

# 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?

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

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

QA3	Physical environment
3.1	The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.
3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.
3.2	The service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning.
3.2.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child’s participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
3.2.2	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.
3.2.3	The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.

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## Property 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](#);

## Maintenance and improvement works

Goodstart's 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. When changes to our facilities are required, safety and compliance will always be prioritised. The Goodstart Quality Team will support centres with any reporting and documentation required by the Regulator.

*Related Goodstart documents:* [NQS3 Centre-based Purchasing Requirement](#); [NQS3 Lodging of Change \(NOC\) and Temporary Waiver Requests Guideline](#); [NQS3 Notice of Change - Facilities Procedure](#); [NQS3 Temporary Waiver - Facilities Procedure](#)

## 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.

## **Responsibilities**

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

## **Definitions**

### Children:

- Refers to each baby, 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,

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family circumstances and geographic locations (Guide to the National Quality Framework, February 2018, p620)

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