# Operational Policy: Environmental Best Practice (NAG 6)

## Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ

## Statement of Intent:

The Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ (BLENNZ) is committed to improving its environmental management through the identification of everyday activities that have an adverse impact on the environment, and then managing them so that it complies with national and regional council regulations. Such activities include, but are not limited to, rubbish disposal and recycling, composting, protecting water quality (stormwater and sewage wastewater) and use of chemicals. All BLENNZ learning environments will support this aim.

## Policy Requirements:

### Agrichemicals:

* Staff applying agrichemicals must follow the instructions noted in NZS 8409:2004 Code of Practice for the Management of Agrichemicals.
* Materials must be stored in appropriate containers that are clearly labelled. Containers should be sturdy, not corroded and not liable to leak.
* Containers must be stored in weatherproof locations where leaks and spills will not cause stormwater pollution.
* Where two or more liquids are stored on-site, each should be stored in a separate bunded area (a structure or device that can contain all of a potential chemical spill) to allow for the collection and reuse of uncontaminated, spilled liquid.
* If inside storage is not possible, storage tanks and drums should be in a covered and bunded area that will contain any spills and leaks.
* A schedule will be maintained that details regular checking of all storage areas.

### Structures at or over watercourses – Homai Campus:

* The Site Manager, on behalf of the Principal, will know the location of all stormwater discharge pipes, water take structures, culverts and conveyance structures and their condition.
* The Site Manager will ensure that culverts (and in particular the pond area), is kept clear of debris to enhance waterflow, and that any maintenance required is completed in order to meet Council regulations and sign off.

### Boiler operation:

* The boilers (main Homai Campus building and swimming pool) will be serviced on an annual basis by qualified service staff.
* Servicing of boilers in other locations will be the responsibility of the local school. Individual arrangements will be arranged for stand-alone sites.

### Rubbish management:

* In the first instance, BLENNZ will look for ways to reduce waste, after which the options of first re-using and recycling will be used.
* Waste disposal facilities will be clearly labelled for separate waste types e.g. recycling bins (glass, paper and cardboard, food and drink cans, plastic), bins for compost.
* Staff and ngā ākonga will be educated on disposal options and the concept of “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle”.
* Wherever possible unwanted furniture or clothing will be recycled through clothing bins, second hand shops, local opportunity shops, or recycling centres.
* Where possible plastic bags will be stored so that they can be recycled as bin liners or as packaging (an alternative to bubble wrap).
* Where possible paper will be shredded and used for packaging, garden mulch, or fed to the worms in the school’s worm farms.
* Waste disposal units will be used as little as possible. Food scraps will be composted or where practicable, used to support the school’s worm farms.
* Unwanted chemicals, used oil, batteries and other hazardous waste will be disposed of in accordance with local council regulations.

### Composting:

* Ākonga on the Homai Campus will be educated on the benefits of composting.
* Where composting is not appropriate, organic wastes will be kept separate from other rubbish.
* Wherever possible staff on the Homai Campus will utilise the school’s composting programme for their organic rubbish. Staff based at other sites are encouraged to use their site’s compositing system if there is one available.
* Composting bags will replace plastic rubbish bags where appropriate.

### Waste pits:

* BLENNZ will not dispose of waste into either a waste pit or offal hole. Should a waste pit be required, resource consent will be sought.
* BLENNZ will not bury any non organic material into the ground. Disposal of such materials will be as per the above guidelines.

### Protecting water quality – Stormwater

* Oil, paint or chemicals must never be tipped down the stormwater drain.
* All liquid wastes (e.g. water to wash the floors), will be tipped down a sink, toilet or gully trap.
* Paint brushes will be washed in an inside sink or a gully trap.
* Litter will not be dropped. Litter should be collected and disposed of through recycling wherever possible.
* Lawn clippings, leaves, dirt and general street pollution should be collected through sweeping, not through hosing down into stormwater drains.
* Wherever possible BLENNZ or staff vehicles will be washed on the grass.

### Emptying the swimming pool:

* The swimming pool is to be maintained in accordance with the BLENNZ Swimming Pool policy.
* Should the pool require emptying, wherever possible this should be into the municipal sewer. Should this not be an option, pool water is to be released to land and not directly into waterways.

### Wise use of water:

* BLENNZ will ensure water is not wasted through checking for leaks and repairing them promptly.
* Any unusual increases in water use will be investigated.
* Wherever possible rain water will be collected and re-used as grey water. Water tanks have been installed as part of the Homai Campus re-build. Water collected is used for toilet flushing.

## Supporting Documents:

[Ministry of Education: Environmental Education in NZ Schools](http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-resources/Education-for-sustainability/Tools-and-resources/Guidelines-for-Environmental-Education-in-New-Zealand-Schools)

BLENNZ Homai Campus Green Star Travel Plan & Parking Management Plan

Ministry for Environment’s Reduce Your Rubbish website [Ministry for the Environment: Reduce Rubbish](http://www.reducerubbish.govt.nz/)

Zero Waste New Zealand Trust’s website [Zero Waste Trust](http://www.zerowaste.co.nz/)

For water conservation tips: [Ecowater Conservation Tips](http://www.ecowater.co.nz/)

NZ Standards can be purchased from [NZ Standards](http://www.shop.standards.co.nz/)

Approved: 

Date: 8 November 2023

Next Review: 2026