

# Environment and Sustainability Policy

## including Sustainability Management Plan

### Purpose

Peak Sports and Learning actively participates in caring for our environment and promotes sustainable practices through educating and working with the children, families and wider community. Children develop positive attitudes and values about sustainability by engaging in learning experiences, joining in discussions that explore solutions to environmental issues, and watching adults model sustainable practices. Sustainability is embedded in both our philosophy and program. A Sustainability Management Plan guides the implementation of environmental sustainability practices and assists Educators to regularly review and improve these practices.

### Considerations

| Education and Care Services National Regulations | National Quality Standard/s                                   | Other Service policies/documentation  | Other   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Regulation 113                                   | 1.1.3, 1.2.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3, 3.2.3, 5.2.1, 7.1.1, 6.2.3, 7.2.1 | Parent Handbook<br>Staff Handbook<br>Service Philosophy<br>- Sustainability Management Plan<br>- Enrolment and Orientation Policy | - My Time Our Place<br>- “The Little Green Steps” Guide for Educators<br>- “Growing Minds Greening Communities” Sustainability Resource kit for Educators |

### Procedures

#### From Our Philosophy

Sustainable practices are embedded in the children’s daily routine and in their day-to-day activities, these include:

- Using recyclable materials where possible.
- Encouraging children to use half flush on the toilets.
- Encouraging children to turn the water off when they have washed their hands.
- Encouraging children to recycle paper and rubbish within their rooms, at home and when in the wider community.
- Talking with the children about electricity and encouraging them to turn off lights.
- Educating children in the natural decomposition cycle through exposure and participation in worm farms and composting food scraps.
- Educating children and having them participate in ‘garden to plate’ activities i.e. seed sprouting, weeding, vegetable gardens, cooking amongst other activities.
- Educating children in how to care for pets and letting them actively participate in caring for the centre pet.
- Educating children on caring for plants and our waterways i.e. recycling water etc
- Energy saver awarded to take pride in ensuring lights are off where not required, taps are turned off etc and ownership in our sustainable practices.

## Sustainability in our Routines

- Educators share and engage children and families in eco-friendly practices, aim to give children and their families an awareness of the need to protect the planet and its future for the generations to come.
- Educators discuss sustainability with the children and families. Ask the children and the families to come up with some ideas to improve the sustainability of the Centre.
- The Centre will make the following part of their daily routine:
  - Recycling and reusing materials for learning activities
  - Minimising waste and effectively using service resources
  - Water Conservation
  - Energy Conservation
  - Gardening
  - Composting
  - Purchasing sustainable equipment
  - Ensuring that children take care of resources to reduce loss or damage
  - Saving leftover drinking water to place in the garden.
  - Turn off taps, light switches etc when not in use.
  - Fish and plants are grown and children are involved in their care
- Use the least hazardous cleaning substance appropriate for the situation, for example, ordinary detergent for cleaning dirt from tables and other surfaces.
- Educators to role model good sustainable practices.
- Encourage children to recycle paper. Provide recycle bins at craft area and model how to use them properly.
- Maintain a garden, a worm farm and a compost bin. Discuss with the children how it all works and why we need to do this. Implement environmentally friendly pest and weed management.
- Containers for composting food scraps are used in the kitchen and at afternoon tea.
- Children participate in composting and garden care daily.
- Reduce the amount of plastic and disposable equipment at the Centre and aim to purchase materials made from natural fibres.
- “Reduce, re-use and recycle” signs and information are displayed at the Centre and it should be a natural process for all concerned.
- A sustainability display is in each Centre with photos and ideas to educate children and families. Children are involved in updating and adding to this display.
- Books with environmental themes are included in the reading area.
- Families are encouraged to donate reusable materials such as jars, containers and magazines. A poster and collection point is located at the parent information area.

## Sustainability in our Program

- Our educators will promote learning programs that explore ideas and practices for environmental sustainability and helps children understand the interdependence between people and the environment by:
  - Connecting children to nature through art and play and allowing children to experience the natural environment through natural materials like wood, stone sand and recycled materials, plants including native vegetation, nesting boxes, a vegetable garden with gardening tools and watering cans.
  - Developing education programs for water conservation, energy efficiency and waste reduction.
  - Celebrating children’s environmental knowledge and sustainable activities.
  - Include books with environmental themes in the reading area.
  - Involving children in nature walks, education about plants and gardening and growing plants and flowers from seed.
  - Engaging children in learning about the food cycle by growing, harvesting, and cooking food.
  - Using resource kits and information on environmental issues targeted at early childhood services such as “The Little Green Steps” Resource kits on Water, Waste and Wildlife.
  - Enlisting the help of groups with expertise in environmental issues, for example bush care groups, wildlife rescue groups, Clean Up Australia, to deliver elements of our sustainability program.
  - Acknowledging and celebrating environmental awareness events like Clean Up Australia Day and Walk to School Day.

## Sustainability in Administration

- Review procedures and policies regularly to make them more sustainable
- Maintaining and regularly reviewing a Sustainability Management Plan with all centres
- Reduce paper by considering electronic newsletters, invoices, enrolment records, child observations etc.
- Purchase only recycled copy paper, paper towels and recycled toilet paper.
- Purchase only environmentally friendly cleaning products
- Email information to families about how they can help their children learn about sustainability and what they can do at home, as well as at the Centre.
- Keep up to date with local council and Government departments regarding information on sustainable practices in your local community. Look for grants that allow you to improve water and energy conservation.
- Sustainability to be included in staff and family newsletters
- Sustainability to be an item on meeting agendas and relate to the Quality Improvement Plan

# Sustainability Management Plan

## Overview

This Sustainability Management Plan, in conjunction with our Environmental Sustainability Policy guides the implementation of sustainable practices and assists Educators to regularly review and improve these practices. The checklist below ensures that each Peak centre has an ongoing self-assessment and defined time frames to implement any actions needed to continually improve in Quality Area 3 of the National Quality Framework.

| Bathroom   | YES | NO | Action Required and When |
|--|-----|----|--------------------------|
| Signs displayed to turn off taps                     |     |    |                          |
| Signs displayed to use half flush                    |     |    |                          |
| Taps turned off and not dripping                     |     |    |                          |
| Lights turned off when not in use and signs in place |     |    |                          |
| Natural light wherever possible.                     |     |    |                          |
| Children aren't wasting water when washing hands     |     |    |                          |

| Kitchen   | YES | NO | Action Required and When |
|---|-----|----|--------------------------|
| Signs displayed to turn off taps  |     |    |                          |
| Lights turned off when not in use and signs in place                                  |     |    |                          |
| Appliances turned off at power points at night where possible                         |     |    |                          |
| Fruit and veggies washed in a tub rather than a running tap                           |     |    |                          |
| Water used sparingly for cleaning up  |     |    |                          |
| Scraps are placed in compost bin or worm farm tubs                                    |     |    |                          |
| Separate recycling and waste bins used  |     |    |                          |
| Reusable containers for food storage  |     |    |                          |
| Reusable cutlery, plates and cups   |     |    |                          |
| Refrigerator energy efficient, seals intact, well maintained                          |     |    |                          |
| Cotton dishcloths used  |     |    |                          |
| Use a full sink of water to wash or soak items rather than running water from the tap |     |    |                          |

| Hall   | YES | NO | Action Required and When |
|--|-----|----|--------------------------|
| Lights turned off when not in use and signs in place                 |     |    |                          |
| Maximise the use of natural light and ventilation throughout the day |     |    |                          |
| Fans used rather than air-conditioners in summer                     |     |    |                          |
| Staff, children, wear warm clothing in winter                        |     |    |                          |
| A 'cosy corner' with blankets for children to use in winter          |     |    |                          |
| Gas heater operated correctly and conforms to Australian Standard    |     |    |                          |
| Furnishings and cushions dust free                                   |     |    |                          |

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| Strict procedures in place to care for pets and signs in place to educate children in their care             |  |  |  |
| Children sort waste in to correct bins including recycling, compost, worm farm and general rubbish           |  |  |  |
| Signage is displayed to educate children to use bins correctly   |  |  |  |
| Recycled paper, cardboard and other materials used for activities  |  |  |  |
| Reverse Garbage and other recycle centres used   |  |  |  |
| Parents contribute recycled paper, fabric, wool, containers etc  |  |  |  |
| Both sides of paper and scrap paper used in free time art  |  |  |  |
| Baskets provided for recyclable paper at craft table   |  |  |  |
| Finishing off tub used for colouring in sheets   |  |  |  |
| Arts and crafts materials are non-toxic  |  |  |  |
| Natural, and water-based paints are used   |  |  |  |
| Children regularly engage in activities and discussions that educate them about environmental sustainability |  |  |  |

| <b>General and Purchasing</b>   | <b>YES</b> | <b>NO</b> | <b>Action Required and When</b> |
|---|------------|-----------|---------------------------------|
| Non-toxic cleaning products used  |            |           |                                 |
| Chemical air-fresheners not used  |            |           |                                 |
| Aerosol spray bottles not used  |            |           |                                 |
| Electrical products have high energy star ratings                             |            |           |                                 |
| Low wattage and small appliances preferred to larger ones                     |            |           |                                 |
| Water using fixtures and appliances, have the highest water efficiency rating |            |           |                                 |
| Products with batteries avoided   |            |           |                                 |
| Products bought in bulk or re-usable containers                               |            |           |                                 |
| Products with packaging recycle symbol chosen                                 |            |           |                                 |
| Reusable shopping bags are used   |            |           |                                 |

| <b>Outdoors and Nature Play</b>                                 | <b>YES</b> | <b>NO</b> | <b>Action Required and When</b> |
|---|------------|-----------|---------------------------------|
| Walking and use of public transport for excursions encouraged.  |            |           |                                 |
| Activities involve but don't waste water                        |            |           |                                 |
| Children are involved in care of gardens, worm farm and compost |            |           |                                 |
| Food from the garden is used in cooking and food preparation    |            |           |                                 |
| Gardens, potted plants maintained and watered                   |            |           |                                 |
| Signs displayed to educate children on plant and garden care    |            |           |                                 |
| Use mulch on gardens  |            |           |                                 |

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| Compost and natural fertilisers used                          |  |  |  |
| Non-toxic sprays used for all plants                          |  |  |  |
| Children have access to a mud pit or sand pit                 |  |  |  |
| Elements of nature are used inside in displays and activities |  |  |  |

### Version Control Table

| Version Control | Date Released | Next Review   | Approved by | Amendment   |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|---|
| 1               | Jan 2017      | March 2018    | Directors   | Nil – small amendments to procedures  |
| 2               | August 2018   | August 2019   | Directors   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rewritten and edited to reflect 2018 updated Quality Standards.</li> <li>- Sections added for Routines, Program and Administration</li> <li>- Policy linked to a Sustainability Management Plan</li> </ul> |
| 3               | August 2019   | February 2020 | Directors   | -Reusable containers introduced to reduce use of cling wrap.  |
| 4               | February 2020 | February 2022 | Directors   | Small amendments – added Energy Saver role. Moved to new document review timeline.  |