



# BOURKE AND DISTRICT CHILDREN'S SERVICES

## QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDRENS HEALTH AND SAFETY

### POLICY NAME: CLOTHING AND COMFORT

#### POLICY STATEMENT

Children need protective, comfortable and appropriate clothing and footwear to explore their environment and participate freely in experiences. Clothing needs to protect children from injury and sun exposure whilst 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, being positive role models for children.

#### BACKGROUND

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. Exploring and getting messy is an integral part of childhood and children cannot freely express themselves and fully explore the experiences provided if they are concerned about getting their clothes dirty and we ask that parents consider this when choosing the clothes that their child will wear to the service.

#### OVERALL STRATEGIES/HOW WILL IT BE DONE?

##### CLOTHING CHOICES

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 particular 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.

##### SUITABLE CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR

We encourage all families to send their children to the service with the below clothing and footwear:

- Safe sleepwear (if applicable).
- Sun protective clothing (sun safe hat provided by the service).
- Clothing that is comfortable, does not restrict movement and doesn't cause any safety concerns.
- Clothing that can be easily removed for nappy changing and toileting (e.g. clothes that are easy to pull down rather than clothes with belts or buttons).
- Clothing and footwear to facilitate self-help (e.g. velcro straps on shoes rather than laces if these are easier for the child to do themselves).
- Clothing which can be worn during messy play activities.
- Appropriate clothing for the weather conditions (we encourage warmer/cooler clothing options to be kept available in the child's bag in case of a change in weather conditions).
- Safe, sturdy, enclosed footwear for play experiences including climbing and running.

##### SPECIAL CLOTHES/DRESS UP

To facilitate pretend play and celebrate different events, children may be invited to dress up according to a theme or particular 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. Spare 'dress up' clothing will also be available to all children at the service to wear if they choose.

##### COMFORT TOYS/SECURITY ITEMS

Many children have a 'security' item that soothes them and helps them to cope throughout a busy day. Security items may include items such as a special blanket, dummy, soft toy, or even a strip of satin ribbon from a blanket etc. We recommend that if children have a comfort toy or security item that it is labelled with the child's name and bought to the service each day. When not required or in use we will ensure that the child knows that it has been put safely in their bag. Parents/guardians are encouraged to regularly discuss the use of comfort toys/security items with educators as their child's needs change.

#### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



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#### THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISORS WILL:

- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Ensure educators (including casual staff) receive information and induction training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of the Clothing and Comfort policy, their responsibilities in implementing it, and any changes that are made over time.
- Ensure students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy.
- Ensure the Sun Safety Policy includes information regarding sun smart clothing choices.
- Ensure that educators are provided with Personal Protective Equipment (e.g., gloves, goggles etc.) as required to facilitate cleaning and protect their health and safety.
- Provide information for educators about suitable clothing and footwear expectations for the education and care work environment during induction.
- Provide information for families about suitable clothing and footwear for their child to wear at the service during orientation and within the parent handbook.
- Ensure a culturally inclusive environment by conveying respect and understanding of families' cultural traditions regarding clothing.

#### EDUCATORS WILL:

- Consult and communicate with families about the individual needs of children with respect to different values and beliefs associated with clothing and footwear.
- Consult with families about the clothing needs of children with sensory and tactile sensitivities, (free of seams, tags, buttons or textures).
- Monitor children's clothing and footwear to ensure compliance with the Sun Safety Policy and to support the safety, comfort, and wellbeing 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 aprons, for messy play experiences and painting. Children will be encouraged by educators to wear protective clothing during messy and water play however they will not be forced, nor will they be excluded from the activity if they choose to not wear the protective clothing.
- Monitor the temperature of the sleep environment and address children's clothing needs accordingly.
- Remove babies heavy or excess layers of clothing and shoes during rest times and encourage older children to do the same, as recommended practice by 'Red Nose'.
- Remove jumpers and jackets with hoods during rest time to ensure children's safety.
- Monitor the weather and adjust babies and toddler's clothes accordingly and assist pre-schoolers to be aware of the weather in relation to appropriate clothing and ensure they are suitably attired.
- 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 monitor younger children to ensure their clothing and footwear is appropriate for the environment and weather conditions.
- 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.
- 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 that they wear, provided that they are safe.

#### FAMILIES WILL:

- Dress children in suitable clothing and footwear as outlined in this policy.
- Communicate with educators about their child's individual clothing needs- (e.g.: cultural diversity, disability, clothing). Understand that children's clothing could get dirty or stained and keep this in mind when choosing what clothes their child will wear to the service.
- 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).



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- Ensure all clothing and belongings are clearly labelled with the child's name (not just initials).

#### CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our Clothing and Comfort Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators, and management.

#### CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Standard 1	Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture
Standard 2	Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
Standard 3	Families and communities are informed and involved
Standard 4	Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account
Standard 7	Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training
Standard 10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe

#### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

##### QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDRENS HEALTH AND SAFETY

2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

##### QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.

#### EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS AND NATIONAL LAW

155	Interactions with children
156	Interactions in groups
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
168(2)(ii)	Policies and procedures are required in relation to sun protection
170	Policies and procedures must be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures

#### STATUTORY LEGISLATION & CONSIDERATIONS

[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 \(Amended 2023\)](#)

[Education and Care Services National Regulations \(Amended 2023\)](#)

[Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)

#### SOURCES

Acknowledgement to Community Early Learning Australia and Childcare Centre Desktop.  
 Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). (2014).  
 Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). (2023). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).  
 Australian Government Department of Education. (2022). [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia](#). V2.0, 2022.  
 Cancer Council Australia: [www.cancer.org.au](http://www.cancer.org.au)  
 Community Child Care Co-Operative  
 Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).  
 Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017). (Amended 2023).  
 Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2023).  
 National Health and Medical Research Council. (2013). *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early*



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childhood education and care services (5th Ed.). Australia: Commonwealth of Australia. NSW Government. (n.d.).

Podiatry Care: [www.podiatrycare.com.au](http://www.podiatrycare.com.au)

Raising Children Network: <http://raisingchildren.net.au>

Red Nose: <https://rednose.com.au>

Revised National Quality Standard. (Amended 2023).

#### RELATED POLICIES

- Family Participation and Communication Policy
- Lost Property Policy
- Nappy Change and Toileting Policy
- Safe Sleep and Rest Policy
- Sun Safety Policy
- Supervision Policy

#### RELATED DOCUMENTS

POLICY AUTHORISED BY	Prue Ritchie	POLICY REVIEWED	June 2024
NEXT REVIEW DATE	June 2025		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New policy format</li> <li>• Child Safe Standards added</li> <li>• Regulation amendments incorporated</li> <li>• Additional sections added:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Special clothes/Dress up</li> <li>○ Comfort toys/Security items</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
PREVIOUS REVIEW			
POLICY AUTHORISED BY	Prue Ritchie	DATE	January 2021