



Hawker Childhood Services Centre Hot Weather Policy

Hawker Childhood Services Centre is situated in an extreme climate during the summer months. This policy aims to outline specific strategies aimed at reducing the risk of heat illness to young children and staff whilst at kindergarten during hot weather.

The policy will recognise that children are at greater risk of suffering from 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"

Strategies to reduce the risk of heat illness

Shade Activities conducted in periods of hot weather are to be undertaken in shaded areas. Set up activities under the shade of trees, pergola, umbrella and verandah when in the outdoor area.

Drinks Children are to be frequently offered water or fluids. Drinking water is to be accessible to children at all times.

Clothing Parents are to be encouraged to dress children in clothing that minimises heat gain, in layers that can be easily removed during activity and of a type that is sunsafe. Children and staff are to wear hats in the outdoor area at all times.

Lunch Parents are to be encouraged to pack food in insulated containers with a freezer brick or frozen water. Food is stored in the refrigerator at the Site.

Equipment Outdoor equipment will be assessed by a staff member to ensure it is not hot enough to place children at risk of burn injuries.

Cooling Hawker Childhood Services Centre has several refrigerator split cooling systems which will be used during hot weather.

In the event of a blackout or breakdown of the cooling or ventilation systems staff may activate an early dismissal. All suitable avenues will be explored first eg. use the Hawker Community library or the Multi-purpose room if unaffected by breakdowns.

Early dismissal (1 hour prior to regular closure) is only to be evoked where the forecast is at least 36 degrees celsius and in consultation with the Hawker Area School Principal.

Early Dismissal Procedure:

1. Notify District Office of intention to evoke early dismissal
2. Notify parents of early dismissal
3. Staff are to remain on duty on days of early dismissal.
4. Children who are unable to be collected, including children who access the School bus must be adequately supervised by staff and kept as comfortable as possible.
5. The interests of the children are to be paramount considerations if developing an early dismissal clause and procedures.

In the case of an extended breakdown of the cooling system during hot weather the kindergarten Director will undertake a risk management process and work with the District Office to manage the situation.

Dated: 14/05/2012 Reviewed T3 2016