

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The clothing children wear while in care, both indoor and outdoor, influences the quality of their experiences as clothes can affect their health, safety, comfort, play and learning. These issues apply to the clothes children wear to childcare, the extra clothing that families provide as well as the clothes provided by the service - including imaginative/ dramatic play clothes (Stonehouse. A).

Small children can become over heated or chill quickly as they are not always able to identify hot and cold conditions. Therefore, they need guidance and direction to dress accordingly as Australian weather conditions can often be unpredictable.

PURPOSE

This policy will promote appropriate clothing options for children in services while understanding risks and managing them in consultation with families.

SCOPE

This document applies to all Children and Family Services, Managers and Coordinators, Centre Directors (who act as Nominated Supervisors), Early Childhood Teachers, Family Day Care Educators, Child Care Workers, Child Care Assistants, Cooks, Children, Families and Administrators.

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Name	Reference
Education and Care National Regulations	81 (2) (3)– Sleep and Rest 106 1(b)- Laundry and hygiene facilities 168 – Policies and procedures 2A – (v)
National Quality Standards	Quality Area Two 2.1.1 Quality Area Three 3.1 Quality Area Six 6.1; 6.2 Quality Area Seven 7.1.2

STAKEHOLDERS

Educators (including FDC) will work in partnership to collaborate with family members and their children in relation to children’s clothing requirements and preferences.

SECTION 2 - POLICY

OBJECTIVE AND GOALS

- For children to wear clothing that is practical, safe, comfortable and non-restrictive as to ensure that children are able to take part in the day’s activities
- For children to wear clothing that meets WH&S & Sun Smart requirements of the service, including sun safe hats.
- For staff and FDC Educators to work in partnership with families and children about every child’s individual needs and to be aware of the different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise that are associated with clothing and footwear.
- For staff/FDC Educators, volunteers, students and visitors to model correct attire indoors and outdoors.
- For staff/FDC Educators to play a role in educating children and families in relation to appropriate clothing choices for children.

POLICY STATEMENT

1.	<i>In relation to clothing</i>
1.1	All clothing that children are wearing in the childcare environment must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Be clothing that protects the body from exposure to cuts, sun or abrasions (shirts must have sleeves and shirts preferably have a collar) ✓ Be suitable for indoor and outdoor environments and any variations in conditions/ temperature ✓ Allows children the freedom of discovery and participation in messy play ✓ Allows children to rest comfortably and without restriction ✓ Enables children the freedom of developing individual needs, self-help skills especially with toileting and dress-ups
1.2	Clothing that is discouraged within the service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Children with hoods and cords are at higher risk of choking and should not be encouraged to wear these garments ✓ Restricts movement in removal such as with toileting ✓ Contravenes the sun protection policy. For example, strapless tops, sleeveless tops or singlets, sleeveless or halter dresses <p>Children will not attend the service with baseball caps or sun visors and any Clothing with images or slogans that may provoke a negative response or offend a particular cultural group</p>

2.	<i>In relation to footwear</i>
2.1	All footwear that children are wearing in the childcare environment must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Be safe, comfortable, correct fitting shoes that provide support for growing feet ✓ Shoes should be appropriate for children’s play (such as sneakers and sandals) and allow children to easily participate in play experiences such as climbing and running
2.2	Footwear that is discouraged within the service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Restricts movement adding undue pressure to the foot or provides too much movement for the foot ✓ Shoes that do not have a back strap to secure the shoe to the foot
2.3	Family preference for their children not wearing shoes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parent preferences for their child to not wear shoes will be made in consultation with the service and take into consideration research from the Australian Podiatry Association ✓ A risk management approach to be implemented in the service where risks for not wearing shoes will be responded to and discussed with families ✓ Where this consultation has occurred barefoot play will be encouraged <p>Children must not attend the service wearing thongs or open / loose shoes. This type of footwear does not support the foot as sand, water and sweat can cause the foot to slip causing injury.</p>

3.	<i>In relation to sun protection:</i>
3.1	By wearing appropriate clothing exposure to harmful UV rays can be reduced <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Hats will be provided by Fairfield City Council at the time of enrolment which meets sun smart requirements ✓ Hats help provide sun protection for the head, face, neck, ears and eyes ✓ Clothing assists in sun protection by covering the head, shoulders, arms and chest, legs and stomach. <p>• <i>Additional information on sun protection can be found in QMPOL-CS-033 Sun Protection Policy</i></p>

APPLICATION & IMPLEMENTATION

Centre Director/ Team Leaders/Child Development Officers:

- Observe compliance with this policy and ensure all children’s clothing reflects relevant WHS regulations, sun smart practices and risk management requirements
- Communicate with families particularly during enrolment and orientation timeframes about the importance of appropriate clothing choices that promote and do not inhibit learning and development
- Consult with families in relation to children’s clothing regularly, encouraging families to offer clothing for all weather conditions throughout the year

Educators & Staff

- Will provide experiences within the services' program to reflect and build on children's own understanding of weather conditions and how it affects them. i.e feeling hot or cold, hydration and dehydration. Educators will promote mindfulness and expressive language to assist children in identifying their needs.
- Consider protective behaviours and practices by maintaining safe environments when children are dressing and undressing
- Supervise and assist children when dressing and undressing, taking into consideration the child's age, ability and the service setting
- Be aware of when and where children are dressing or undressing and understand that children have a right to privacy
- Be patient and engaging with each child's attempt at dressing or undressing
- To ensure they model the correct clothing practices
- Will take into consideration the daily environment adjusting children's clothing accordingly
- Offer protective clothing for messy play such as, craft aprons
- Consult with families in relation to children's clothing
- If a child refuses to wear a hat or protective clothing other strategies will be implemented - refer to sun protection policy
- No messy or soiled clothes, including hats will be laundered at the service and instead will be placed in a plastic bag away from children accessibility e.g. Laundry and returned to the family at the end of the day
- Ensure 'dress-up' clothing is appropriate and not deemed a hazard to a child such as, high heeled shoes that may twist a child's foot or long dresses as a tripping hazard

Families:

- Ensure their child is appropriately dressed in accordance with requirements in relation to clothing and footwear outlined in this policy
- To pack a minimum of two changes of clothing per day in case of emergencies
- Ensure all children's clothing is labelled (including shoes and hats)
- Return laundered any clothing that your child may have borrowed from the service

SECTION 3 - GOVERNANCE

RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES

Policy Number	QMPOL-CS-033 Sun Protection Policy
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USEFUL INFORMATION - EXTERNAL SOURCES

	<p>http://www.podiatry.asn.au/foot-health-resources/children/children</p> <p>https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-01/Guide-to-the-NQF_2.pdf</p> <p>The Cancer Council NSW (2015). Sun Smart childcare: A guide for service providers. The Cancer Council NSW</p> <p>https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/attachments/ch55-staying-healthy.pdf Staying Healthy in Child Care 5th Edition</p>
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RESPONSIBILITY

Policy Owner	Children and Family Services
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VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version Number	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment
07	August 2018	Children and Family Services Manager	Minor formatting adjustments
08	January 2020	Children and Family Services Manager	Include FDC Scheme Update Education and Care National Regulations, National Quality Standards
09	March 2020	Children and Family Services Manager	Updated resources and reviewed the practices against current legislation Implemented clothing restrictions

The management of Council reserves the right to cease, modify or vary this Policy and will do so in accordance with Council’s established consultation processes.

REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed every 5 years, or when a change to governing legislation occurs, or when operational requirements and practices may require a review; whichever occurs sooner.