

Clothing and Footwear Policy

Quick reference: clothes | footwear | what to wear | temperature | sun protection | safety | clothing fabric | labelling | respect for cultural diversity | messy play | WHS | sleep and rest | neurodiversity

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

- (1) To set out our expectations regarding children's clothing and footwear with the aim of ensuring their safety and comfort
- (2) This policy helps us to comply with the *National Regulations* (s 168(2)), which requires us to have policies and procedures related to children's health and safety, and sun protection

SCOPE

- (1) This policy applies to:
 - 'Staff': the approved provider, nominated supervisor, paid workers, volunteers, work placement students, and third parties (e.g., contractors, subcontractors, self-employed persons, employees of a labour hire company) who carry out work on behalf of our service
 - Children in our care, their parents, families and care providers
- (2) This policy only covers clothing and footwear for children, not staff or other adults

DEFINITIONS

- (3) The following definitions apply to this policy and related procedures:
 - 'Parents' includes guardians and persons who have parental responsibilities for the child under a decision or order of court
 - 'Staff' refers to the approved provider (unless otherwise indicated), paid employees, volunteers, students, and third parties who are covered in the scope of this policy

POLICY STATEMENT

General clothing requirements

- (4) Children should wear clothes that:
- Allow them to move comfortably and safely, participate in active play, and be safe for rest and sleep
 - Are not too loose or tight
 - Are free from cords, ribbons, drawstrings or any other accessory that can pull tight around the child's neck and pose a choking or entanglement risk
 - Give them protection from the sun
 - Are appropriate to the weather and temperature
 - Cover the child in such a way that maintains their privacy and dignity
 - Are clearly labelled with the child's name
 - Are suitable for active and messy play (i.e., not their best clothes)
 - Allow for easy dressing and toileting for younger children (e.g., elasticated waist bands rather than buttons, zips or belts; tops with large necks; cardigans; bigger buttons rather than small buttons or studs)
 - Are low fire danger
- (5) Educators will encourage children to wear aprons for art and messy or water play
- (6) Educators will inform families in advance if children need specific clothing or footwear for excursions, or other planned activities or events such as cultural celebrations

General footwear requirements

- (7) Children should wear footwear that:
- Is stable and supportive with a good grip
 - Fits comfortably and securely (i.e., not too loose or small)
 - Is closed toe
 - Allows them to participate in active play such as running, climbing, jumping etc
 - They can put on and take off according to their age and stage of development (e.g., velcro fastenings or slip-on shoes for younger children)

- (8) Children should not wear thongs, slides, high-heeled shoes, clogs, shoes with slippery or flimsy soles, or backless shoes that might cause them to trip

Sun safety

- (9) To comply with our Sun Safety and Heat Protection Policy, children should wear:
- A UV protective, legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket style hat when outdoors
 - Clothes that cover as much skin as possible, including on their chest and back, shoulders, upper arms and upper legs (preference is to cover lower arms and legs too, but this may not be practical)
 - Where practical, close-fitting, wrap around sunglasses that meet Australian Standards and cover as much of the eye area as possible
- (10) Children should not wear caps, visors, or sleeveless or backless tops

Dressing for the weather

- (11) In cold weather, children should wear warm layers (e.g., jackets, long pants, hats, beanies - if necessary)
- (12) In wet weather, children should bring raincoats and gumboots
- (13) In warm weather, children should wear light, breathable clothes and bring a jacket or jumper in their bag to be ready for cool changes
- (14) Educators will monitor children's clothing and footwear to ensure it is suitable for the weather

Sleep and rest

- (15) Educators must ensure that children are dressed safely for sleep and rest
- (16) Children must be:
- Wearing well-fitting clothes that are not too loose or tight
 - Not wearing clothes that may obstruct or cause strangulation or suffocation, including: crocheted jackets, jewellery, teething necklaces, headwear, or clothes with hoods, capes, ties, ribbons, strings, cords, loose buttons or toggles
 - Dressed appropriately for the temperature of the room, without heavy or excess layers of clothing. Children should be comfortably warm, not too hot or too cold

- Helped to remove shoes if they are unable to do so themselves

Jewellery and sensory chewy necklaces

- (17) Children should not wear decorative jewellery at our service
- (18) Children may wear cultural or religious jewellery, or safe sensory chewy necklaces that are designed to support children with neurodiversity
- (19) If a child arrives wearing jewellery that is not allowed, educators may remove it and give it to the child's parent at collection time

Supporting children and families

- (20) Staff will be aware that families have diverse needs, values and beliefs associated with clothing, jewellery and footwear, and some children will have disabilities or sensory sensitivities that may dictate their choice of fabrics, fits and fastenings
- (21) We will respect all families' cultural, religious and personal preferences regarding their child's clothing and footwear, provided they do not pose a risk to a child's safety or prevent them from participating in activities
- (22) Educators will support children's autonomy by respecting their clothing and footwear choices where they do not pose a risk to themselves or others or stop them from participating in our activities
- (23) Educators will discuss respectfully any concerns they have about children's clothing, jewellery or footwear, and work with families to find suitable solutions
- (24) Educators must respect children's privacy and modesty when they are helping children with dressing

PRINCIPLES

- (25) Clothing and footwear should keep children safe and allow them to move, sleep, rest and play without risk
- (26) Children should feel comfortable and be dressed appropriately for the weather
- (27) We support children's independence and autonomy regarding clothing and footwear
- (28) We respect and celebrate the cultural, religious and individual clothing needs and preferences of our children and families

- (29) We regularly review and update our policies and practices to make sure they still reflect current best practices

POLICY COMMUNICATION, TRAINING AND MONITORING

- (30) This policy and related documents can be found in our front office
- (31) The approved provider and nominated supervisor provide information, training and other resources and support regarding the Clothing and Footwear Policy and related documents
- (32) All staff (including volunteers and students) are formally inducted. They are given access to, review, understand and formally acknowledge this Clothing and Footwear Policy and related documents
- (33) The nominated supervisor runs a professional development program for each staff member, which covers this policy
- (34) Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined in this policy and in individual position descriptions. They are communicated during staff inductions and in ongoing training
- (35) The approved provider and nominated supervisor monitor and audit staff practices and address non-compliance. Breaches of this policy are taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action against a staff member
- (36) At enrolment, families are given access to our Clothing and Footwear Policy and related documents
- (37) Families are notified in line with our obligations under the *National Regulations* when changes are made to our policies and procedures

LEGISLATION (OVERVIEW)

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations

Law	Description
s 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Regulations	
s 168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
s 170	Policies and procedures to be followed

s 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
s 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

National Quality Standard

Standard / Element	Concept	Description
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 hazards
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing

My Time, Our Place (MTO) V2.0

Outcome	Key component
1: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young people develop their autonomy, interdependence, resilience and agency
3: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF WELLBEING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young people become strong in their social, emotional and mental wellbeing Children and young people become strong in their physical learning and wellbeing Children and young people are aware of and develop strategies to support their own mental and physical health, and personal safety

National Principles for Safe Organisations

Most relevant principles
Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Key Policies Child Safe Environment Policy | Family and Community Partnerships Policy | Enrolment Policy | Orientation Policy | Sleep and Rest Policy | Positive Relationships for Children Policy | Access and Inclusion for Children Policy | Physical Activity Policy | Excursions Policy | Sun Safety and Heat Protection Policy

Procedures Roles and Responsibilities – Clothing and Footwear (attached) |

SOURCES

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations | National Quality Standard | StartingBlocks resources | Red Nose | Sun Protection Policy Guidelines ACECQA | Cancer Council Australia

POLICY INFORMATION

Approval Dina Kahn

Review Reviewed annually and when there are changes that may affect this policy or related procedures. The review will include checks to ensure the document reflects current legislation, continues to be effective, or whether any changes and additional training are required

Last reviewed: 25th March 2026 Date for next review: 25th March 2027

APPENDIX A

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES – Clothing and footwear

Approved provider responsibilities (not limited to)

Ensure our service meets its obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*, including to take every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury

Ensure that our service's governance, management, operations, policies, plans, (including risk management/action plans), systems, practices and procedures for children's clothing and footwear are appropriate in practice, up-to-date, best practice, and comply with all relevant legislation, standards and guidelines

Ensure this Clothing and Footwear Policy and related procedures are in place and available for inspection

Take reasonable steps to ensure our Clothing and Footwear Policy and related procedures are followed (e.g. through clear and accessible communication, and systemised inductions, training and monitoring of all staff – including volunteers, students)

Regularly review this Clothing and Footwear Policy and related procedures in consultation with children, families, communities and staff

Notify families at least 14 days before changing this Clothing and Footwear Policy if the changes will: affect the fees charged or the way they are collected; or significantly impact the service's education and care of children; or significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service

Nominated supervisor / persons in day-to-day charge responsibilities (not limited to)

Ensure our service meets its obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*, including to take every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury

Support the approved provider to ensure that our service's management, operations, policies, plans, (including risk management/action plans), systems, practices and procedures for children's clothing and footwear are appropriate in practice, up-to-date, best practice, and comply with all relevant legislation, standards and guidelines

Implement this Clothing and Footwear Policy and related procedures

Take reasonable steps to ensure our [Clothing and Footwear Policy](#) and related procedures are followed (e.g. through clear and accessible communication, and systemised inductions, training and monitoring of all staff – including volunteers, students)

Contribute to policies and procedure reviews and risk assessments and plans in consultation with children, families, communities and staff. Support the approved provider to notify families of reviews and changes according to legislation and our policies and procedures

Educator / other staff responsibilities (not limited to)

Follow this [Clothing and Footwear Policy](#) and related procedures, including for sun protection, and safe sleep and rest

Communicate respectfully with families about children's clothing and footwear, and be mindful of families' cultural, religious or individual needs and preferences

Monitor children's clothing and footwear and make sure it is safe, comfortable and appropriate to the weather and the specific activity the child is engaged in

Give families advanced information about children's clothing or footwear requirements for excursions, or special events and activities (e.g., harmony day or other dress up days)

Make sure children are dressed safely for sleep and rest, in line with our procedures

Make sure children are wearing protective clothing in the sun and heat

Encourage children to wear aprons or smocks for messy play and art

Allow children to make decisions about their clothing and footwear, but only insofar as it does not pose a risk to themselves or others

Model appropriate clothing (e.g., wearing hats and close-in shoes)

Respect children's privacy and modesty when helping them dress or with toileting

Support children to build the skills for self-dressing

Contribute to policy and procedure reviews and risk assessments and plans, and participate in training and professional development opportunities that are relevant

Families responsibilities (not limited to)

Dress your child appropriately for the weather and play, in line with this [Clothing and Footwear Policy](#)



Label your child's clothes and shoes with their name (not just initials)

<Pack a spare set of clothes for your child in case of accidents. If possible, also pack a pair of shoes>

Make sure your child is wearing sun protective clothing

Discuss any specific needs your child has related to clothing and footwear with educators or the nominated supervisor

Dress your child in clothes that are okay to get dirty while playing – that is, don't dress them in their best clothes

Barefoot / No Shoes Procedure

[This procedure is only relevant if your service encourages barefoot play / no shoes. If not, delete the whole appendix. Services that do use the procedure should edit it according to your arrangements and add any other steps you may have identified in your risk assessment]

Introduction

- These procedures apply to our Clothing and Footwear Policy
- 'Parents' includes guardians and persons who have parental responsibilities for the child under a decision or order of court
 - 'Staff' includes volunteers, students and third parties defined in the scope of the Clothing and Footwear Policy

When to use this procedure

- To assess and manage the risk of promoting barefoot play
- When entering indoor spaces

1. Assess and manage risks

- The nominated supervisor and approved provider must conduct regular risk assessments that identify and manage the risks to children, staff, families and visitors who are not wearing shoes at our service
- Risk assessment should cover risks such as:
 - Injuries, e.g., heavy items dropped on feet, slipping and tripping, stubbing toes, stepping on sharp objects or hot surfaces (such as metal outdoor play equipment, soft fall materials, astroturf, sand)
 - Harms and hazards in different environments/areas at the service, e.g., outdoor/indoor, play equipment, in bathrooms and toilets, in rest/sleep areas, kitchens/food preparation and eating areas, arts/craft area, arrangement of furniture and play equipment
 - Material quality of walking surfaces, e.g., on hot days/cold days, tiled / paved / floorboards / carpets / rugs, soft play, mulch, woodchip, grass, tree roots etc.
 - Fungal or bacterial infections being spread by direct contact with uncovered feet or by contaminated floors/soil

- Emergency situations or accidents when the service needs to evacuate quickly
 - Obligations under work health and safety laws to provide a safe work environment for our staff
- 2. Remove outdoor shoes before entering indoor spaces**
- Place outdoor shoes in the designated area (e.g., shoe rack, shelf, basket near the door, lockers)
 - Help children to remove their shoes
 - Staff, families, visitors and children should either:
 - Go barefoot
 - Wear indoor-only shoes
 - Use shoe covers
- 3. Ensure safe and hygienic barefoot play**
- Feet must be covered if there are any wounds, or fungal or bacterial infections present
 - Help children to wash and dry their feet
 - Keep tiled and hard surfaces, including toilet and bathroom floors, clean and dry to prevent slips and the spread of infectious diseases
- 4. Monitor safety and environmental conditions**
- Check indoor and outdoor spaces for hazards throughout the day
 - Tidy up toys, play equipment and other materials regularly to prevent trips
 - Remove sharp sticks and stones from outdoor play areas
 - On hot days, check the temperature of:
 - Play equipment
 - Soft fall surfaces
 - Astroturf
 - Walkways and other surfaces (e.g., tiles, bricks, metal grates)
 - If surfaces are too hot and could cause burns, shoes must be worn
 - In colder months, ensure that surfaces are not uncomfortably cold for bare feet and hard floors are covered with secured rugs, where appropriate
- 5. Wear shoes in the following situations:**
- On excursions or during higher-risk activities
 - In kitchen areas and when children are preparing food
 - When surfaces (e.g., play equipment, tiles, bricks, metal flooring) are too hot
 - When surfaces are too cold to walk on comfortably
- 6. Respect children and families' preference to wear shoes**
- Do not compel any child, family member, staff member or visitor to remove their shoes
 - Instead, you should:



- Explain the possible benefits of barefoot play
- Work to accommodate preferences (e.g., having indoor-only shoes or shoe covers)
- Respect a child's choice to keep their shoes on and provide time for adjustment to barefoot play