



## Law & Regs

**Regulation 113 Outdoor space – natural environment.** The approved provider ... must ensure that the outdoor spaces ... 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.

### Regulation 114 Outdoor space – shade

The approved provider ... must ensure that outdoor spaces ... include adequate shaded areas to protect children from overexposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun. **Penalty: \$1000.**

**Evidence to show compliance** – must ensure outdoor spaces enable children to explore and experience the natural environment, incorporating features like trees and sand. For Regulation 114, providers must include sufficient shaded areas to protect children from sun exposure, ensuring regular inspections and maintaining records.

The following section will show you exactly what to do to ensure your practice is meeting.

## Why is the element important?

Element 3.2.1, educators build inclusive environments by:

- organising and adapting indoor and outdoor spaces to support each child's interests, preferences, self-confidence and participation
- (re)arranging furniture, equipment and materials in multiple ways to support children's engagement with built and natural environments.

## What could potential go wrong if educators didn't do the above?

**Limited Participation:** Without adapting indoor and outdoor spaces, children with physical disabilities might be unable to participate fully in activities, leading to exclusion and decreased self-esteem. For example, a child using a wheelchair might find it difficult to access

play areas with narrow pathways or high shelves.

**Lack of Engagement:** If spaces are not organised to cater to diverse interests and preferences, children may become disengaged and bored. For instance, a child interested in sensory play may lose interest if the environment lacks sensory materials like sand, water, or tactile toys.

**Safety Hazards:** Poorly arranged furniture and equipment can create safety risks. For example, cluttered spaces or unstable furniture could lead to accidents and injuries, especially for younger children who are still developing their motor skills.

**Social Isolation:** Without spaces that encourage social interactions, children might struggle to build relationships. For example, if the environment doesn't have areas designed for small group activities, children may find it difficult to engage in meaningful conversations and cooperative play.

**Inhibited Creativity and Exploration:** Failing to arrange environments that stimulate curiosity can stifle creativity and exploration. For instance, if natural elements like plants, rocks, and water are not incorporated into the play areas, children might miss out on opportunities to engage with and learn from their natural surroundings.

**Inadequate Adaptation for Different Learning Styles:** Not considering different learning styles can impede a child's learning and development. For example, a child who learns best through physical activity might struggle if the environment is primarily set up for quiet, sedentary play, leading to frustration and behavioural issues.



You must practice

**It's important that outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and engagement in quality experiences, encompassing both built and natural environments.**

### Week 21, 15 to 19 July 2024 – 3.2.1 Inclusive environment

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**Accessible Pathways:** Ensure pathways are wide enough for children using mobility aids to navigate comfortably. For example, create wide, smooth paths in the playground to allow wheelchair access to all play areas, ensuring inclusivity and independence for children with mobility challenges.

**Diverse Sensory Areas:** Incorporate sensory play areas both indoors and outdoors, with materials such as sand, water, textured fabrics, and sensory bins. For instance, setting up a sensory garden with different plants, water features, and textured paths can engage children's senses and cater to those who thrive on sensory input.

**Child-Friendly Storage:** Arrange storage units and shelves at a child-friendly height to encourage independence. For example, have low shelves with clearly labelled bins so children can easily access and put away materials, fostering self-confidence and autonomy.

**Safe and Flexible Furnishings:** Use stable, safe furniture that can be easily rearranged to suit different activities. For example, lightweight tables and chairs can be moved to create a quiet reading nook or an open space for group activities, accommodating various learning and play styles.

**Designated Social Areas:** Create specific areas designed for small group interactions to promote social skills. For instance, set up cosy corners with cushions and books indoors, and picnic tables outdoors where children can gather, play, and converse, fostering friendships and social development.

**Incorporate Natural Elements:** Include natural materials in play areas to stimulate curiosity and exploration. For example, a section of the playground could have logs, rocks, and a small water feature, allowing children to engage with nature and explore different textures and elements.

**Varied Activity Zones:** Set up distinct zones for different types of play and learning to cater to diverse

preferences and learning styles. For instance, have a quiet area with books and puzzles for those who prefer solitary activities, a construction zone with blocks and tools, and an active play area with sports equipment, ensuring every child finds something engaging and enjoyable.

After reading these points, which one(s) do you think you are doing well? Describe your practice in detail so it can go directly into your QIP or SAT (NSW only).

After reading these points, which one(s) do you think you need to work on? Describe how you could improve your practice.