

Protective Clothing Policy

Quality Area: 2: Children's Health and Safety

Standard: 2.1 Each Child's health is promoted

Element: 2.1.1: Each Child's health needs are supported

Purpose

This policy aims to clearly define:

- Guidelines for parents/guardians and staff regarding appropriate clothing to be worn by children attending Bush Kinder in various weather conditions to ensure their safety and wellbeing (including a description of clothing which should not be worn)
- Guidelines regarding the change of clothes requirements for Bush Kinder participants
- The appropriate mechanism for communication of the protective clothing requirements for Bush Kinder sessions to parents/guardians

Policy Statement

1. Values

Heathmont East Preschool is committed to:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment for children participating in the Bush Kinder program
- Facilitating a Bush Kinder experience in a variety of (safe) weather conditions, including rain, to allow children to experience nature across as broad a spectrum as possible and without compromising the safety of the participants
- Ensuring clothing worn by children in the program allows for free movement and does not obstruct the children in their activities in the Bush Kinder setting, through assisting them in remaining comfortable.
- Facilitate communication with parents and guardians to ensure compliance with this policy

2. Scope

This policy applies to parents, staff, committee members, authorised persons, volunteers and students on placement working at Heathmont East Preschool.

3. Background and Legislation

Background

Heathmont East Preschool's Bush Kinder program is intended to operate across a broad spectrum of weather conditions, allowing children to experience nature and its elements across the seasons. Whatever the weather, children are encouraged to take the lead in playing, exploring and learning in Nature or natural environment.

For this reason, there are some clothing requirements in the Bush Kinder setting that may differ from requirements in a centre-based environment.

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation may include but is not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Law 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007.

4. Definitions

DEFINITIONS

Protective and appropriate clothing and footwear

It is important that Bush Kinder participants wear appropriate and protective clothing and footwear which:

- allows children to move freely and undertake activities such as climbing, balancing, running
- keeps children warm and dry in cold and/or wet weather
- protects children from the damaging effects of the sun, UV rays in warm weather and high UV conditions.
- prevents sunburn, bites, scratches and stings. Even in warm weather, long sleeve tops and long pants are recommended - this clothing should be loose fitting and light.
- Where possible is made from natural fabrics which allow the body to breathe and is comfortable against the skin
- In the case of footwear, keeps feet and toes covered and has a flexible sole to allow children to climb and balance on uneven surfaces

The following table provides examples of recommended clothing, clothing which is not recommended and unacceptable clothing:

	Warm Weather	Cold Weather / Rain
Recommended clothing and footwear	Light loose fitting long sleeve tops and long pants, broad brimmed kinder hat, closed toe shoes	Wet weather covers, long pants, long sleeved top, (supplied by Kinder) beanie, waterproof gloves, thermals in very cold weather
Not recommended	short sleeved tops, long skirts or dresses, shorts	Skirts, dresses (incompatible with Wet weather covers)
Unacceptable clothing and footwear	Open toe shoes, sandals, thongs, crocs, singlet tops	Non-waterproof outer clothing. (A Wet weather cover on top of non-waterproof clothing is recommended).

Change of clothes: All children participating in Bush Kinder are required to bring a change of clothes and footwear as these may become wet and muddy, and a plastic bag. It is recommended that the spare clothing include:

- spare top and bottoms of appropriate thickness/weight for the weather on the day
- spare underpants (and singlet in winter)
- two pairs of socks
- one pair of gumboots (it is not recommended that gumboots are worn at all times due to the restriction of movement they impose).

Heathmont East Preschool policy and procedures

Heathmont East Pre-School is responsible for:

- implementing and maintaining a Protective Clothing Policy that clarifies the appropriate clothing children must wear Bush Kinder in various weather conditions to ensure their safety and wellbeing (including a description of clothing that should not be worn)
- all parents being aware of this policy and are provided access to the policy at orientation sessions, in written Bush Kinder material and on the Kinder website, and made available on request

Nominated supervisor, Teachers, educators and other staff are responsible for:

- ensuring all children being dropped off to Bush Kinder are wearing appropriate clothing in line with this policy. If children are wearing inappropriate clothing, staff must:
 - highlight to the parent dropping off the child which clothing items are inappropriate and why
 - determine if the change of clothing brought by that child is appropriate and request the parent change the clothes on the child if need be
 - if the clothing can put the child's safety and wellbeing at risk and there is no suitable clothing, inform the parent that the child is not able to attend Bush Kinder
- assisting changing the child's clothing if need be
- encouraging children to tell a staff member if they need help with clothing or feel uncomfortable
- during orientation sessions, advising parents of the clothing requirements for Bush Kinder
- checking the contents of the Bush Kinder 'on-site kit' before the next day's session to ensure it contains waterproofs.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- ensuring their child wears protective and appropriate clothing to Bush Kinder in line with this policy
- changing their child's clothing as instructed by the teacher if necessary, so the child can participate in the Bush Kinder session
- ensuring their child's change of clothes complies with this policy
- reading and being familiar with the policy
- bringing relevant issues to the attention of both staff and committee
- changing children into and out of the waterproofs at the start and end of each session. (if necessary)

Evaluation

To assess whether the policy has achieved the values Heathmont East Preschool will:

- Seek feedback regarding this policy and its implementation with parents of children participating in the Bush Kinder program. This can be facilitated through discussions and the annual centre survey.
- Ask staff to share their experiences and observations in relation to the effectiveness of this policy.
- Regularly review the policy and centre practices to ensure they are compliant with any new legislation, research or best practice procedures.

Sources and other related policies

Sources Kindergarten policies

- Excursion & Service Events Policy
- Bush Kinder Extreme Weather Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Bush Kinder Identification and Visibility Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Bush Kinder Identification and Visibility Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Bush Kinder Snake Awareness Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Bush Kinder Dog Awareness Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Bush Kinder Mini Beast Sting or Bite First Aid Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Bush Kinder Play Benefits and Risk Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Bush Kinder Medical Emergency Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Occupational Health & Safety Policy
- Sun Protection Policy
- Water Safety Policy
- Incident, Illness, Trauma & Illness Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy
- Child Safe Environment Policy

Attachments

Nil

Authorisation

This policy was approved and passed by the Heathmont East Preschool Committee of Management and adopted by Heathmont East Preschool on:

5/6/2024

Authorised by: Alison Uldrich [President]

Authorised by: Sarah Black [Nominated Supervisor]

Review Date: June 2027