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Government of South Australia
Department for Education

POLICY & PROCEDURE – INCLEMENT WEATHER AND SUN PROTECTION

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Background

Inclement Weather

Inclement weather can affect everyday activities and comes in many forms. Inclement weather includes:

- extreme high temperatures
- high UV levels
- heavy rain, hail and snow
- strong winds
- severe dust or electrical storm
- flooding.

Sun Protection

A balance of ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure is important for health. Too much of the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Sun exposure in the first ten years of life is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk.

Too little UV radiation from the sun can lead to low Vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones and muscles and for general health.

Principles

This policy has been developed to:

- Maintain the safety of children, educators, parents and volunteers during inclement weather
- Help educate children and families about sun protection and monitoring UV levels
- Encourage children and educators to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above
- Work towards a safe outdoor environment that provides shade for children and educators at appropriate times
- Ensure all children and educators have some UV radiation exposure for vitamin D
- Assist children to be responsible for their own sun protection
- Ensure families and new educators are informed of the centre's Sun Protection policy

Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all staff, children, parents and volunteers for centre events both on and off site.

INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURE

When planning outdoor events, camps and excursions it is important to prepare contingency plans for the potential risk of inclement weather.

Site leaders must ensure they have considered the potential hazards for all locations and situations impacted by inclement weather conditions.

Monitor, or delegate someone to monitor, daily weather forecasts (such as [Bureau of Meteorology](#)) and identify any potential inclement weather risks.

During and following a period of inclement weather:

- consider
 - the health and safety risks to employees, children before allowing them to undertake outdoor activities, including excursions
- look out for
 - tree debris such as leaves, nuts and branches that might pose a slip or trip hazard
 - damaged tree limbs and branches that may fall
 - wet floors and stairs.
- Monitor severe weather danger warnings, including the [South Australia Country Fire Service's](#) fire danger warnings, particularly for R1 and R2 sites.

SUN PROTECTION PROCEDURE

Educators are encouraged to access the daily sun protection times to assist with the implementation of this policy. We use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities during Terms 1, 3 and 4 (August until the end of April) and whenever UV radiation levels reach 3 and above at other times.

1. Clothing

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

When outside, children are required to wear loose fitting clothing that cover as much skin as possible. Clothing made from cool, closely woven fabric is recommended. Tops with elbow length sleeves, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best. If a child is wearing a singlet top or dress they wear a t-shirt/shirt over the top before going outdoors.

2. Sunscreen

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

- SPF 30 or higher, broad spectrum and water resistant sunscreen is available for educator and children's use
- Parents are to apply sunscreen to their child prior to coming to kindergarten. This will then be reapplied at lunchtime.
- Parents may send specific sunscreen (labelled with their child's name) for children with skin sensitivities. This will be made available to this child only.
- Children, once old enough, are encouraged to become independent and apply their own sunscreen under the supervision of educators.
- Families with children who have naturally very dark skin are encouraged to discuss their vitamin D requirements with their GP or paediatrician.

3. Hats

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

All children are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, eg. legionnaire, broad brimmed or bucket hats. Baseball or peak caps are not considered a suitable alternative. Please ensure hats **do not** have an adjustable chin cord to avoid the potential risk of strangulation. If your child's hat has a chin cord educators will discuss the safety concerns and alternatives with families. Spare hats will **not** be provided by the kindergarten and children without a sun safe hat will be required to play indoors or under the verandah.

In the event of an excursion and a child does not have a sun safe hat, they will be provided with a new one from kindergarten uniform supplies and parents will be invoiced accordingly.

4. Shade

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

Quality area 3: Physical environment

- A shade audit is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade
- Educators make sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the outdoor area
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities
- Outdoor activities are scheduled outside the peak UV radiation times or in the shade where possible
- Children are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside
- Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun (eg. verandah)

5. Enrolment and information for families

Quality area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

When enrolling their child, families are:

- Informed of the centre's Sun Protection policy
- Asked to provide a suitable hat for their child
- Asked to provide their child with suitable outdoor clothing that is cool and covers as much skin as possible (eg. shirts with collars and elbow length sleeves, longer style dresses and shorts)
- Asked to apply sunscreen to their child before coming to kindergarten each day
- Required to give permission for educators to apply sunscreen to their child OR asked to provide SPF 30 or higher, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for their child
- Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, shade, and sunscreen) when attending the centre.

6. Staff WHS and role modelling

Quality area 5: Relationships with children

As part of WHS UV risk controls and role modelling, when the UV radiation is 3 and above, educators:

- Wear sun protective hats and clothing when outside
- Apply SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
- Seek shade whenever possible

7. Education

Quality area 1: Educational program and practice

Quality area 5: Relationships with children

Quality area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

- Sun protection and vitamin D are incorporated into the learning and development program, including checking of the UV level with the children
- The Sun Protection policy is reinforced through educator and children's activities and displays
- Educators and families are provided with information on sun protection and vitamin D through family newsletters and noticeboards

Version #	Approval Date	Approved By	Review Cycle	Review Date
1.0	July 2018	Governing Council		
2.0	October 2019	Governing Council	2 years	October 2021
3.0	June 2021	Governing Council	2 years	June 2023