**Charnwood-Dunlop School**

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**Environment and Sustainability at Charnwood-Dunlop Preschool**

**The goal of sustainability**

* to promote a transition from an unsustainable society to a sustainable one through making education for sustainable development a part of everyday practice.
* to be an integral part of the Charnwood-Dunlop Preschool program that underpins daily practice.
* for Charnwood-Dunlop Preschool to continue to develop and expand sustainable practices into the teaching and learning program.

**The Sustainable Practices Program**

The sustainable education program covers seven key learning areas:

1. Creating natural indoor/outdoor learning environments
2. Gardening and composting
3. Sustainable food practices
4. Water conservation
5. Waste minimisation: reduce, reuse, recycle
6. Energy saving
7. *Nguru Yerrabi:* Community walks program

**Creating natural indoor/outdoor learning environments**

* Minimise the use of plastic products and replace with resources made from natural materials such as wood and cane baskets.
* Reflect the natural world in the indoor environment: images of nature, use of natural resources including seeds, plants and flowers, stones, wood, cane baskets, glass and sand.
* Ready access to nature outdoors: wooden play props, large rocks, water, sand, natural grass, tanbark.
* Create spaces for individual play, small/large group experiences and active/quiet spaces.
* Model wonder and curiosity about the natural world found in our own outdoor learning environment; birdlife, insects, snails, worms, weather and seasonal change. Use discoveries and interests as a base for further investigation.
* Make or place objects in the environment to enable children to experience the natural world using their senses: to see the wind at work (kites, wind chimes, sculpture), to feed the birds, to interact with indigenous perspectives, including caring for the land.

**Gardening and composting**

* Provide ongoing gardening experiences through digging, planting, propagating, watering, fertilising, weeding and mulching.
* Children, families and staff share responsibility for the care of the preschool garden beds, including vegetables, herbs and flowers. Children will learn through authentic experiences where food originates.
* Experience from garden to table practice by picking produce from the garden beds to taste, cook and decorate.
* Establish and maintain composting practices.

**Sustainable food practices**

* Grow our own vegetables, fruit and herbs.
* Encourage healthy eating.
* Encourage children to take home unwanted food items or store to eat later rather than throw away.
* Drink water only.
* Cook using produce from the preschool garden. Share recipes and produce with families.
* Sort waste from lunch and snacks into organic waste, recyclable waste and non-recyclable waste. Organic waste will be composted at preschool or taken to homes that have chickens.
* Encourage reuse of zip lock plastic bags.

**Water conservation**

* Promote water as a precious resource.
* Enforce water restrictions when applicable.
* Use water wisely when handwashing, cleaning, engaging in water and sandpit play and gardening.
* Construction and use of a bilge pump for water and sandpit play.

**Waste minimisation: reduce, reuse, recycle**

* Place all paper into the paper recycling bin.
* Children play and create with re-useable materials, boxes, egg cartons, material scraps, wool, plastic lids, and coloured paper offcuts.
* Use discarded office paper and computer paper for drawing.
* Reuse jars and plastic containers for storage.
* Reuse wood offcuts and plastic pipes in play.
* Use pieces of fabric/cane for cubbies, tents and teepees
* Source resources from op shops, where appropriate.
* Attempt to repair broken resources where appropriate.
* Photocopy double sided and on recycled paper.
* Consider the environment before printing.

**Energy saving**

* When using electrical appliances, turn off at the wall.
* Encourage the use of public transport, walking or riding a bike.
* Use public transport for excursions.
* Use recycled items such as containers, plastic lids, cardboard boxes for box construction and collage.
* Use hand operated torches, whisks.
* Close doors and windows to keep heat in during winter, use windows and doors for cross-ventilation during summer.

***Nguru Yerrabi*: Community walks program**

* Encourage wonder and curiosity for the natural environment.
* Work on the premise of *we only leave footprints*: do not pick natural materials unless they have fallen to the ground, and do not leave rubbish behind.
* Explicitly teach how to care for the natural environment.

**At Charnwood-Dunlop Preschool we strongly believe if children observe staff caring for their indoor and outdoor environment and involve children in the above learning, sustainable practices will become a part of their everyday life and of great benefit to the future of the world in which they live.**