



Berrinba East State School
Nature Play and Outdoor Learning Policy
'Bringing Back Childhood'



At Berrinba East State School is endorsed by Nature Play Queensland as an approved Outdoor Learning Provider. At Berrinba East State School we engage in outdoor learning and nature play opportunities on a daily basis. Nature Play is a valued part of our embedded practice in both our curriculum and outdoor playground areas. There is extensive research to demonstrate that engaging in regular nature play and learning outside of the classroom significantly improves children's academic, physical, social and emotional development. In 2020, Berrinba East State School was a State Finalist in the Outdoors Queensland Nature Play Education Awards. Some of the many recorded benefits of our approach include:

- Enhanced personal and social communication skills
- Increased physical health, supporting the development of healthy, active lifestyles
- Improved academic achievement
- Providing a bridge to higher order learning
- Developed skills and independence in a widening range of environments
- Make learning more engaging and relevant to young people
- Develop active citizens and stewards of the environment
- Nurture creativity
- Provide opportunities for informal learning through play
- Reduce behavioural problems and improve attendance
- Stimulate, inspire and improve motivation
- Develop resilience and the ability to deal with uncertainty
- Provide challenge and the opportunity to take acceptable levels of risk
- Enhanced spiritual, sensory, and aesthetic awareness
- The ability to assert personal control and increased sensitivity to one's own well-being.
- The ability to assess and mitigate risk.



Learning Spaces

At Berrinba East State School, many areas have been repurposed to support Nature Play and Outdoor Learning. Examples of this include –

- Old Cricket Nets being converted into a chicken pen, greenhouse and garden.
- The previously out-of-bounds Fairy Forest becoming our Forest Play Space.
- An unused Tennis Court being converted into a Loose Parts Space.

Examples of Nature Play enhancing learning can be seen at - <https://youtu.be/5gGSr51fiqQ>



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Nature Play
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1. Farm Space – Garden and Greenhouse
2. Farm Space – Chickens
3. Bike Track
4. Forest Space
5. Yarning Circle
6. Sand Mound
7. Bike Shed and repair station
8. Junior Farm/Pick of the Crop
9. Sand Mound
10. Loose Parts Play Space
11. Junior Yarning Circle
19. Bug Hotels

☆INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES TRAIL☆

12. Hello & Welcome
We invite you here – flags
13. Acknowledgement of Country
14. Yarning Circle
15. The Forest
16. Meeting Place
17. Bora Rings
18. Acknowledgement of Country

Teaching and Learning

Nature Play and Outdoor Learning is used to teach in the following settings –

- Embedding into Year level planning
- Delivered as a specialist lesson (Outdoor Learning and Play) by a specialist teacher
- Small Group intervention for student engagement
- Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives
- Unstructured Play at Lunchtimes
- Embedded in HPE and Music Lessons (combined with the Outdoor Learning and Play Lesson, all students have a minimum of three hours a week exposure to Nature Play and Outdoor Learning)

The formation of a Nature Play/Outdoor Learning Lesson as outlined in the BESS Nature Play Planning and Teaching Framework, comprises of –

- Identifying the WHAT – using the Australian Curriculum General Capabilities.
- Identifying the HOW – using Age Appropriate Pedagogies
- Embedding the WHY – using the PERMA – Positive Education Model
- Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Culture – Place, Culture, People
- Connecting to Learning Areas within the Australian Curriculum
- Identifying the Learning Spaces

Identifying the WHAT	
Nature Play and Outdoor Learning at Berrinba East State School is used to teach the General Capabilities of the Australian Curriculum with a specific focus on –	
<p><u>Literacy</u> <i>Composing texts through speaking, writing and creating</i> - Use language to interact with others <i>Grammar knowledge</i> - Use knowledge of sentence structures - Express opinion and point of view</p>	<p><u>Critical and Creative Thinking</u> <i>Inquiring – identifying, exploring and organising information</i> - Pose questions - Identify and clarify information and ideas - Organise and process information <i>Generating ideas, possibilities and actions</i> - Imagine possibilities and connect ideas - Consider alternatives - Seek solutions and put ideas into action <i>Reflecting on thinking and processing</i> - Think about thinking (metacognition) - Reflect on processes - Transfer knowledge into new contexts <i>Analysing, synthesising and evaluating reasoning and procedures</i> - Apply logic and reasoning - Draw conclusions and design a course of action - Evaluate procedures and outcomes</p>
<p><u>Personal and Social</u> <i>Self-awareness element</i> - Recognise personal qualities and achievements <i>Social Awareness</i> - Appreciate diverse perspectives - Understand relationships <i>Self-Management</i> - Develop self-discipline and set goals - Work independently and show initiative - Become confident, resilient and adaptable <i>Social Management</i> - Communicate effectively - Work collaboratively - Make decisions - Negotiate and resolve conflict - Develop leadership skills</p>	

Identifying the HOW		
Nature Play and Outdoor Learning at Berrinba East State School is delivered using the Age Appropriate Pedagogies approaches with a specific focus on -		
<p><i>Inquiry learning</i> - Initiate the inquiry through a question, problem or idea - Support children to theorise, hypothesize and wonder - Provide opportunities for children to become more confident and autonomous problem-solvers and thinkers - Organise for learning experiences extending beyond singular activities, that can be repeated or returned to, and that lend themselves to active</p>	<p><i>Project based</i> - Facilitate a three-step process that includes planning, exploration and culmination. - Orientate children towards a shared outcome or the creation of an artefact. - Provide opportunities for individual children or small groups to explore aspects of the project that are of specific interest to them. - Provide opportunities for children to negotiate the</p>	<p><i>Play-based learning</i> - Construct opportunities for play within (not opposed to, or as well as) the learning program/environment. - Make connections between play and the Australian Curriculum visible for all involved and clearly articulate this relationship. - Model, support, initiate and generate play to include the use of, for example, miniature</p>

engagement in purposeful learning	medium used for creating and sharing their project.	worlds, socio-dramatic, puppet, media, block, sand and water. - Actively engage in and guide the play – before, during and after
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Embedding the WHY

Nature Play and Outdoor Learning at Berrinba East State School embeds Seligman's PERMA Model to develop a student's positive disposition to learning. The foundations of the PERMA model include -

<u>Positive Emotion</u> Feeling good, positive emotion, optimism, pleasure and enjoyment.	<u>Engagement</u> Fulfilling work, interesting hobbies	<u>Relationships</u> Social connections, love, intimacy, emotional interactions	<u>Meaning</u> Having a purpose	<u>Accomplishments</u> Ambition, realistic goals, important achievements, pride in yourself
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Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures

Nature Play and Outdoor Learning is used as a vehicle to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures by connecting students and learning to Place, Culture and People.

Country/Place	Culture	People
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities maintain a special connection to and responsibility for Country/Place. - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have holistic belief systems and are spiritually and intellectually connected to the land, sea, sky and waterways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies have many language groups. - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Peoples' way of life are uniquely expressed through ways of being, knowing, thinking and doing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies encompass a diversity across nations. - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' family and kinship structures are strong and sophisticated. - The significant contributions of Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the present and past are acknowledging locally, nationally and globally.

Acknowledgement to country is performed at the commencement of every Nature Play/Outdoor Learning lesson and experience.

Risk Assessment

The risk of all Nature Play/Outdoor Learning spaces and experiences are assessed using the Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment (CARA) process (<https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/stages-of-schooling/CARA>). All spaces and experiences are assessed and responses developed using the following criteria –

Risk Level	Description	Action required
Low	Little chance of incident or injury	<i>Risk/Benefit Assessment</i> – This process outlines the associated risk for the learning space or experience and identifies risk mitigation strategies to minimise the risk. This mitigated risk is then assessed against to the benefits of the activity to determine the viability of the space or experience. <i>The risk mitigation strategies are documented in the teacher's three levels of curriculum planning.</i>
Medium	Some chance of an incident and injury requiring first aid	<i>Risk/Benefit Assessment</i> – This process outlines the associated risk for the learning space or experience and identifies risk mitigation strategies to minimise the risk. This mitigated risk is then assessed against to the benefits of the activity to determine the viability of the space or experience. <i>The risk mitigation strategies are documented in the teacher's three levels of curriculum planning.</i> <i>Consent</i> - Individual consent is sought from parents and/or caregivers. The parent/caregiver consent is informed with identified risks and risk mitigation strategies clearly stated.
High	Likely chance of a significant incident	<i>CARA</i> - A Curriculum Risks Assessment and Plan is undertaken and developed using the CARA guidelines. This plan is required to be endorsed by the Principal.

	and injury requiring medical treatment	<p>Risk/Benefit Assessment – This process outlines the associated risk for the learning space or experience and identifies risk mitigation strategies to minimise the risk. This mitigated risk is then assessed against to the benefits of the activity to determine the viability of the space or experience. The risk mitigation strategies are documented in the teacher’s three levels of curriculum planning.</p> <p>Consent - Individual consent is sought from parents and/or caregivers. The parent/caregiver consent is informed with identified risks and risk mitigation strategies clearly stated.</p>
Extreme	High chance of a serious incident resulting in a highly debilitating injury	The space, activity or experience is not conducted by the school.

Outdoor Learning/ Play Rules



OUTDOOR LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

- ✓ 1,2,3 Basecamp
- ✓ No Pick No Lick
- ✓ Stay within the boundary
- ✓ Trade with others
- ✓ Reset the area

All rules will be recapped and discussed at Basecamp at the start of each outdoor learning lesson and classes will be reminded by class teacher prior to outdoor play sessions in the nature area.

1,2,3 Basecamp

Upon an educator/ teacher calling 1,2,3 Basecamp, all children will return to the designated base camp area. They will be counted, to ensure all children are present. This may be used to redirect the children’s attention, introduce a new concept or in safety situations such as an X-Factor (sake or dog

sighting), intruder or emergency incident.

No Pick, No Lick

Children are not permitted to pick any items off living plants, trees or shrubs, nor are they to put anything in their mouths, including their fingers. This rule protects the children from the risk of toxins from plants, and also protects the living flora and reduces the environmental impact of the program. The only exception to this rule is if students are in the farm or bush tucker space and their decision is being guided by a teacher.

Stay within the Boundary

Children will stay within the nominated boundary of the site at all times. This boundary may be altered by the teacher on duty/teaching to extend or decrease the play space as deemed necessary and will be explained to the children.

Trade with others

Children are required to offer a ‘trade’ for desired items being used by another student. This rule is in place to prevent arguments over items as well as provide students with the skill set of negotiation to resolve an issue.

Reset the Area

Children are to expect that the area may be rest set after they have used it. This means that any creations they have made may not be there the next time they visit the space.



CHICKEN COOPS LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

- ✓ 1,2,3 Basecamp
- ✓ No Pick No Lick
- ✓ Chickens stay on the ground
- ✓ Keep the gate closed
- ✓ Walk slowly
- ✓ Use quiet voices



LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

- ✓ 1,2,3 Basecamp
- ✓ No Pick No Lick
- ✓ Stay within the boundary
- ✓ Trade with others
- ✓ Reset the area

Outdoor Emergency / Incident Procedures

Safety Checklist

Prior to the commencement of each session, teachers are required to assess the safety of the environment. Due to the ever-changing environment, the use of the safety checklist is to be used in combination with any CARAs and/or Risk/Benefits assessments that have been developed.

An Outdoor Learning Checklist can be located upon entry to the Forest, Farm and Loose Parts Space.



OUTDOOR LEARNING SAFETY CHECKLIST

PREPARATION CHECKLIST	✓	SAFETY SWEEP CHECKLIST	✓
Hazardous weather check		Safety sweep of outdoor learning area (sharp rubbish, slips/trips, overhead branches)	
Emergency/First Aid Kit		Establish boundary with students	
Specific medication accessible		Snake Stomp & Hazardous wildlife check	
First Aid Slips & Phone accessible		Revise/teach Outdoor Learning Expectations	
Equipment ready & accessible		Adults & students briefed – Learning Intention / Success Criteria	
Students & adults dressed appropriately (sun safety and closed in shoes)		Leave the area better than you left it (pack up / clean up)	

Minor Accident / Illness

A regularly checked First Aid kit will be taken over to outdoor areas for the duration of each session. There will be a list of medical details for children with specific difficulties (allergies, inhalers, epi pens). Snake bite aid taken if necessary.

1. In an event of a minor injury to a child, they will be aided by a designated First Aider. They will either be treated in the area or back in the classroom depending on the severity of the injury. Minor incidents will then be recorded in the class's Incident book and parents and carers will be informed at the end of the school day.
2. If a child is ill or has had an allergic reaction during the session they will be aided by the class teacher. Their medical details will be checked and if appropriate they will be given their inhalers or epi-pens immediately. If an epi-pen is administered or an asthma attack does not improve the emergency services will be called on the school Mobile

Major Accident / Head Injury

In the event of a major accident during an outdoor session, there are two procedures to follow depending on the severity and type of injury.

1. If a child is able to be escorted by a practitioner and the injury can be aided within school, they will be seen by the school nurse/ trained first aider in their office. Following the appropriate treatment, the nurse/ first aider will then ring the parents/carers of the child to inform them of the incident and request they pick up their child if necessary. A report will then be written by the school nurse/ first aider.
2. If a child's injuries require immediate hospital treatment, 000 or 112 is dialled from the School mobile carried by the class teacher. It is then the First aider's duty to contact the child's parent/carer. She will organise a member of staff to meet the ambulance at the entrance of the school. The injured child will remain accompanied by a qualified First Aider until the ambulance has arrived. All other pupils will be supervised away from the incident by the other members of staff.

Trespassers

Trespassers are those who enter the property of another with no legal right or justification. Trespassing on childcare centre/ school grounds is regarded as a civil matter and a police officer can only intervene if there is a breach of the peace, possibly as a result of confrontation.

In order to reduce the risk of trespassers, fences and gates are all around premises. There are key pads on door and visitors wear identification badges and have to sign in and out. Staff should be advised to be cautious in challenging any trespassers or intruders directly.

They (or their families) should never approach them alone. If it is possible that the trespasser/intruder may be aggressive staff should call the police rather than openly challenge them. If pupils are present, staff should avoid any actions which may lead to the situation escalating.

A detailed record should be kept of every incident, together with the action taken. Where the offender reacts violently or in a threatening manner, police assistance should always be called for.

Evacuation

If any staff or pupils report any objects they deem to be suspicious/ harmful they must report these to the class teacher. The Leader then must make the decision of whether to evacuate the area. In this incidence the group will assemble at the Fire Evacuation Point and the centre/ school will be informed.

Missing Child

If a child is discovered missing from the outdoor site, the situation is acted upon immediately and the following procedure must be followed

1. The class teacher must be informed.
2. Activity for the rest of the group will stop and they will be given a whole class low level risk activity taken by one member of staff.
3. Other members of staff conduct a search which should last no more than 10 minutes.
4. If the child has not been found the class teacher will contact the Police on 000 or 112 using the school mobile.
5. The centre/ school will then be informed and the Parent/Carer will be contacted.
6. All incidents must be recorded in the Incident Book.

Emergency Contact Numbers

Ambulance/ Fire Service/ Police: 000 or 112

School Office: (07) 34896777

Resources

Nature Play Queensland - <https://www.natureplayqld.org.au/>

Nature Play South Australia - <https://natureplaysa.org.au/>

Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment (CARA) - <https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/stages-of-schooling/CARA>

Burracun Aboriginal Cultural Services – www.burracun.com.au

Nature Play research - <https://www.natureplayqld.org.au/resources/resources-for-researchers>

Institute of Positive Education - <https://www.ggs.vic.edu.au/Institute>

Age Appropriate Pedagogies - <https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/early-years/age-appropriate-pedagogies>

ACARA - Australian Curriculum - <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/>