



## Callington Kindergarten Hot Weather Policy

Policy Number	16
Issue Number	1
Link to NQS for ECE	2.1.1 2.3.2 3.1.1 3.1.4 6.1.1 6.1.3 6.2.2 7.3.2

### Policy statement

- Callington Kindy has a duty of care to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of heat and sun protection during the hours of the service's operation.
- It is understood by staff/carers, children and families that there is a shared responsibility between the service and other stakeholders that the Hot Weather Policy and procedures are accepted as a high priority.
- In meeting the kindergarten's duty of care, it is a requirement under the *Occupational Health & Safety Act* that management and staff implement and endorse the service's Hot Weather Policy, and ensure a level of protection to all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

### Rationale

- In developing this policy the characteristic of our context are to be considered;
  - Callington experiences extremes in heat similar to Murray Bridge, often well over 38C in summer, often into the 40s.

- The building radiates heat up through the floor on days of extreme heat, staff must be aware that the temperature the children are playing in may be much different to the temperature for adults near the air-conditioned height.
- Callington Kindergarten is rated such that on days of catastrophic fire danger it will be required to close.
- Callington can be subject to strong northerly winds and dust storms.
- This policy is underpinned by the need to ensure that all employees must take reasonable care to protect their own health and safety and that of others in the site.
- All site leaders have a duty of care to behave in a manner that ensures no foreseeable harm befalls the individuals under their care as a result of any negligence on their part.
- The objects of the Children's Services Act 1985 are upheld:  
*(2) In dealing with children under this Act, the Minister shall regard the interests of the children as the paramount consideration.*

## **Strategies and practices**

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The aims of the Callington Kindergarten Hot Weather policy are to provide a safe environment for staff and children at all times in order to reduce the risk of heat illnesses during hot weather. Callington Kindergarten staff recognise that children are at greater risk of suffering from heat illness than adults. A child's ability to respond to the environmental heat and acclimatise to heat is due to physiological differences.

### **Managing the physical environment**

#### *Times of UV radiation exposure*

- The peak UV radiation periods are September to April, between 11.00am and 3.00pm during daylight saving. Outdoor activity in full sun will be avoided during these times or when UV levels are 3 and above.
- Staff will utilise the shaded areas of the outdoor environment for play and plan outdoor play experiences before 11am on days of extreme heat.

#### *Shade provision, outdoor play and outdoor play equipment*

- The kindergarten will consider the availability of shade when planning and programming for outdoor play experiences or excursions.
- Outdoor equipment that is not fixed will utilise the shaded areas of the outdoor environment at all times of the day.
- The kindergarten will continually assess the shade coverage of the outdoor play environment and seek avenues to improve the conditions if required.
- The service will plan and program for outdoor play experiences and excursions during non-peak UV radiation hours of the day.
- Outdoor play equipment that is fixed will be monitored for usability throughout the day by staff/carers.
- Infants less than 12 months of age are always kept in dense shade and are not exposed to direct sunlight.
- Staff/carers will ensure that the infants outdoor play environment utilises as much dense shade as possible.

## Protective behaviours and practices

### Hats

- All children must wear an approved sun protective hat that is either: a broad-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire's style, when outdoors.
- It is recommended that a sun protective hat adequately covers the face, back of the neck and ears.
- **Due to the risk of children becoming entangled in hat cords and choking, the service recommends that the cords are removed from hats.**
- Children who do not have a hat will be asked to play indoors, however this may not always be possible due to staffing ratios. Therefore, children without hats will be restricted to shaded areas when outdoors if children cannot be supervised indoors, or provided with a sun safe Kindy hat.
- Spare hats may be available for children who do not have a hat. The service will ensure that hats are laundered after each use to minimise cross infection (for example, head lice).

### Clothing

- Loose fitting and closely woven fabrics assist in protecting children from exposure to the sun.
- It is recommended that shirts have a collar to protect the nape of the neck and long sleeves.
- Longer style tops and shorts are acceptable items of clothing to protect children from the sun.
- **Sleeveless shirts, dresses and singlets are not considered as appropriate clothing to protect children from the sun. Children may need to change their clothing or not be allowed to access outdoor play.**
- Infants (between 6-12 months) must have exposed skin covered at all times however; it is acceptable to use sunscreen on the face and hands to protect exposed skin areas.

### Maintaining hydration levels

- Infants and children's body/water ratio mass is significantly different than from adults, therefore the risk for dehydration from outdoor play and hot weather is high and can be dangerous.
- Water will be offered to children throughout the day regardless of indoor or outdoor play settings.
- Children are able to bring in water bottles from home and are encouraged to access water to drink throughout the day.
- Staff will monitor and document the input/output of infants and young children's fluids.

### Food

- *Parents are encouraged to pack food in insulated containers with at freezer brick or frozen water. The kindergarten is to provide a cool place to store food.*

### Role modelling by staff, carers, students and volunteers

- Children learn through example and role modelling is an important strategy in children's services to maintain quality standards.
- Staff, students and volunteers must comply with the Hot Weather Policy .

- Staff, students and volunteers must wear a sun protective hat and clothing, apply SPF30+ broad spectrum sunscreen, and seek shade whenever possible when supervising outdoors or facilitating children's play experiences and excursions. It is recommended that appropriate sunglasses are worn when outdoors.

### **Extreme Heat**

Callington has a number of days each year of extreme temperature ( in the high 40 degree Celsius range). While the kindergarten has adequate levels of shade and air-conditioning the temperature in the yard can still reach extreme levels. For the safety of the children and staff the following actions will occur:

- Kindy staff will maintain an outdoor thermometer to monitor temperatures.
- On days where the temperature exceeds 38C staff and children will stay inside when this temperature is reached – at the discretion of the staff.
- ***In the event of a power outage of longer than 30 minutes on days of extreme heat, staff will contact parents/carers to collect their children.***

### **Communication with different stakeholders**

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#### **Children**

- Children's play and learning experiences will reflect the importance of hot weather behaviours and practices.

#### **Families**

- Hot weather behaviours and practices are outlined in the Parent Handbook, enrolment forms, newsletters and excursion permission forms.
- Signed permission will be sought from families in the enrolment form so that staff can apply sunscreen to children's exposed skin areas (face, arms, hands, legs, back of the neck).
- Sun safety information will be displayed on notice boards.
- Families will be encouraged to implement the service's hot weather and sun protection behaviours and practices when engaged in service experiences and excursions. For example, parents must wear a sun protective hat when volunteering on excursions.

### **Policy review**

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- The service will review the Hot Weather Policy and procedures, and related documents, including behaviours and practices every 12 months, in September.
- Families are encouraged to collaborate with the kindergarten to review the policy and procedures.
- Staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be encouraged to actively be involved.

### **Links to other policies**

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- Allergies
- Enrolment of new children and families to the service
- Health, hygiene and wellbeing
- Meeting children's individual and group needs
- Occupational health and safety
- Physical activity and outdoor play environments
- Planning play experiences and excursions for children
- Protective behaviours
- Staff as role models

### Sources and further reading

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- Occupational Health & Safety Act
- The Cancer Council Australia. (2005a). *Position statement: Sun protection in the workplace*. Retrieved November 15, 2006, from [http://www.cancer.org.au/documents/Pos\\_St\\_Sun\\_Protection\\_Workplace\\_DEC05.pdf](http://www.cancer.org.au/documents/Pos_St_Sun_Protection_Workplace_DEC05.pdf)
- The Cancer Council Australia. (2005b). *Position statement: Sun protection and infants (0-12 months)*. Retrieved November 15, 2006, from [http://www.cancer.org.au/documents/Sun\\_protection\\_infants\\_May\\_2005.pdf](http://www.cancer.org.au/documents/Sun_protection_infants_May_2005.pdf)
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- The Cancer Council Australia. (2005d). *Position statement: Eye protection from ultraviolet radiation*. Retrieved November 15, 2006, from [http://www.cancer.org.au/documents/AUG06\\_Eye\\_protection.pdf](http://www.cancer.org.au/documents/AUG06_Eye_protection.pdf)
- The Cancer Council Australia. (2005e). *Position statement: Use of SPF30+ sunscreens*. Retrieved November 15, 2006, from [http://www.cancer.org.au/documents/Use\\_of\\_SPF30\\_sunscreen\\_June%202005.pdf](http://www.cancer.org.au/documents/Use_of_SPF30_sunscreen_June%202005.pdf)

Policy review date 1/9/2017

New review date 1/9/2018

### Signatures

Director \_\_\_\_\_