

2022 Bush/Beach Kinder Protective Clothing Policy

NQS: Quality Area 2

Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Set out clear guidelines for parents and staff regarding appropriate clothing to be worn by children attending Bush/Beach Kinder in various weather conditions to ensure their safety and wellbeing (including a description of clothing which should not be worn)
- Provide clear guidelines regarding the change of clothes requirements for Bush/Beach Kinder participants
- Provide an appropriate mechanism for communication of the protective clothing requirements for Bush/Beach Kinder sessions to parents.

Policy statement

1. Values

Parkdale Preschool is committed to:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment for children participating in the Bush/Beach Kinder program
- Facilitating a Bush/Beach Kinder experience in a variety of (safe) weather conditions, including rain, to allow children to experience nature across as broad a spectrum as possible and without compromising the safety of the participants
- Ensuring clothing worn by children in the program allows for maximum comfort, free movement and does not obstruct the children in their activities in the Bush/Beach Kinder setting
- Facilitating communication to parents to ensure compliance with this policy

2. Scope

This policy applies to children, parents, staff, committee members, authorised persons, volunteers and students on placement working at Parkdale Preschool.

3. Background and legislation

Parkdale Preschool's Bush/Beach Kinder program is intended to operate across a broad spectrum of weather conditions, allowing children to experience nature and its elements across the seasons. Whatever the weather, children are encouraged to take the lead in playing, exploring and learning in a bush or natural environment. For this reason, there are some particular clothing requirements in the Bush/Beach Kinder setting that may differ from requirements in a centre-based environment.

Relevant legislation may include but is not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

- Education and Care Services National Law 2010
- National Quality Standards, including Quality Area 2 – Children’s health and safety and Quality Area 3 – Physical environment
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007

4. Definitions

Protective and appropriate clothing & footwear:

It is important that Bush/Beach Kinder participants wear appropriate and protective clothing and footwear which:

- allows children to move freely and undertake activities such as climbing, balancing, running, puddle jumping
- keeps children warm and dry in cold/wet weather
- protects children from the damaging effects of the sun, UV rays in warm weather and high UV conditions.
- prevents sunburn, bites, scratches and stings. (Even in warm weather, long sleeve tops and long pants are recommended - this clothing should be loose fitting and light).
- Where possible ensure your child is wearing clothing that is made from natural fabrics which allow breathability and is comfortable against the skin
- In the case of footwear, keeps feet and toes covered and has a flexible and gripped sole to allow children to climb and balance on uneven surfaces.

The following table provides examples of recommended clothing, clothing which is not recommended and unacceptable clothing:

	Warm Weather	Cold Weather/Rain
Recommended Clothing and Footwear	Light, loose-fitting long sleeve tops and long pants, broad brimmed hat, closed toe shoes	Waterproofs, long pants, long sleeved top, beanie, waterproof gloves, thermals in very cold weather
Not Recommended	Short sleeved tops, long skirts or dresses, shorts	Skirts, dresses (incompatible with waterproofs)
Unacceptable Clothing and Footwear	Open toed shoes, sandals, thongs, crocs, singlet tops	Non-waterproof outer clothing.

Change of clothes:

All children participating in Bush/Beach Kinder are required to bring a change of clothes and footwear as these may become wet and muddy. It is recommended that the spare clothing include:

- Spare top and bottoms of appropriate thickness/weight for the weather on the day
- Spare underpants (and singlet in winter)
- 2 pairs of socks
- 1 pair of gumboots (it is not recommended that gumboots are worn at all times due to the restriction of movement they impose)
- Providing a wet bag/plastic bag for wet gear.

Waterproofs: Waterproof overalls will be provided by the Preschool which will be available on the day if it is wet. Please provide your own waterproof jacket for your child. If you would prefer your child to use waterproofs you already own, please ensure you provide a light rainproof suit worn over clothing, which includes a jacket with a hood, and pants or overalls, which zip up over clothing.

5. Sources and related policies

Kindergarten policies

- Bush/Beach Kinder Delivery & Collection of Children Policy (Bush/Beach Kinder Specific)
- Bush/Beach Kinder Extreme Weather Policy (Bush/Beach Kinder Specific)
- Bush/Beach Kinder Identification and Visibility Policy (Bush/Beach Kinder Specific)
- Bush/Beach Kinder Emergency Evacuation Policy (Bush/Beach Kinder Specific)
- Bush/Beach Kinder Snake Awareness Policy (Bush/Beach Kinder Specific)
- Bush/Beach Kinder Dog Awareness Policy (Bush/Beach Kinder Specific)

Procedures

General

The Committee is responsible for:

- Implementing and maintaining a Protective Clothing Policy which provides clarity to parents and staff as to the appropriate clothing children are required to wear to Bush/Beach Kinder in various weather conditions to ensure their safety and wellbeing (including a description of clothing which should not be worn)
- All parents being made aware of this policy and provided access to the policy at orientation sessions, in written Bush/Beach Kinder material and on the Parkdale Preschool website, and made available upon request.
- Ensuring staff are appropriately educated on procedures in the event that children are not wearing compliant clothing
- Supplying waterproof overalls for children attending Bush/Beach Kinder.

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring all children being dropped off to Parkdale Preschool on the day of Bush/Beach Kinder are wearing appropriate clothing in line with this policy. If inappropriate clothing is worn, staff are to:
- Highlight to the parent dropping off the child which clothing is inappropriate and the reasons for it;
- Determine if the change of clothing brought by that child is appropriate and request the parent change the clothes on the child if need be;
- If the clothing has the potential to put the child's safety and wellbeing at risk and there is no suitable alternative clothing, inform parent that the child is not able to attend Bush/Beach Kinder
- During session, assisting in changing children's clothing if need be
- Encouraging children to tell a staff member if they need help with clothing or feel uncomfortable.
- During orientation sessions, advising parents of the clothing requirements for Bush/Beach Kinder

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring protective and appropriate clothing is worn to Bush/Beach Kinder by their child in line with this policy
- Changing their child's clothing as instructed by the teacher to enable their child to participate in the Bush/Beach Kinder session if required.
- Ensure their child's change of clothes includes items as set out in this policy
- Reading and being familiar with the policy
- Bringing relevant issues to the attention of both staff and committee
- Changing children into the waterproof overalls at the start of each session.

Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes the committee

will:

- Seek feedback regarding this policy and its implementation with parents of children participating in the Bush/Beach Kinder program. This can be facilitated through discussions and the annual centre survey.
- Ask staff to share their experiences and observations in relation to the effectiveness of this policy.
- Regularly review the policy and centre practices to ensure they are compliant with any new legislation, research or best practice procedures.

Authorisation

Endorsed by the Parkdale Preschool Committee of Management in March 2022.

Review Date: February 2023



Parkdale Preschool would like to acknowledge Westgarth Kindergarten for their support in reviewing this policy.