



Lyndoch Preschool Hot Weather Policy

Policy Statement

The environment in South Australia can pose risks related to heat exposure and dehydration particularly for young children. The policy recognises that children are at a greater risk of suffering heat illness than adults. A child's ability to respond to environmental heat and acclimatise to heat is due to physiological differences.

“Children sweat less and get less evaporative cooling than adults. In warm and hot weather they have greater difficulty getting rid of heat; they look flushed, and feel hotter and more stressed than adults”

Source “Sports Medicine Australia”, refer to:

www.sma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/beat-the-heat-2008-email-version.pdf

Sports Medicine guidelines provide recommendations about young children's exposure to weather conditions outlining considerations for both ambient temperature and humidity.

Aims

The aims of the Lyndoch Preschool's 'Hot Weather Policy' are to promote among children, staff and parents:

- Positive attitudes towards environmental conditions.
- Lifestyle practices which can help reduce the incidence of heat stress and heat related health conditions.
- Personal responsibility for and decision making about own regulation of exposure in hot weather.
- Awareness of the need for environmental changes in our centre to reduce the level of sun exposure.

Implementation

This policy is primarily required during terms 1 and 4 as average temperatures in Adelaide and the surrounding areas are more likely to be above 35C.

1. When the ambient temperature is over 35C children will play in areas covered by shade.
2. When temperatures exceed 38C children will remain inside between the hours of 10:00 and 3pm.
3. On days where the forecast temperature exceeds 34C before children play in areas with rubber play safe and metal climbing equipment staff will conduct touch test to ensure surfaces are safe for children to use. (Adult can hold hand on surface for a slow count to 10 – surface is safe for use)
4. Families might choose to pick children up early in periods of extreme weather conditions – heat waves.
5. In the event of air-conditioning malfunction on a day where temperatures exceed 35C families will be contacted and provided with the option of picking their children up early. Staff will try to find a space with air-conditioning for the children to access.
6. On days where temperatures exceed 30C children will be encourage to drink water at regularly intervals. Water will be available to children at all times.
7. Staff will discuss physical signs with children to support children's understanding of their own body's responses to heat. Eg your cheeks look red, your hot it's time go inside and get a drink and slow down.
8. Humidity levels will influence the period of time children spend outside. During times of high humidity children will be encouraged to play indoors.
9. Parents are encouraged to dress their children in clothes that minimises heat gain, in layers that can be easily removed during activities and that meet the Sun Protection Policy.
10. **Parents encouraged to place ice packs in their child's lunch and snack boxes.**

A copy of this policy will be on display in the centre at all times, and will apply to volunteers and visitors also.

*** Concluding Statement**

* This policy has been developed by the Governing Council in consultation with staff members of the centre.

* This policy will be reviewed and evaluated regularly by both staff and Governing Council and modified as required to ensure continued relevance for the centre.

Signed by Director.....(date).....

Signed by Chairperson..... (date).....