An Education for Sustainability approach for early learning sites

_Early Childhood Education for Sustainability is ... transformative education that values, encourages and supports children to be problem seekers, problem solvers and takers of action in their own environments. It is explicitly about creating social change._

Julie Davis, Young Children and the Environment: Early Education for Sustainability 2010 p.31

NRM Education supports early learning sites with Education for Sustainability. This approach is about developing the knowledge, skills, values and behaviours for leading sustainable lifestyles. Early Years Learning Framework’s principles, practices and learning outcomes also underpin this approach.

Education for Sustainability addresses Being, Belonging and Becoming

**Being** – Children experience the awe and wonder of nature. Children gain an understanding of their local environment and how ecosystems function. Being responsible for our actions (positive and negative) and developing behaviours that are sustainable.

**Belonging** – Humans are a part of the environment and belong in our environment. Relationships are the foundation to our community shifting towards more sustainable lifestyles. Children are a part of a learning community that values our environment, natural resources and being sustainable.

**Becoming** – Children are becoming more of a role model within their community for sustainable practices and behaviours. Children bring a sustainability mind set when facing future challenges and opportunities. Children identify as responsible global citizens.

Education for Sustainability has strong links to the National Quality Standards

An Education for Sustainability approach also has strong links to the National Quality Standards (NQS). The NQS talks about sustainability in a physical environment (QA3) but, in reality, Education for Sustainability covers all quality areas. For example, sustainability requires leadership (QA7); relationships with and engaging families and children (QA 1, 5 and 6); educators developing knowledge and skills around sustainability (QA4) and promoting a healthy world (QA2).

NRM Education supports early learning sites to:

- embed sustainability in practices and daily routines, develop a sustainability vision and values with your community which complements the statement of philosophy
- develop a Site Environment Management Plan (SEMP) to record and plan sustainability learning, practices and behaviours
- use the Preschool Core Indicators to lead discussions and decisions about where your site is on its journey towards sustainability. This has direct links to Quality Areas in the National Quality Standards.

For more information visit: