

BUSH KINDER (EXPLORERS) PROTECTIVE CLOTHING POLICY

1. AUTHORISATION

This policy was first adopted by the Pre-School committee in November 2018.

This policy was reviewed on 09/08/2022

2. REVIEW DATE

This policy is due for review in December 2024

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all committee, staff, volunteers and parents of the Kangaroo Ground Pre-School Inc.

BUSH KINDER PROTECTIVE CLOTHING POLICY

NQS: Quality Area 2

Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Set out clear guidelines for parents 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 the participants of the Explorers Program
- Provide an appropriate mechanism for communication of the protective clothing requirements for the outdoor session to parents.

Policy statement

1. Values

Kangaroo Ground Pre-school is committed to:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment for children participating in the Explorer's program
- Facilitating an outdoor 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 maximum comfort, free movement and does not obstruct the children in their activities in the Bush Kinder setting
- Facilitating communication to parents to ensure compliance with this policy

2. Scope

This policy applies to children, parents, staff, committee members, authorised persons, volunteers and students on placement working at Kangaroo Ground Pre-school.

3. Background and legislation

Kangaroo Ground Pre-school's Explorer's 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.

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

Relevant legislation may include but is not limited to:

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

4. Definitions

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, puddle jumping
- 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
- in the case of footwear; keeps feet and toes covered and has a flexible and gripped 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

Weather Conditions	Warm/Hot	Cold/Wet
Recommended Clothing and Footwear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light, loose fitting long sleeved top and long pants • Closed toe shoes • T shirts are acceptable if sunscreen has been applied to arms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterproof Jacket/raincoat • Long pants • Long sleeved top • Beanie • Waterproof gloves • Warm socks • Gumboots • Thermals are recommended in very cold conditions
Not Recommended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long skirts or dresses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skirts and Dresses
Unacceptable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open toe shoes, Sandals, Thongs , Crocs • Singlet tops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-waterproof outer clothing

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).

5. Sources and related policies

Kindergarten policies

- Excursion & Service Events Policy
- Bush Kinder Extreme Weather Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Bush Kinder Snake Awareness Policy (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Occupational Health & Safety Policy
- Incident, Illness, Trauma & Illness Policy
- Clothing Policy
- Sun Protection Policy
- Water Safety Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy
- Child Safe Environment Policy

Procedures

General

The Committee is responsible for:

- Implementing and maintaining a Protective Clothing Policy which provides clarity to parents and staff as to the appropriate clothing children are required to wear to the outdoor session in various weather conditions to ensure their safety and wellbeing (including a description of clothing which should not be worn)
- All parents being aware of this policy and are provided access to the policy at orientation sessions, in writing, on the website 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 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:
 - Highlight to the parent dropping off the child which clothing is inappropriate and the reasons for it;
 - 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 has the potential to put the child's safety and wellbeing at risk and there is no suitable alternative clothing, inform parent that the child is not able to attend the outdoor session (child may be able to return to the service in the Joey's program if staff ratios permit)
 - Assisting changing the child's change of 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 the Explorers Session.

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring protective and appropriate clothing is worn to outdoor sessions by their child in line with this policy
- Changing their child's clothing as instructed by the teacher to enable their child to participate in the Bush Kinder session if required.

- Ensuring 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
- Changing children into and out of the waterproofs at the start and end of each session

Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes the committee 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.

Attachments

Nil.

Authorisation

Review Date

This policy will be reviewed every two years and is next due for formal Committee review in December 2024, unless deemed necessary earlier.