

Mitcham Preschool Centre

Sustainability Policy

At Mitcham Preschool Centre we believe that action for sustainability is vital for our children's future.

Statement of Intent:

Educators and children at the Preschool work together to learn about and promote the sustainable use of resources and to develop and implement sustainable practices.

Through this policy our goals are to:

- take an active role in caring for our environment and contribute to a sustainable future whereby sustainable practices are embedded in our service operations;
- support children to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment; and
- promote sustainable practices within the Preschool community e.g. children, parents, educators, Governing Council, cleaners & gardeners.

As Educators we will provide learning opportunities that:

- foster children's capacity to understand and respect the natural environment and the interdependence between people, plants, animals, and the land; and
- provide spaces that promote the development of life skills, such as growing and preparing food, waste reduction and recycling.

PROCEDURES USED TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS

Whilst recognising the interconnectedness of sustainable practices, we will adopt the following procedures in our daily routines:

Reducing Waste Procedures

1. Purchasing and packaging

The Preschool purchases a significant amount of material each year including educational resources, art materials, furniture, food, and catering products.

When making purchasing decisions the following will be considered:

- Need for the item – consider the rationale for having the item, how it can be sourced? can it be borrowed?
- Recycled content of item and its potential for recycling or end use / disposability
- Bulk buying of items to minimise cost & packaging
- Looking for “greener options” symbols in catalogues and other promotional material
- Sharing of resources with other educational centres
- Community involvement - families are encouraged to, where possible, donate resources eg boxes for construction
- Consider purchasing recycled paper eg newsprint
- Procurement of sustainable packaging for events that is preferably recyclable or compostable

2. Recycling

- Rubbish bins are coded green, yellow and blue, to match the kerbside bins and make it easier for children and adults to successfully manage recyclable materials
- Small green organic bins for food scraps (suitable for kitchen benches) used in lunch rooms, kitchen and snack table, and disposed of in the green kerbside bin.
- Explicit teaching for children occurs, on a regular basis, to manage the bins eg beginning of each term and as required
- A range of recycled materials and resources are collected & used on a daily basis eg boxes for box construction; pipes and plastic bowls for use in the sandpit; telephones for dramatic play
- Collage trolley to include at least 5 recycled items
- Ask for parent assistance in recycling toners & printer cartridges eg take to office works

3. Organics

- Compost bins and worm farm used to collect food scraps
- Green bins are used to collect food scraps
- Vegetable garden promotes food production, seasonal produce, and importance of composting
- Ongoing learning may include the importance of life cycles (wanderer butterflies worms, mini beasts & frogs) in our environment

4. Litter

- Children and staff are encouraged to take food and related waste (non-organic) home to reinforce the need for less packaging
- Smaller blue bins (waste) than yellow bins (recyclables) to encourage less waste

5. Waste minimisation

- Families have access to newsletters and other communications via electronic media eg email, APP, website. Text alerts inform families of updates
- Nude food is promoted
- Non-recyclable items eg glad wrap are sent home

6. Conservation of energy

- Water conservation through installation of rainwater tanks, timer taps in bathroom areas, promotion of half / full flush in the toilets, limited supply of water in sandpit play, activities that promote recycling water, watering plants in the cooler part of the day to maximise absorption
- Energy efficiency - Turning off lights, fans & heaters when not in use. Replacing lighting with energy efficient lighting eg LED. Energy efficiency is taken into consideration when purchasing new equipment eg energy labelling.
- Reviewing the summer and winter set points for temperature for comfort and energy efficiency

Continuing to reflect on our practices and implement improvements.

Approved: Governing Council Chairperson

Approved: Mitcham Preschool Director