



Protective Clothing (Bush Kinder Specific)

Policy

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 a bush or natural environment.

Bush Kindergarten 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.
- Facilitating communication to parents and guardians to ensure compliance with this policy

Strategies

This policy aims to:

- Set out clear 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)
- Provide clear guidelines regarding the change of clothes requirements for Bush Kinder participants
- Provide an appropriate mechanism for communication of the protective clothing requirements for Bush Kinder sessions to parents/guardians

Guidelines

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

Protective and appropriate clothing & 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/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

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- 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 hat*, closed toe shoes	Puddlesuit*, long pants, long sleeved top, beanie*, waterproof gloves, thermals in very cold weather
Not recommended	short sleeved tops, long skirts or dresses, shorts	Skirts, dresses (incompatible with puddlesuits)
Unacceptable clothing and footwear	Open toe shoes, sandals, thongs, crocs, singlet tops	Non-waterproof clothing. [A puddlesuit on top of non-waterproof clothing is acceptable].

* UV long sleeve polo shirts, plastic pants and rain jackets will be provided by Bush Kinder

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. 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)
- 2 pairs of socks
- 1 pair of gumboots (it is not recommended that gumboots are worn at all times due to the restriction of movement they impose).
- The Bush Kinder 'on-site kit' will contain some spare clothing, for general use.

Procedures

General

Approved Provider - SHINE BRIGHT EYM staff is responsible for:

- Implementing and maintaining a Protective Clothing Policy which provides clarity to parents/guardians and staff as to the appropriate clothing children are required to wear to Bush Kinder in various weather conditions to ensure their safety and wellbeing (including a description of clothing which should not be worn)
- All parents/guardians being aware of this policy and are provided access to the policy at orientation sessions, in written Bush Kinder material and made available upon request.
- Supplying UV protective long sleeve polo shirts and waterproof jackets
- Ensuring staff are appropriately educated on procedures in the event that children are not wearing compliant clothing
- Ensuring the Bush Kinder 'on-site kit' contains spare clothing

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all children being dropped off to Bush Kinder are wearing appropriate clothing in line with this policy. If inappropriate clothing is worn, staff are to:
 1. Highlight to the parent/guardian dropping off the child which clothing is inappropriate and the reasons for it;

2. 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 (or draw on spare clothing in the Bush Kinder 'on-site kit' if available);
 3. If the clothing has the potential to put the child's safety and wellbeing at risk and there is no suitable alternative clothing, refuse the child's entry to Bush Kinder
- Checking children's clothing periodically, asking children if their clothes are wet, on wet days, and changing from the child's change of clothing if required, keeping in mind the children's level of need and balancing with the need to not interrupt play where possible.
 - Encouraging children to tell a staff member if they have wet clothing
 - During orientation sessions, advising parents/guardians of the clothing requirements for Bush Kinder
 - Checking the contents of the Bush Kinder 'on site kit' prior to the next day's session to ensure it contains spare clothing

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Ensuring protective and appropriate clothing is worn to Bush Kinder by their child in line with this policy
- Changing their child's clothing if required, as instructed by the teacher to enable their child to participate in the Bush Kinder session.
- Ensure their child's change of clothes includes items as set out in this policy
- Reading and being familiar with the policy
- Bringing relevant issues to the attention of both staff and committee

Scope

- This policy applies to children, parents/guardians, staff, committee members, authorised persons, volunteers and students on placement working at Bush Kindergarten.

Relevant legislation includes but is not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

5. Sources and related centre policies

Centre policies (needs to be revised following all policy completion)

- Extreme Weather (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Communication
- Hygiene
- Inclusion and equity
- Program participation
- Supervision
- Excursions and centre events

Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes the Approved Provider will:

- Seek feedback regarding this policy and its implementation with parents/guardians 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 recorded 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.

Attachments

Nil

Authorisation

This policy was approved by SHINE BRIGHT EYM

Review date: February 2017