Introduction

Bega Valley Shire Council education and care services have a strong commitment to maintaining safe and sustainable natural resources like water.

Strategies

Safe and sustainable work practices

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure all Educators and Staff are aware of strategies for safe and sustainable use of water.

All Educators and Staff will:

- use safe and sustainable work practices when using water with children, families and others. This will include where possible:

Access to drinking water

- Ensure each child has access to, or can ask for, drinking water throughout the day.
- Ensure children are encouraged to bring and drink water rather than juices or soft drinks

Education

- Providing information to children, families and others about the need to use water and other natural resources safely and wisely, and encourage recycling.
- Provide information to children, families and others about pool and water supervision and safety.
- Provide information to children, families and others about the benefits of drinking water rather than juices or soft drink.
- Provide information to children, families and others about the risks and safe responses to managing drinking water affected by flood and other major natural events.

Conservation

- Use rain-water collected in tanks where available for play purposes rather than drinking water
- Limit the amount of water used for non-essential purposes like play and cleaning. For example, troughs should be filled to a safe level and emptied when not in use; craft sinks should use plugs when washing up toys or craft materials.
- Water used for play purposes should be recycled onto gardens. Children will be discouraged from drinking this water.
Safety

- Empty all water containers including buckets or containers used for cleaning when not in use. Children can not be present if non-temperature regulated hot water is used for cleaning.
- Ensure water in the outdoor environment does not accumulate in puddles or containers. It can be a breeding ground for mosquitoes and other insects, or present a slip hazard.
- Ensure hot water in children’s bathrooms has a temperature regulating valve fitted, or that there is a venue management plan in place to prevent children from accessing hot water.
- Hot liquids and drinks may only be consumed by adults in child-free areas.
- All excursions must include risk assessment of and controls for any water hazards that may be present.

Evaluation

Water is managed safely and sustainably for children, families and others in the service.

Statutory legislation and considerations

- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations, 2011

References

- Community Child Care Co-operative Sample Policy: Water Safety
- Kidsafe, water safety Online access May, 2012:
  - http://www.kidsafensw.org/watersafety/index.htm