

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Clothing and Footwear



Introduction

Children need protective, comfortable and appropriate clothing and footwear to explore their environments. Clothing needs to protect children from injury and sun exposure while promoting self-help abilities. Appropriate footwear will fit a child's foot correctly and ensure comfort. Educators will also dress to prevent injury and sun exposure and will be encouraged to dress in a professional and respectful manner.

Goals – What are we going to do?

The Education and Care Service will:

- Develop and maintain a sun protection policy.
- Follow the Guidelines set by Cancer Council Australia to reduce UV exposure throughout the year.
- Encourage both educators and children to wear appropriate clothing for the weather conditions, work environment and social/cultural circumstances.
- Aim to ensure the comfort, protection, dignity and rights of children at all times of the day by recommending appropriate clothing and footwear guidelines.
- Provide information to families about suitable clothing for play experiences, sun protection and safety.
- Respect cultural differences and individual family and educator needs when recommending suitable clothing.

Children being clothed appropriately enables them to play without risk of sunburn and serious injury caused by inappropriate footwear or clothing. Children are more at ease, comfortable, and less anxious when they are dressed for warmth during winter or not over-dressed during summer or wearing safe footwear when climbing outdoor play equipment or participating in physical activity.

Clothing is a way of expressing our culture, personality and individuality. The clothes children wear can affect the development of their independence, self-help skills and participation in play-based activities in early education and care services.

We understand that young children are developing their self-concept and individuality and may be intent on wearing accessories or clothing items to our Service. We respect their choices and encourage their independence; however, some clothing types or accessories may be dangerous and hinder their participation in physical activities. For example, dresses or skirts that have long hems may cause tripping when children attempt to use play equipment or bikes. Long necklaces, drawstrings on jumpers and long ribbons can also be hazardous to children's safety if they become caught in equipment.

We request that parents talk to their child about the choice of clothes and activities they will be involved in at our Service and help them to choose clothes that will be practical.

Parents may decide to send additional clothes in their child's bag to assist educators ensure their safety when they are participating in physical activities that require clothing to be more practical.

To facilitate pretend play and celebrate different cultural experiences, children may be invited to dress up according to a theme or particular cultural celebration. Our educators will communicate with families to ensure all children have the opportunity to engage in these activities by wearing appropriate clothing.

When dressing their child in 'dress up' clothes, parents are asked to ensure their child's footwear is appropriate for play-based learning at the service and ensure clothing is sun safe.

Strategies – To achieve our goals

Role	Authority/Responsibility For
Approved Provider/ Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure that a sun protection policy is developed and maintained ➤ Ensure that educators are provided with personal protective equipment (eg. gloves) to facilitate cleaning and health protection measures ➤ Provide information for educators about suitable clothing and footwear expectations for the education and care work environment ➤ Ensure educators are aware of the sun protection policy ➤ Provide information for families about suitable clothing and footwear. This information will also be available at the education and care service using a variety of communication strategies including newsletters, brochures, websites and poster ➤ Ensure educators are aware and abide by the Sun Safety Policy ➤ Ensure a culturally inclusive environment by conveying respect and understanding of families' cultural traditions regarding clothing ➤ Provide information to educators and staff about children's cultural dress requirements.
Early Childhood Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consult with families about the individual needs of children with respect to different values and beliefs associated with clothing and footwear ➤ Monitor children's clothing and footwear to ensure compliance with the Sun Protection Policy and to support the safety, comfort and well-being of every child ➤ Consider clothing and footwear needs associated with excursions or planned learning experiences and communicate clearly with families about the need for extraordinary protective clothing requirements ➤ Provide protective clothing, such as paint shirts, for messy play experiences. Children will be encouraged by educators to wear protective clothing during messy play ➤ Encourage children to remove shoes and heavy/ excess layers of clothing during rest times and to reflect the room temperature, as recommended practice by SIDS and Kids ➤ Encourage children to utilise their self-help skills as appropriate to put on and remove clothing and shoes to meet their needs. For younger children, educators will use observation and monitoring skills to ensure children's clothing and footwear is appropriate for the environment and weather conditions ➤ Take off children's jumpers and jackets with hoods during rest time to ensure children's safety ➤ Encourage children to use their self-help skills where appropriate to put on and remove clothing and shoes to meet their needs. Educators will observe and

	<p>monitor younger children to ensure their clothing and footwear is appropriate for the environment and weather conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monitor the UV rating to ensure children are dressed appropriately for the weather and are adequately protected (e.g., long sleeve shirts, appropriate footwear) ➤ Discuss clothing with children: for example, the need to wear hats for sun protection ➤ Model appropriate clothing: for example, wearing hats and sun safe clothing ➤ Encourage children to make choices in relation to getting dressed and the clothing they wear ➤ Respect children's privacy and modesty when having children change their clothes or dressing themselves, ensuring that individual and/ or cultural needs and preferences are understood and catered for ➤ Show respect for children and appreciate their individuality by allowing them to make some decisions about the clothes they wear.
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Communicate with educators about their child's individual clothing needs- (e.g.: cultural diversity, disability, clothing sensitivity – labels or fabrics, fine motor skills) ➤ Provide spare clothing in children's bags to allow for dirty or soiled clothing and changing weather conditions. (This includes supplying a spare set of socks, and shoes if possible) ➤ Dress children appropriately for play and the weather, including footwear and an appropriate hat ➤ Ensure their child is clothed in an appropriate manner which will allow them to explore and play freely and not restrict them using equipment while at play ➤ Ensure clothing also allows easy access for toileting: i.e., elasticised trousers or track pants rather than buttons, zips, belts, etc. ➤ Not dress their child in good/expense clothing where there is a chance, they will get dirty or stained ➤ Ensure children are appropriately protected from the sun - please refer to <i>Sun Protection</i> policy for further directives on clothing and sun safe hats (preschool provided hat or bucket, broad-brimmed or legionnaire's hat) ➤ Ensure children's clothing accommodates the weather conditions. For example, be loose and cool in summer to prevent overheating and warm enough for cold weather, including outdoor play. At all times educators will monitor children to ensure they are appropriately dressed for all weather, play experiences, rest and sleep routines ➤ Ensure children have appropriate footwear that enables them to play comfortably and not cause safety concerns. Children are encouraged to not attend the service wearing thongs or open / loose shoes. This type of footwear does not support the foot as sand, water and sweat can cause the foot to slip causing injury. ➤ Ensure all clothing and belongings are clearly labelled with the child's name (not just initials)

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| | ➤ Be familiar with their child's clothing fabric to minimise possible allergies and reactions. |
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Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

Management and staff will monitor and review the effectiveness of the Clothing and Footwear policy regularly. Updated information will be incorporated as needed.

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every 12 months.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with Regulation 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

Links to other policies:

Excursion Policy

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness

Sun Protection

Code of Conduct for Staff Members

Sleep, Rest and Relaxation

Supervision

Interactions with Children

Toileting & Nappy Change

Complies with:

NQS

Quality Area 2		Children's health and safety
Standard	2.1	Health
Element	2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort
Standard	2.2	Safety
Element	2.2.1	Supervision
Quality Area 4		Staffing arrangements
Standard	4.2	Professionalism
Element	4.2.2	Professional standards
Quality Area 5		Relationships with children
Standard	5.1	Relationships between educators and children
Element	5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions
Element	5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child

National Regulations

Reg	106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
Reg	168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Reg	168 (2)(ii)	Policies and procedures are required in relation to sun protection
Reg	170	Policies and procedures are to be followed

Sources:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- ACECQA's Guide to the National Quality Framework
- Red Nose: <https://rednose.org.au>
- Cancer Council Australia: www.cancer.org.au
- Podiatry Care: www.podiatrycare.com.au
- Raising Children Network: www.raisingchildren.net.au
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth).