

2.14 Clothing

Background

The clothing children wear while at the Service influences the quality of their experiences and their learning because clothes can affect their health, safety, comfort, level of independence and ability to play. These issues apply to the clothes children wear to the Service, the spare clothes they bring, spares provided by the Service, and to dress-up clothes.

Policy statement

The Policy provides families with information about suitable clothing for their child to wear while at the Service. It is consistent with recommendations from recognised authorities such as SunSmart, SIDS and Kids and Kidsafe. The Policy also takes into account the range of activities children are involved in at the Service, the weather, and the need to encourage children's independence and self-help skills.

Family preferences and values, cultural or otherwise, with regard to clothing are respected and accommodated without compromising children's safety while at the Service.

Strategies and practices

- The *Clothing Policy* is provided to parents when they enroll their child in the Service, and their attention is specifically drawn to their responsibilities under this Policy. The *Clothing Policy* is also included in the Family Handbook given to all parents. QA 2.1.2
- The Service informs families about suitable clothing for their children while at the Service for safe indoor and outdoor play, sun safety, safe sleep and rest. This information is provided through newsletters, notice boards and with special emphasis during change of seasons and unusual weather. QA 2.1.2
- Educators include in the program planned and spontaneous discussions and experiences about appropriate clothing for weather, seasons, and different types of activities. QA 2.1.2
- Educators ensure children are dressed appropriately throughout the day. This includes the possibility that some adjustments may need to be made during the day through changes in weather and in the activities children are involved in (e.g. active play, messy play, sleep and rest). QA 2.1.2
- Children do not remain in wet clothes.
- Educators, students and volunteers are considered to be role models for children and are expected to meet the Service's dress requirements when at the Service. QA 2.1.4
- Parents are asked to label every item of their child's clothing (including spares) brought to the Service.

When dressing their child for a day at the Service, parents are also asked to consider:

Sun protection

Refer to the Service's *Sun Protection –Hat – Policy*.

Active play

- Children need to wear clothes that are non-restrictive, durable and can be easily laundered so that they can participate freely in all of the activities available at the Service. Such items as: long skirts; hooded jumpers with cords; hats with cords and toggles; and, rubber thongs and other loose footwear are not suitable because they pose safety risks when children are climbing, running and riding bikes. QA 2.1.2

Weather conditions

- Parents are asked to dress their children according to weather conditions and temperatures and to provide a supply of clothing in their child's bag for possible changes in the weather through the day. QA 2.1.2

Art and craft activities / messy activities

- Parents are asked to dress their child in clothing that allows participation in messy activities, and can be easily laundered. Good or 'special' clothes are not suitable because children can become distressed if these become marked. QA 2.1.2
- Children participating in art and craft, clay or water play, cooking or any other form of messy play will be encouraged to wear one of the Service's protective smocks or aprons. QA 2.1.2

Independence and self-help skills

- Educators encourage children's self-help skills (e.g. taking off and putting on shoes and socks, removing clothing, pulling up clothing after toileting). Routines and 'dressing times' are unhurried and considered to be opportunities for interaction and conversation with children and developing self-help skills. QA 1.1.3
- In order to facilitate children's self-help and independence, parents are asked to dress children in:
 - clothes they can undo easily and remove quickly for toileting. Clothes with elastic waists are preferred to overalls and to trousers with zips and buttons.
 - shoes that are easiest to put on, such as those with velcro clips. QA 1.1.3

Protective behaviours and practices

- Children under the age of three years old are offered assistance when dressing or undressing.
- Children over the age of three are encouraged to dress/undress themselves. Assistance is provided when necessary.
- Children who are capable of dressing/undressing are given the option of privacy. QA 2.1.2

Excursions

- The Service provides parents with information about suitable clothing for any planned excursion, and parents are asked to dress their child accordingly, and also to pack spare clothing suitable for the excursion. QA 2.1.2

Footwear

- Children are to wear non-slip shoes or sandals that are flexible and provide a good grip. QA 2.1.2
- Children may remove their shoes for outside play, weather permitting.

Sleep and rest

- Refer to the Service's *Sleep and Rest Policy*.

Spare clothing

- Parents are asked to provide spare clothing for their child. Older children require at least one change of clothes. Younger children require several changes of clothes because accidents are more frequent. Children who are toilet training also need a sufficient number of underpants or training pants. QA 2.1.2
- The Service has a supply of spare clothing, consistent with its *Clothing Policy*, to be used when needed. If a child needs to use these clothes, parents are asked to launder and return them as soon as possible. QA 2.1.2

Soiled clothing

- Soiled clothing is placed in a plastic bag which is stored in a container out of the reach of children. Parents are asked to collect any soiled clothing at the end of each day. QA 2.1.3, 3.1.1

Kindergarten Uniforms

- Each child attending the Kindergarten program is provided with allocated polo shirts. It is asked that the children wear these shirts as often as they are able. This will support their transition into school uniform the following year. Families are able to purchase more from the Director. QA 1.1.3

Additional requirements for babies

- Parents are asked to supply sufficient disposable nappies or Eco nappies for their child to use while at the Service. QA 2.1.2
- Parents are encouraged to dress toddlers in clothes which allow easy nappy changes. QA 2.1.2

Responsibilities of parents

- To dress their child in accordance with this Policy.
- To provide spare clothing for their child. Older children require at least one change of clothes. Younger children require several changes of clothes because accidents are more

frequent. Children who are toilet training also need a sufficient number of underpants or training pants.

- To label every item of their child’s clothing (including spares) brought to the Service.

Links to other policies

- Educator Professionalism, Ethics and Reflection
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Excursion Policy
- Sun Protection Policy

Sources, Further reading and useful websites

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011.
- Stonehouse, A. (2009). *NCAC Factsheet: Children’s clothing in child care.*
http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/educator-resources/factsheets/qias_factsheet_15_children's_clothing%20.pdf accessed 22 December 2013
- Sunsmart. (2012). *Slip on protective clothing: Tips for choosing and using clothing well.*
http://www.sunsmart.com.au/sun_protection/slip accessed 22 December 2013
- Sids and Kids – <http://www.sidsandkids.org/>
- SunSmart – <http://www.sunsmart.com.au/>

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