

Margaret Lohmeyer Kindergarten



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SUN SAFETY AND WEATHER POLICY

RATIONALE

At Margaret Lohmeyer Kindergarten we believe that all children and staff have a right to a safe and secure environment.

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world, with one out of every two people developing some form of skin cancer in their lifetime. Recent studies show that the vast majority of melanoma and sun related skin cancers occurring during an individual's lifetime result from overexposure to harmful UV rays from the sun during childhood. As part of the kindergarten's duty of care it is imperative that this risk be minimized.

SUN PROTECTION POLICY AIMS

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that all children and staff use a combination of sun protection measures whenever the UV index levels are predicted to reach 3 and above.
- To ensure all children and staff have some UV radiation exposure for vitamin D.
- To assist children to be responsible for their own sun protection.
- To ensure families and new staff are informed of this policy.

SKIN PROTECTION STRATEGIES

HAT POLICY

- The wearing of a hat outdoors will be compulsory when the predicted UV level will be 3 or above. Children without a hat will be required to play indoors, on the veranda or where available use a kindergarten hat.
- The wearing of hats will be modelled by staff and parents will be encouraged to support the policy.
- Parents will be encouraged to provide hats that satisfy the Anti-Cancer Foundation guidelines so as to shade the face, back of neck and ears i.e. broad brimmed or legionnaire style. Hats must be toggle free to reduce the risk of neck injury.

STAFF

- Staff will be expected to act as role models by wearing protective hats and appropriate clothing. This behaviour will be modelled both at the centre and on excursions.
- Staff will access the SunSmart UV alert each morning at www.bom.gov.au/sa/uv to find out up to date local sun protection times.
- Staff will set-up outdoor activities in appropriately shaded areas, avoiding children being in direct sun between 10.00am to 3.00pm. Staff will seek shade whenever possible during outdoor activities.
- SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen will be available for staff to use.
- Staff will include information about the importance of skin protection in the educational program for the children.
- Staff will incorporate Kaurna seasons and culture into our discussions about sun safety and hot weather.

PARENTS

- Parents will be made aware of this policy upon enrolment of their child at the kindergarten.
- Children attending for a full day, with parent permission, will be supported to apply sunscreen after lunch. Parents will be encouraged to apply sunscreen before children arrive in the morning and for half-day sessions. Personal sunscreen can be provided if clearly named.
- Parents will be encouraged to provide clothing for their child which protects the skin. It is recommended that clothing should cover shoulders, back, arms and protect the back of the neck.

CENTRE MANAGEMENT

- Make shade provision a priority in the kindergarten's forward planning ie. plant shade trees, cover sandpits and play equipment with a pergola or suitable shade structure.
- Provide appropriate SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen for use at the kindergarten.

HEAT PROTECTION STRATEGIES/ HOT WEATHER

Children are sensitive to hot temperatures and can become ill when overheated. Children absorb heat much more quickly and have greater difficulty getting rid of heat than adults therefore we need to ensure all children are provided with a comfortable environment to prevent heat illness such as dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

At Margaret Lohmeyer Kindergarten we:

- Provide experiences inside or under shade on days of high temperature
- Have purpose build outdoor play spaces with natural and constructed shade to provide cool areas for children to play.
- Provide drinking water which is easily accessible to children throughout the day
- Provide refrigeration for children's lunches
- Ensure children are dressed appropriately for the temperature
- Provide air conditioning and ceiling fans for children, family and staff comfort

- Provide water play for children on hot days
- Recognise that it is not only the heat but humidity that can cause heat distress
- Minimise excessive exercises such as running during times of high temperature.
- Provide rest periods for children and staff
- Plan excursions and outings during the cooler months or postpone/cancel events if the temperature is too high
- Plan outside play in the cooler parts of the day.
- Outdoor play is to be monitored and at the discretion of the staff, children may be required to remain inside the building.

As Margaret Lohmeyer Kindergarten is air conditioned we do not have an early dismissal time on days of high temperatures. Families may choose to keep their child home on extreme weather days, for instance when temperatures are over 36 degrees.

Air quality

Dust and smoke particles can impact children and adult's health. Children and adults with health conditions (particularly asthma) can be impacted by dust storms and smoke from bushfires. Air quality will be monitored through alerts from the Bureau of meteorology, SA Health and the Asthma foundation. At times of poor air quality children will remain inside.

This policy has been developed by the staff team in consultation with the Governing Council.

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