

Physical environment

Policy statement

Goodstart Early Learning (Goodstart) is committed to providing safe and comfortable physical environments at its centres that actively promote children’s wellbeing and learning and development outcomes. The design and location of our premises will be appropriate for their purpose. Our environments will promote children's competence and independent exploration, and enrich children's learning and development through play. We take an active role in caring for the environment and will contribute to a sustainable future.

Regulatory references: National regulations - Part 4.3, Physical Environment, regulations 103 to 115 (including space requirements); regulation 168(2)(h)(child safe environment)

What does this policy apply to?

- ▶ **Facilities management**
- ▶ **Facilities works**
- ▶ **Sustainable practices**
- ▶ **Learning environment**

This policy relates to Quality Area 3 of the National Quality Standard

QA3	Physical environment
3.1	The design and location of the premises is appropriate for the operation of a service.
3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources are suitable for their purpose.
3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.
3.1.3	Facilities are designed or adapted to ensure access and participation by every child in the service and to allow flexible use, and interaction between indoor and outdoor space.
3.2	The environment is inclusive, promotes competence, independent exploration and learning through play.
3.2.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces are designed and organised to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
3.2.2	Resources, materials and equipment are sufficient in number, organised in ways that ensure appropriate and effective implementation of the program and allow for multiple uses.
3.3	The service takes an active role in caring for its environment and contributes to a

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	sustainable future.
3.3.1	Sustainable practices are embedded in service operations.
3.3.2	Children are supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment.

Facilities management

In the management of its centres, Goodstart is committed to ensuring that all outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources are suitable for their purposes. Premises, furniture and equipment must be safe, clean and well maintained. Resources, materials and equipment are sufficient and appropriate, and support the flexibility of our children's programs and experiences.

Related documents: NQS3 Centre-based Purchasing Requirement; NQS3 Emergency Maintenance Procedure; NQS3 Key Register Procedure; NQS3 Scheduled Maintenance Procedure.

Facilities works

Goodstart facilities will be designed or adapted to ensure access and participation by every child and employee in the centre and to allow flexible use, and interaction between indoor and outdoor space.

Related documents: NQS3 Centre-based Purchasing Requirement; NQS3 Facilities Request Flow Chart Appendix.

Sustainable practices

Sustainable practices will be embedded in the operations of our centres, including the use of environmentally friendly products where practicable. Children are encouraged to respect the environment and participate in experiences that build their understanding of the responsibilities necessary for a sustainable future.

Related documents: NQS3 Sustainability Guideline.

Learning environment

We offer children and families inviting, flexible, inclusive and interactive indoor and outdoor environments at Goodstart centres that provide opportunities to engage with both built and natural elements.

Related documents: Physical Environment toolkit – including resources, research, guidelines, and processes, and opportunities to support professional learning (available on Goodstart's intranet physical environment web page)

Responsibilities

This policy is to be implemented by: All Goodstart employees in all States and Territories of Australia must comply with this policy

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Definitions

Children:

- Each infant, toddler, three to five year old and school age child and means children as individuals and as members of a group in the education and care setting, unless otherwise stated. It is inclusive of children from all social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds and of their learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographic locations (Guide to the National Quality Standard, 2011)

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