



## **BUSH KINDER - Protective Clothing Policy**

### **PURPOSE**

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

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

#### **1. VALUES**

Shine Bright Bush Kindergarten Programs are 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

#### **2. SCOPE**

This policy applies to children, parents/guardians, staff, volunteers and students on placement working at Shine Bright Bush Kindergarten sites.

#### **3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION**

##### **Background**

Shine Bright Bush Kinder programs are 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.

For this reason, there are some particular 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 and Regulations
- National Quality Standards – Quality Area 2
- Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004;

#### **4. DEFINITIONS**

**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.
- **Protective and appropriate clothing & footwear:** It is important that Bush Kinder participants wear appropriate and protective clothing and footwear which allows them to move freely and undertake activities such as climbing, balancing, running and keeps children warm and dry in cold/wet weather

#### **Clothing should:**

- Protect children from the damaging effects of the sun, UV rays in the warm weather and in the high UV conditions
- 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

#### **Footwear should;**

- keep feet and toes covered at all times
- have flexible soles to allow children to climb and balance on uneven surfaces
- be weather appropriate

#### **Waterproofs should;**

- Consist of a light rainproof suit which can be worn over clothing
- If not a suit, than a jacket with a hood, pants or overall which can zip up over clothing
- Be weather appropriate

## **5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES**

- Extreme Weather Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Delivery and Collection of Children policy
- Hygiene Policy
- Sun Protection Policy
- Water Safety Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness Policy
- Excursions, Service Events and Regular Outing Policy
- Healthy Eating, Oral Healthy and Active Play Policy
- Shine Bright Bush Kinder Policies

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

	<b>Warm Weather</b>	<b>Cold Weather / Rain</b>
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

## **PROCEDURES**

### **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 relevant 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.
- Ensuring staff are appropriately educated on procedures in the event that children are not wearing compliant clothing

**Staff are responsible for:**

- Ensuring that all children involved in Bush Kinder are wearing appropriate clothing in line with this policy.
- Ensuring that all staff are wearing appropriate clothing in line with this policy.
- All parents/guardians being aware of this policy and are provided access to the policy at orientation session and made available upon request
- Ensuring the Bush Kinder 'on-site kit' contains spare clothing, waterproofs and gumboots

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, advise the parent or guardian that the child may not participate in Bush Kinder for that session.
- 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 Shine Bright EYM

## **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 staff, parents/guardians of children participating in the Bush Kinder program
- Regularly review the policy and centre practices to ensure they are compliant with any new legislation, research or best practice procedures.

## **Attachments**

Nil

## **Authorisation**

SHINE BRIGHT EYM approved this policy January 2022

**Review date:** 2025