Law & Regs

Regulation 110 Ventilation and natural light. The approved provider ….must ensure that the indoor spaces used by children …(a) are well ventilated; and (b) have adequate natural light; and (c) are maintained at a temperature that ensures the safety and wellbeing of children. **Penalty: $2000.** Note. A compliance direction may be issued for failure to comply with this regulation.

Regulation 113 Outdoor space – natural environment. The approved provider…must ensure that the outdoor spaces… allow children to explore and experience the natural environment eg 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.** Note. A compliance direction may be issued for failure to comply with this regulation.

Evidence to show compliance
We ensure indoor spaces are well ventilated, have adequate natural light, and are maintained at a safe temperature. We provide outdoor spaces that allow children to explore the natural environment, including natural features like trees and sand. We include sufficient shaded areas in outdoor spaces to protect children from excessive sun exposure. Keep documentation, such as photographs, records, and policies, to show evidence of meeting these requirements.

Looking at the element in detail - Element 3.2.3 includes:

- teaching children about their responsibility to respect and care for the natural environment in a sustainable way and
- implementing sustainable practices at the Service.

The following section will show you exactly what to do to ensure your practice is meeting. You **do not** need to complete this section if you have successfully completed 'Section 2'.

Why is the element important?

Element 3.2.3 includes:

- teaching children about their responsibility to respect and care for the natural environment in a sustainable way and
- implementing sustainable practices at the Service.

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

Environmental Disregard: Children might not develop a proper understanding or respect for the environment, potentially leading to behaviours that negatively impact ecological health.

Wasteful Resource Use: Without sustainable practices, the service could contribute significantly to resource wastage, including excessive water and electricity use, increasing its environmental footprint.

Lack of Biodiversity Appreciation: Children may not be exposed to activities that showcase biodiversity, potentially leading to a lack of interest in conservation efforts as they grow.

Poor Sustainability Skills: Without learning key sustainability practices such as recycling and energy conservation, children might not develop these essential habits for environmentally responsible living.

Community Isolation: By not participating in local environmental initiatives, the service might detach itself from community efforts, missing opportunities to lead by example and engage with broader sustainability movements.

Educational Shortfalls: Neglecting environmental education could lead to a less engaging and comprehensive curriculum, possibly resulting in diminished educational outcomes in areas connected to environmental awareness and sciences.

Long-term Environmental Damage: Over time, the absence of early environmental education could contribute to larger environmental issues like pollution

and climate change, as successive generations might not see these concerns as priorities.

You must practice

It's very important to make sure you and the service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.

Provide hands-on experiences: Encourage children to actively engage with nature through activities like recycling and gardening, which foster a deeper connection to the natural world and instil a strong sense of environmental responsibility.

Model sustainable behaviours: Demonstrate eco-friendly practices such as conserving energy and reducing waste, setting a powerful example for children to emulate.

Encourage a sense of connection: Help children appreciate the natural world and understand their role in its care, fostering empathy and a desire to protect the environment.

Incorporate environmental education: Integrate lessons on ecosystems, conservation, and the impacts of human activities into the curriculum, providing a well-rounded understanding of environmental stewardship.

Encourage critical thinking: Stimulate discussions on environmental issues, encouraging children to think critically about solutions and formulate their own ideas for positive change.

Place-based sciences in the EYLF and MTOP: This educational approach integrates local environments and cultures into learning, enhancing relevance and engagement by utilising the community's unique cultural and environmental resources. Through place-based sciences, children explore local ecosystems and community challenges, learn about ecological interconnectedness, and participate in activities that strengthen community ties and develop critical thinking skills.

Restoring the Health of Our Local Pond: A Place-Based Science Mission

We embarked on a place-based science project to address the environmental problem of water pollution in our local creek. Our group of children eagerly embraced the opportunity to become environmental problem solvers within our community. The project aimed to raise connections with our environment, families, and educators, while building upon the children's knowledge.

We began by discussing the importance of our local creek and the issue of water pollution. We learned that pollution from litter and runoff from nearby areas had harmful effects on the water quality and the ecosystem. To deepen our understanding, we invited families to share their knowledge and experiences related to water pollution and its consequences. Parents eagerly contributed by discussing the impact of pollution on aquatic life and the importance of clean water for all living things.

With our newfound knowledge and a determination to make a positive change, we set off on an excursion to the creek armed with gloves, nets, and determination. The children observed firsthand the litter that had accumulated in and around the water, such as plastic bottles and food wrappers. They were saddened by the sight and motivated to take action to restore the health of the pond.

Back in the classroom, we engaged in discussions about the causes and effects of water pollution. We brainstormed ideas on how we could contribute to solving this environmental problem. The children suggested organising a community clean-up event, spreading awareness through posters, drawings, and Instagram, and finding ways to prevent pollution in the first place.

To implement our ideas, we reached out to local community organisations and experts for guidance and support. Simone from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) visited our classroom to educate the children about the importance of clean water and ways to prevent pollution. The children eagerly absorbed the information, learning about responsible waste disposal, the harmful effects of chemicals, and the significance of keeping our water sources clean.

Follow up
Empowered with knowledge and armed with determination, we will be organising a community clean-up event with families, friends, and neighbours to remove litter and debris from the pond area.

Reflection
Through our place-based science project, we witnessed the transformative power of children taking action to address an environmental problem. The project not only sparked their awareness of water pollution but also instilled a sense of responsibility and empowerment in them. By incorporating their funds of knowledge and building connections within our community, we created a meaningful and impactful learning experience.

Throughout the project, we observed the children's growing understanding of the causes and effects of water pollution. They began to recognise their role in preventing pollution and felt a deep connection to the health of the pond and its inhabitants. We were delighted to see their enthusiasm and commitment to solving the environmental problem at hand.

For great examples click on the link and watch these videos.

Embedding Sustainable Practices video – part 1 of 3

Embedding Sustainable Practices video – part 2 of 3

Embedding Sustainable Practices video – part 3 of 3

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 you 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.

