

(Revised September 2025)

Policy Statement:

The Mueller College Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Service recognises that healthy ecosystems and environments are necessary to the survival of humans and other organisms. Education and care Services play an important part in improving sustainability understanding and practice, as it is situated to educate children and young people in meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This responsibility is reflected in the National Quality Standard, which asks that each Service takes an 'active role' in caring for the environment and contributes to a sustainable future (NQS Standard 3).

The intention of adopting sustainable practices should be to encourage a questioning and investigative approach with children and young people regarding their surroundings and environment, rather than to dictate a particular set of values. The elements listed in this Policy formulate the Service's environmental strategy.

Background Statement:

The Education and Care National Regulations require Service providers to have policies and procedures that promote environmental responsibility and sustainability within education and care settings. Services are expected to model and embed sustainable practices into their daily operations, fostering an appreciation for the natural environment among children, families, and educators. The Mueller College Outside School Hours Care Service recognises its role in supporting children to develop lifelong respect for the environment and to understand the impact of their actions on the world around them. Through intentional teaching, hands-on experiences, and modelling of sustainable behaviours, the Service aims to reduce waste, conserve resources, and create a culture of environmental stewardship across the community.

Important terms

Children and young people	Refers to the children and young people present in the care environment.
Educator	Refers to the staff employed by the Service to provide care for children and young people attending.
Parent/guardian	Refers to the primary carer/s of the child or young person attending the Service.
Family	Refers to the group of people, including the primary carer, who engage daily with the child or young person in the home environment.
Nominated Supervisor	The person designated by the Approved Provider to have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the Service, including ensuring environmental practices are embedded and maintained.
Approved Provider	The organisation or entity that holds the Service approval under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations and ensures compliance with environmental and sustainability policies.
Environment	Refers to the natural, built, and social surroundings of the Service, including indoor and outdoor areas, resources, and the wider community environment.
Sustainable	The ongoing process of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, through practices that protect and preserve natural resources.
Environmental responsibility	The commitment by the Service, educators, children and young people, and families to act in ways that minimise harm to the environment and promote care for the planet.

Legislation:

National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area **1: Educational Program & Practice**

3: Physical Environment

7: Governance and Leadership

1.1	Program	The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.
1.1.3	Program learning opportunities	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.
1.2	Practice	Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development.
1.2.1	Intentional teaching	Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.
3.1	Design	The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.
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.
3.2	Use	The service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning.
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.
3.2.3	Environmentally responsible	The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service.
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.

Education and Care Services National Regulations

103 (1)	The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that the education and care service premises and all equipment and furniture used in providing the education and care service are safe, clean and in good repair. Penalty: \$2200.
105	Furniture, materials and equipment The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that each child being educated and cared for by the education and care service has access to sufficient furniture, materials and developmentally appropriate equipment suitable for the education and care of that child. Note— A compliance direction may be issued for failure to comply with this regulation.
110	Ventilation and natural light The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that the indoor spaces used by children at the education and care service premises— (a) are well ventilated; and (b) have adequate natural light; and (c) are maintained at a temperature that ensures the safety and well-being of children. Penalty: \$2200. Note— A compliance direction may be issued for failure to comply with this regulation.
113	Outdoor space—natural environment The approved provider of a centre-based service must ensure that the outdoor spaces provided at the education and care service premises allow children to explore and experience the natural environment. Example— The use of natural features such as trees, sand and natural vegetation. Note— A compliance direction may be issued for failure to comply with this regulation.

Education and Care Services National Law

301 (3,f)	(3) Without limiting subsection (1), the national regulations may provide for the following— (f) requirements and standards to be complied with for safety, security, cleanliness, comfort, hygiene and repair of premises, outdoor spaces, fencing, gates, resources and equipment used for providing education and care services;
301 (3,g)	(3) Without limiting subsection (1), the national regulations may provide for the following— (g) requirements and standards about the premises to be used to provide an education and care service including siting, design, layout, space, security and entitlement to occupy;

Principles:

The Mueller College Outside School Hours Care Service will make every effort to encourage and increase awareness of environmental responsibilities and will work to develop practices that contribute to a sustainable future. Children and young people will be supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment.

Environmental strategy

Growing in Nature: The Service aims to incorporate sustainability discussions with educators at the Service and provide ongoing professional development opportunities to assist them to confidently implement sustainable practices. We promote conservation and encourages children, young people and families to protect and care for the environment. Educators model, environmentally friendly and sustainable practices and build strategies into the program to encourage children and young people towards critical thinking in relation to questioning and discussing sustainable issues such as food scrapes, droughts and water conversation. The use of fresh food for lunches and morning and afternoon teas will be encouraged to reduce the over use of packaging.



Understanding Nature: Healthy ecosystems and environments are necessary to the survival of humans and other organisms. Education and care Services play an important part of improving sustainability understanding and practice as it is situated to educate children and young people in meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This responsibility is reflected in the National Quality Standard, which asks that each Service takes and 'active role' in caring for the environment and contributes to a sustainable future (NQS Standard 3).



Valuing Nature: The Service will actively examine reduction in energy and water consumption. It will also continue to examine waste management and implement recycling practices. Wherever possible, environmentally friendly cleaning products will be used. Native animals and insects will be treated with care and respect and if captured for use in the educational program, will be set free after an appropriate observation time. Plants and animals should be cared for as per the cleaning roster ensuring any animal feeding, water changes and watering of plants is diligently adhered too.



Experiencing Nature: Educators model environmentally friendly and sustainable practices including recycling, gardening and composting. Sustainable practices are imbedded so the concept of "reduce, re-use and recycle" should be part of everyday practice for both children, young people and educators and will help to develop lifelong attitudes towards sustainable practices. Themes in relation to the importance of our natural environment and environmental protection and sustainability will be included in the children and young people's programs and in the day to day operation of the Service. Children and young people are encouraged to appreciate elements of the natural environment. Materials used for art and craft activities will include recycled or reused products. Wherever possible children and young people will be intricately involved in the caring for plants and animals and the processes taken through compost care and recycling.



Procedure:**Families will:**

- Be encouraged to use fresh food for lunches and morning and afternoon teas will be encouraged to reduce the overuse of packaging.

Educators will:

- attempt to build strategies into the program to encourage the children and young people towards critical thinking in relation to questioning and discussing sustainable issues such as food scraps, droughts, water conservation, etc.
- model as appropriate, environmentally friendly and sustainable practices, including recycling, gardening and composting.
- seek to embed sustainable practices at the Service. The concepts of “reduce, re-use and recycle” should be part of everyday practice for both children and young people and educators and will help to develop lifelong attitudes towards sustainable practices.
- wherever possible, have children and young people actively involved in caring for plants and animals and the processes taken in compost care and recycling.
- promote conservation and encourages children, young people, and families, to protect and care for the environment. Educators will model, as appropriate, environmentally friendly and sustainable practices.
- Ensure native animals and insects will be treated with care and respect, and if captured for use in the educational program, will be set free after an appropriate observation time.
- Plants and animals should be cared for as per the cleaning roster, ensuring any animal feeding, water changes and watering of plants are diligently adhered to.

Educational leader will:

- Endeavour to have themes in relation to the importance of our natural environment and environmental protection, and sustainability will be included in the children and young people’s programs and in the day-to-day operation of the Service. Children and young people are encouraged to appreciate elements of the natural environment.
- Ensure materials used for art and craft activities will include recycled or reused products.
- Create opportunities within the program for learning opportunities about recycling, sustainability, animal care, plants and composting.

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will:

- Share the ‘Environmental Sustainability Policy and Procedure’ with all employees upon their induction and ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, co-ordinators, educators and staff, and available for inspection.
- All Service policy will be reviewed annually through consultation with all stakeholders or sooner should there be identified changes or updates to legislative requirement.
- Additional professional development will be provided as needed and during review processes.

- incorporate sustainability discussions with educators at the Service and provide ongoing professional development opportunities to assist them in confidently implementing sustainable practices.
- actively examine the reduction in energy and water consumption.
- continue to examine waste management and implement recycling practices.
- Wherever possible, environmentally friendly cleaning products will be used at the Service.

Recycling

- Recycling of paper towels will be encouraged among children and young people. Every effort will be made to reuse and recycle products as the opportunity arises.
- Recycle bin is to be emptied from the garbage bag into the council recycle bin at the end of J block.
- The council bin needs to be placed on Wattle Rd outside of the Childcare Centre every **second Tuesday at 6 pm** by the After School Care staff.
- The After School Care staff will then need to bring in the bin every second Wednesday.
- Exact dates for bin collection can be confirmed on the Morton Bay Regional Council website

Compost

- Children and young people are encouraged to put food scraps in the compost bins, which will be emptied daily.
- Compost and paper from the shredder will be added to the compost outside the Service.

See also:

- Mueller OSHC Educational Program Policy & Procedure
- Mueller OSHC environmental strategy

REFERENCES:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, Current as of October 2024
- Education and Care Services National Regulations, Current as of September 2025
- My Time, Our Place – Framework for School Age Care in Australia – Produced by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments. Ver 2.0, Revised 2022
- Guide to the National Quality Framework, Revised September 2025
- National Quality Standard, Revised 1 February 2018
- Guide to the National Quality Standard, Revised May 2022
- The Code of Ethics - Early Childhood Australia Inc. (2025 update)
- Belonging, Being and Becoming – the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. Produced by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments.
- Sustainability – Wikipedia
- Environmental Protection Regulation 2019, Current as at July 2024
- Talking about Practice: Embedding sustainable practices (NQS PLP e-Newsletter No. 67 2013)
- Going 'green' in childcare services – Extract from Putting Children First (Issue 29 March 2009)
- A 'green' thumbs up to sustainable practices (Posted on Feb 25, 2013 by ACECQA)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act (QLD) 2011, Current as at September 2025



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY & PROCEDURE

OSHC
Outside School Hours Care

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY:	Rachel Rose	OSHC Director	12/09/25
POLICY REVIEWED	SEPT 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	JAN 2026
VERSION NUMBER	V2.2		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New legislation		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		PAST REVIEW DATE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated references• Addition of the review table		JAN 2025