CLOTHING POLICY

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.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S 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	
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 are to be followed

RELATED POLICIES

Children's Belongings Policy Family Communication Policy Health and Safety Policy Multi-Cultural Policy Nappy Change and Toileting Policy	Respect for Children Policy Sleep and Rest Policy UV Sunsmart Policy Supervision Policy

PURPOSE

We aim to ensure the safety and comfort of all children by providing appropriate clothing guidelines for children, parents and staff utilising and working at the Service.

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.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Effective clothing strategies, including appropriate clothing for sun protection are important factors in ensuring a child feels safe and secure at our Service.

Management or the Nominated Supervisor will:

- ensure that a *UV SunSmart Policy* is developed and reviewed regularly
- 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. This information will also be shared with families using a variety of communication strategies including newsletters, brochures, websites, and posters.
- ensure educators are aware and abide by the *Sun Safety Policy*
- ensure a culturally inclusive environment by conveying respect and understanding of families' cultural traditions regarding clothing
- provide information to educators and staff about children's cultural dress requirements.

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.
- encourage children to remove shoes and heavy or excess layers of clothing during rest times to reflect the room temperature, as recommended practice by *Red Nose*
- take off children's jumpers and jackets with hoods during rest time to ensure children's safety
- 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
- monitor the UV rating to ensure children are dressed appropriately for the weather and are adequately protected (e.g., long sleeve shirts, appropriate footwear)
- 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
- convey respect for children and appreciate their individuality, whilst developing their understanding of safe clothing and footwear for play and the weather
- encourage children to make choices in relation to getting dressed and the clothing they wear
- 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 they wear

Families will:

- communicate with educators about their child's individual clothing needs- (e.g.: cultural diversity, disability, clothing sensitivity – labels or fabrics, fine motor skills)
- 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).
- dress children appropriately for play and the weather, including footwear and an appropriate hat

- ensure their child is clothed in an appropriate manner which will allow them to explore and play freely and not restrict them using equipment while at play
- ensure clothing also allows easy access for toileting: i.e., elasticised trousers or track pants rather than buttons, zips, belts, etc.
- not dress their child in good/expensive clothing where there is a chance, they will get dirty or stained
- ensure children are appropriately protected from the sun - please refer to *UV SunSmart Policy* for further directives on clothing and sun safe hats (bucket, broad-brimmed or legionnaire's hat)
- ensure children's clothing accommodates the weather conditions. For example, be loose and cool in summer to prevent overheating and warm enough for cold weather, including outdoor play. At all times educators will monitor children to ensure they are appropriately dressed for all weather, play experiences, rest and sleep routines.
- ensure children have appropriate footwear that enables them to play comfortably and not cause safety concerns. For example, thongs, clogs or backless shoes have a trip factor and do not allow children to use equipment safely.
- ensure all clothing and belongings are clearly labelled with the child's name (not just initials)
- be familiar with their child's clothing fabric to minimise possible allergies and reactions.

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.
Parents may decide to send additional clothes in their child's bag to assist educators ensure their safety when they are participating in physical activities that require clothing to be more practical.

Special clothes/dress up

To facilitate pretend play and celebrate different cultural experiences, children may be invited to dress up according to a theme or particular cultural 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.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

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

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). *Guide to the National Quality Framework.*
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
Cancer Council Australia: www.cancer.org.au
Community Child Care Co-Operative
Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023).
Raising Children Network –http://raisingchildren.net.au
Red Nose - https://rednose.com.au
Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).
National Health and Medical Research Council. (2013). *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5th Ed.). Australia: Commonwealth of Australia. NSW Government. (n.d.). *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth).

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Krystle Hills	Centre Manager	02/07/2024
POLICY REVIEWED	July 2024	NEXT REVIEW DATE	July 2025
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy maintenance • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
May 2023	Policy Created		June 2024