



Not-for-profit preschool installs Tarkett flooring to improve air quality & hygiene

Project: Killarney Vale Preschool, NSW

Product: Tapiflex Excellence 80
AirMaster Tones
LuxCommercial Turf

A preschool on New South Wales' Central Coast has recently had several forms of Tarkett flooring installed to meet its goal of improving the health and wellbeing of its children and staff.

Killarney Vale Preschool director, Karen Currie, said that when she first came to the preschool five years ago, she was surprised at the amount of carpet used throughout the centre, which she suspected was exacerbating young children's asthma and allergies.

"The existing carpet which was all-throughout the preschool was aged and I was concerned about it affecting the children's health," said Ms Currie.

"It didn't seem very hygienic and I wasn't sure if it was creating illness, particularly amongst the kids suffering from asthma and allergies. As a director, you think about the children's well-being and take measures to protect it as much as possible.

"We have a lot of asthmatic children and so I started looking into asthma-appropriate flooring. "Then I saw the competition Tarkett was running with Asthma Australia – Healthy Schools for Healthy Kids – to win a \$15,000 flooring transformation."

Ms Currie then recalled that she had encountered Tarkett flooring in the past. "It jogged my memory; I had seen Tarkett vinyl flooring used in my previous employment about 15 years ago and was impressed by how good it looked and how durable it was.

"So then I started researching Tarkett more and found they had flooring technologies that provided the environmental qualities I was looking for, and also resonated with our preschool's ethos. So we entered the competition."

Killarney Vale Preschool is a parent managed education centre located in beautiful Tumbi Umbi bushland. As such, the preschool encourages children to spend as much time outdoors in nature as possible.

The preschool hoped to replicate their healthy outdoor environment, indoors. Tarkett senior product manager, Greg Widders, said that Killarney Vale Preschool's competition entry stood out because it demonstrated a strong understanding of the positive benefits of improving indoor air-quality and hygiene. "Our products directly related to their situation with a number of children with asthma and allergies at the centre and their response was the most thoughtful and genuine," said Mr Widders.



"We recommended our Tapiflex Excellence 80 vinyl flooring for the main children's area because it is designed for heavy-duty applications. It has a cushioning effect and improves acoustics, is also impervious to liquids and other materials, but most importantly is very easy-to-clean and maintain."

Ms Currie said Tarkett made the specification process easy and were amazing to work with. "They came out and had a look at our environment to see what would work. We could have gone with bright colours, but we like to focus on nature. We wanted to give the centre less of an institutionalised feeling and more of a cosy, home-style feel. So with the Tapiflex Excellence 80 vinyl flooring, we went with the natural timber colour of Modern Oak Grege, which has a realistic finish and fits-in with our environment.

"The same old carpet in the centre extended to our staff offices and Tarkett suggested that, with air-quality and health concerns in mind, we should go with their DESSO AirMaster Earth carpet tile, which traps fine dust particles to keep them out of the air making it perfect for asthma and allergy sufferers.

"The AirMaster carpet also looks amazing. You can't even tell it's a carpet tile because you can't see the joins. It also has this nice tufted, carpet-like texture and we chose a lovely dark grey colour. And if one of them gets destroyed, for whatever reason, we can easily replace just that section – perfect for childcare environments."

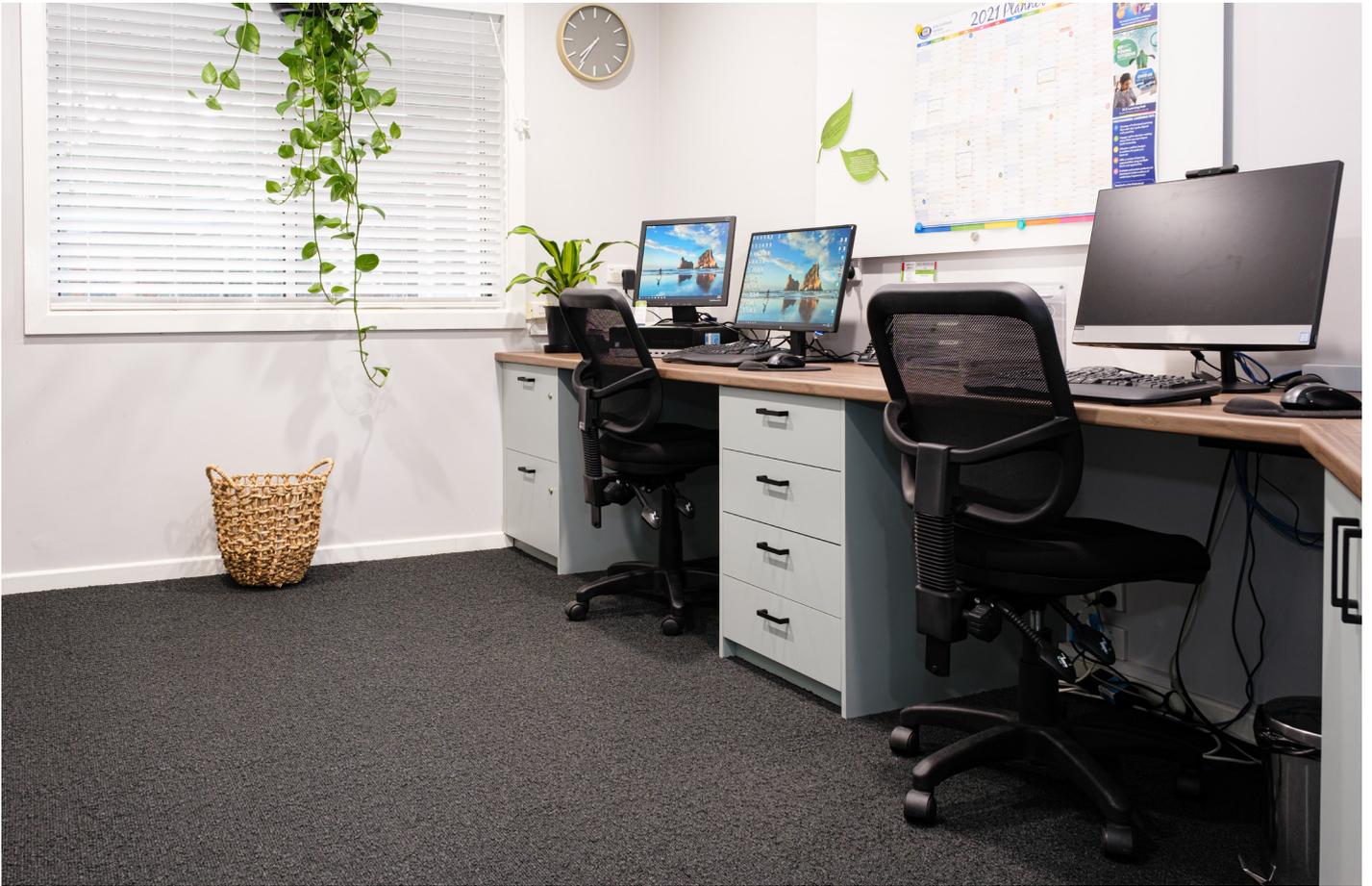
Tarkett left the installation of the Tapiflex Excellence 80 vinyl flooring to local experts, JAG Floors. Project Manager Rhett Rockman said the job went smoothly and that he favours working with Tapiflex Excellence 80. "My guys went in, picked up the old carpet, ground and prepped the floor and then laid-down the vinyl.

"I've worked with thousands of square metres of Tapiflex Excellence 80 and it's an easy product to work with – having two-metre-wide runs, which helps. It does everything right, just as it's supposed to," said Mr Rockman.

"I've used a lot of commercial sheet vinyl in my career – it's what we specialise in – and Tarkett is the best manufacturer that I know of. There's never any drama. I wouldn't know what the warranties look like because I've never had to use them.

"Also, it looks good when it's finished. It gives you some job satisfaction when you see how well it has come up with a nice, flat finish."

Killarney Vale Preschool's Karen Currie said the Healthy Schools for Healthy Kids prize afforded it the ability to also buy some Tarkett LuxCommercial artificial turf, for outside. "With all the savings Tarkett provided, we wanted to give-back to them, so we bought some LuxCommercial artificial turf to make all our areas uniformly Tarkett," said Ms Currie.



"It's a lovely area with a soft fall where the children can go out and play, even if it's been wet outside, and it looks just like natural grass – it doesn't look fake at all."

Asked what her favourite things about the Tarkett flooring are, Ms Currie had many things to say. "I love the look of the Tapiflex Excellence 80 vinyl, it's beautiful. It has a 'peaceful' feeling and it's really nice for the staff and parents to walk on."

"I feel really good about the carpet and vinyl and the outdoor turf. It's given me peace-of-mind to know that the kids are in the best-possible indoor environment and that benefits their health and wellbeing."

"Also, given its cleanability and durability – we know it will be here in the centre for a really long time."

Ms Currie reports that since the Tarkett installations she has had interest from other preschools, who have attended Killarney Vale and been highly impressed with the results.

