misusing plants. Vegetables used in gardening will be exempt and can be planted with the appropriate risk assessment, education of children and supervision from educators.

### **Compost**

Compost has living organisms within its structure and can cause harm to humans if entering the body, therefore when using compost any person/child handling compost will be required to use gloves. Children under three are to have no contact with compost. Educators will ensure children do not get too close to the compost to breathe in air particles that may contain harmful organisms. Compost will be stored in the garden shed, situated in the entrance area of the grounds or in the gardening area of the kindergarten outdoor environment, outside of play spaces.

### **Gardening**

Gardening is an important part of the educational program and provides children with many opportunities to learn and understand the importance of plants and the world around them. All children will be given the opportunity to garden within their environment. When gardening, educators will ensure the safety of the children, follow all policy and procedures and ensuring there is a current risk assessment. Educators should maintain the garden to ensure children are able to see the growth, development and when applicable the harvesting of plants.

### **Weeds**

Birralee will employ a gardener who will be the primary person controlling weed infestations. Educators will be responsible to ensure any further weeds within garden beds are removed on a regular basis. Sensitive weed and all other weeds with thorns or parts that protrude that are found in the grassed areas will be removed immediately. The nature strips and park surrounding the centre used as the emergency evacuation route will also be regularly checked and weeds removed. Local councils will be contacted if further assistance to control weeds is required.

## Pets

Pets of the centre will need to be in good health and up to date with all medications required to remain healthy and pest free. Risk assessments will be created for all pets to ensure quality of care for the animal and the safety and wellbeing of children and educators. At all times, precautions and adequate supervision will be maintained to ensure the safety of the children when handling pets. Housing for the pet will be in good repair and cleaned regularly. All waste from cleaning will be bagged, sealed, removed from the environment, and disposed of immediately. All educators and children handling pets will be required to wash hands before and immediately afterwards.

## Visiting Animals

Community members, families or staff bringing in animals from home will need to ensure their pets are in good health and up to date with all medications required to remain healthy and pest free. Visits will need to be organised, with a time and dated predetermined and the appropriate risk assessments are current and complete. Community, families, and staff will always be required to remain with the pet during the visit or provide secure caging that can contain the pet in a safe and humane manner. All adults and children handling animals will be required to wash hands immediately afterwards.

## Stray Animals

The council will be called to remove any stray animals lurking around the perimeter of the centre. Educators will monitor all stray animals and ensure children are kept at a distance that will make sure there is no contact with the stray animal. Sand pit covers will be used each night to deter stray animals entering the premises and using sand pits to defecate. Each week disinfectant will be watered onto all sandpits and sandpit covers to further deter stray animals. Any signs of stray animals leaving faeces will require further deterrent methods, with traps used to have animals removed when other methods have failed.

## Animal Waste

All animal waste will be removed immediately. Morning checks of all indoor and outdoor areas will be undertaken to ensure no animal waste is present. Extra attention will be given to walkways, windowsills, and ledges for gecko waste. Any waste found will be removed using the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment [PPE], disposed of in a closed plastic bag and placed in council waste bins stored in the bin area.

## Substance Free

### Stakeholders Responsibilities

Birralee Child Care Centre will be smoke, drug, vap and alcohol free at all times. All stakeholders will be required to strictly abide by this policy. All stakeholders will be provided with information explaining their responsibility, via handbooks and apps that provide access to the Birralee policies and procedures. All stakeholders on signing contracts / enrolment forms have accepted to remain substance free when at the centre. Any person entering the centre who is under the influence will be asked to leave. In the case of an Educator being under the influence, further disciplinary action

will be taken, which may include dismissal. Employees are required to report their suspicion of drug or alcohol effected individuals immediately to management.

### **Management of Person Under the Influence**

Employees will report their concern to management, who will then communicate with the person. If Management deem the person to be under the influence, they will be asked to leave immediately. If the person was responsible for the collection of a child, the child will not be permitted to leave, and Management will contact another authorised person to collect the child. Any person refusing to leave the centre when asked will be informed that the police will be contacted to remove them. Any person becoming violent, will send the centre into lockdown and have the police called. Management will try to calm the person only if there is no immediate danger to themselves or others. In an extreme case of violence, the persons request will be fulfilled in a delayed manner, providing enough time for the police to arrive. Management reserve the right to immediately cease the person's contract if violence is used.

## **Programming**

### **Experiences**

Educators will program for experiences that will help educate children about the planet they live on and the importance of caring for it. Experiences will range from local to global issues and be presented in an age-appropriate manner. Educators will ensure they are able to provide children with knowledge that is sufficient, relevant, and factual. Knowledge will be presented in a non-bias, non-threatening or fearful manner.

### **Care of Resources and Equipment**

Educators and children will be responsible for caring for resources and equipment. Environments will be set up each night by educators in a manner that is aesthetically pleasing, ensuring resources and equipment are complete and stored in their correct area. Educators will dispose of any minor resource or equipment that is in disrepair and report to Management any issues with major resources or equipment, Management will make the final decision if the item can be salvaged or disposed of. Educators will intentionally teach children to look after resources and equipment:

- By showing children the appropriate way to use resources and equipment
- By supervising the children while using resources and equipment
- By encouraging children to store the resources and equipment correctly
- By providing children with the appropriate reason why we care for resources and equipment

### **Use of Resources and Equipment**

All resources and equipment are to be used in a manner that does not lead to deliberate breakage of resources and equipment, or harm to children. Children will be allowed to explore resources and equipment and be encouraged to use resources and equipment in varying ways. Educators will endeavour whenever possible to seek further resources and equipment requested by the children to extend their play.

## Enough Resources and Equipment

Educators will ensure there are enough resources and equipment available for all children to be engaged in the environment. Varying experiences will be available to ensure children always have sufficient resources and equipment. Educators will not limit children's imaginations when using equipment and resources, allowing the child to explore and engage in varying play unless the play will endanger a child or cause damage or loss to the equipment and resources.

## Safe Resources and Equipment

All resources and equipment will be in good repair and safe for children to use. Any damaged resources and equipment will be removed from the environment immediately and reported to Management if required. Educators will monitor all resources and equipment to ensure they are age appropriate and or suitable for the developmental stage of the individual child. Educators will adapt experiences to ensure all children can use the resources and equipment set up in the environment, in a safe manner.

## Recycled Materials

Birralee will incorporate recycled items into the program and use items to educate children on the importance of sustainability. Recycled items will need to be in good repair, clean and safe for use for children. All items donated to the centre will be gladly taken, educators will then go through all items keeping only items that can be used by the centre. Any item deemed inappropriate will be recycled by the centre or donated to charity when possible. The centre will recycle items within the environment and further enhance sustainability.

## Opening and Closing Centre

### Opening

The responsible person in charge of opening the centre will ensure:

- External entrance gates are unlocked
- All doors are unlocked, and alarms are turned off
- Lights, fans and if required air conditioners are turned on
- Windows are closed if Aircon is on
- All rooms are neat and tidy and set up appropriately
- Fridge and freezer temperatures are checked and recorded
- All areas outside are checked for foreign objects and if required items removed
- All fences are checked to ensure integrity and functionality
- All areas are checked for animal faeces and if required faeces removed
- Outdoor areas are tidy
- The outdoor environment is set up appropriately according to outdoor program
- Families do not leave children until the official opening time of 7am.
- Opening check lists are complete and if required record all issues

The responsible person will delegate responsibilities to other employees to ensure all opening requirements are fulfilled as well as maintaining child to adult ratios.

## Closing

The responsible person in charge of closing the centre will ensure:

- All external doors are locked, including flywire doors, wooden doors, laundry door and all external doors in the kindergarten room
- All windows are locked
- All air conditioners and fans are turned off
- All lights are turned off
- All drink bottles left behind by families are rinsed and left to soak in Milton solution
- All bins are emptied, and liners replaced
- All laundry is complete, and the washing machine and dryer are turned off at the power point
- A visual check off all rooms is completed to ensure there are no children or persons present
- To check Xplor via Ipads and ensure all children have been signed out.
- To check all rooms and ensure they have been left in an appropriate manner for the next day
- To set all alarms
- To lock external gates
- To record families picking up after 6pm
- To complete the closing check list and if required record all issues

The responsible person will delegate responsibilities to other Employees to ensure all closing requirements are met as well as maintaining child to adult ratios.

## Checklists

The Director and 2IC will be responsible for ensuring the completion of all checklists. Employees will be responsible for completing checklists as directed by the Director or 2IC.

Checklists required:

- Kitchen Cleaning
- First Aid Checks
- Chemical Checks
- Open / Close Checklist
- Quarterly Safety Checks

Employees will also monitor the environment whenever children are present and remove any equipment or item found in the play area that may cause harm to a child. Examples

- Broken toys
- Branches on trees

Management will use checklists to ensure compliancy, safety of the children and to embed high standards within the centre.

## Responsible Person

During operational hours, a responsible person will be present. While the Director is present at centre, the Director will be the responsible person. At times when the Director is not present the responsible person will be either the 2IC or an appointed Lead Educator. All staff required to be the responsible person will need to accept the position in writing. The signed documentation will be kept in the individuals file. A responsible person checklist will reflect the current roster and person in charge as well as signage in both foyers. Whenever the responsible person changes from the current roster, all Employees will be informed of the current responsible person, via verbal communication and the change documented in the responsible person check list and on the signage in both foyers. It is the responsibility of the Director or 2IC to ensure the check list and signage provides accurately who is the responsible person.

The responsible person will oversee the running of the centre while the Nominated Supervisor is not present. This includes:

- Maintaining the Safety and Wellbeing of the Children
- Communicating with Families as required
- Supporting Employees as required
- Ensuring Compliance always
- Following Policies and Procedures

## Electrical Equipment

### Use Of

Any person using electrical equipment will follow the user guide and only use the equipment as recommended. Electrical equipment will not be altered or used for any other purpose than stated on the user guide.

### Maintenance

Equipment will be checked quarterly and if damage is present, removed from use until fixed or replaced. Persons will check equipment first before each use and will inform management of any concerns, any concerns will see the equipment removed from use until checked or replaced.

### Safety

It is the responsibility of management to maintain all electrical equipment and ensure all items are safe for use and all persons using the equipment have been instructed on its use. It is the responsibility of all persons using the equipment to follow user guides and safety directions when operating equipment.

### Child Use

When using electrical equipment with children, risk assessments will be required, and safety checks completed. During the experience with children using electrical equipment supervision will be paramount and educators will be required to remain with children when electrical equipment is present.

## Tagging

All electrical equipment will require ongoing test and tagging, it is the responsibility of the Director and 2IC to ensure all test and tagging is complete. Any electrical equipment with out of date tags will be removed from use until a new tag is in place.

## Sustainability

### Education

Management will ensure all Educators, children and Families are provided with knowledge to become more sustainable. Birralee will, whenever possible find ways to limit our footprint and encourage everyone to help support a positive future for all.

Staff will work together to develop sustainable practices within the work environment, sourcing information from current world practices.

Information for Families will be available through the programs, flyers, connections with the community and notifications delivered through electronic social media.

Children will be educated through programming and experiences that will teach and extend knowledge on the importance of looking after the environment. This includes:

- Employees being aware of first nations people connectiveness to land and becoming knowledgeable in ensuring that first nations people's perspectives, traditions and respect for the land are incorporated into the program
- Routines
- Intentional Teaching
- Extending on Children's Interests
- Community Interests
- World Interests
- Educator Research, ensuring practices are sustainable

### Embedding Practices

Every individual should actively participate in caring for the environment. Educators will contribute to children's understanding and passion for a more sustainable future.

To ensure best outcomes, all practices will become embedded into the daily routines by:

- Educators role modelling practices
- Practices are used regularly by all educators
- Children are given time and knowledge to understand practise
- Children are given the reason why the practise is being used
- Educators showing genuine interest in all practices

### Definitions:

Term	Definition	Source
Pets	A domestic or tamed animal kept for companionship or pleasure.	<a href="http://www.google/define">www.google/define</a>
Risk Assessment	A systematic process of evaluating the potential risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking.	<a href="http://www.google/define">www.google/define</a>
Personal Protective Equipment [PPE]	Personal protective equipment is protective clothing, helmets, goggles, or other garments or equipment designed to protect the wearer's body from injury or infection. The hazards addressed by protective equipment include physical, electrical, heat, chemicals, biohazards, and airborne particulate matter.	<a href="http://www.wikipedia.com">www.wikipedia.com</a>
Recycled	Convert (waste) into reusable material.	<a href="http://www.google/define">www.google/define</a>
Responsible Person	A RESPONSIBLE PERSON is one who has been granted a Supervisor Certificate under the Children Education and Care Services National Law 2011 OR who the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor sees fit to be left in charge of the day-to- day operations of the service.	<a href="http://www.earlyyears.com.au">www.earlyyears.com.au</a>
Test and Tag	Test and Tag is the name given to the process of checking the safety of portable electrical appliances. It involves two parts: first visually inspecting the appliance for any damage.	<a href="http://www.testandtagtraining.com">www.testandtagtraining.com</a>

### Policy Details:

Date Created	Date Due for Review	Date Revised	Date Authorised by Committee of Management
25/01/2021			14/05/2021
	25/11/2022		
	25/11/2023	20/04/2023	26/04/2023
	25/11/2024	24/5/2024	30/5/2024
	25/12/2025	20/12/2025	23/12/2025
	25/12/2026		