Lobethal Kindergarten
Hot and Inclement Weather policy

Policy Number **16**
Issue Number **7**

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

Supporting Policies, Procedures and Risk Assessments

- Hot Weather Procedure (in Staff Induction Folder)
- DfE Inclement Weather Policy (available online)

Rationale:

In developing this policy, the characteristic of our context is to be considered;

- Lobethal can experience extremes in heat, often well over 38C in summer, often into the 40s.
- Lobethal can be subject to strong winds, electrical storms and dust storms.
- Lobethal can experience high levels of rainfall and hail, with daytime temperatures dropping below 10 degrees during winter.

This policy 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 Education and Children's Services Act 2019 are upheld:

(2) In dealing with children under this Act, the Minster shall regard the interests of the children a s the paramount consideration.

Policy Statement

Lobethal Kindy has a duty of care to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of protection from hot and inclement weather 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 stake holders that the Hot and Inclement 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 and Safety Act* that management and staff implement and

endorse the service's Hot and inclement weather Policy and ensure a level of protection to all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

Practices:

Hot Weather and high UV rating days

The aims of the Lobethal Kindergarten Hot and Inclement weather policy are to always provide a safe environment for staff and children to reduce the risk of heat illnesses during hot weather. Lobethal Kindergarten staff recognise that children are at a 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/minimised on days of extreme heat ie. Over 30 degrees.
- Staff will utilise the shaded areas of the outdoor environment for play and plan shaded outdoor play experiences 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. All rubber/vinyl safety mats need to be removed or placed in full shade at all times.
- 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 radiations hours of the day.
- Outdoor play equipment that is fixed will be monitored for usability throughout the day by staff/carers. Ie. Swings, climbing equipment.
- Portable Gazebos will be utilised to provide extra shaded areas

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 and in accordance with our sun smart policy. 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 insists that the cords are removed from hats.**
- Children who do not have a hat will be asked to play indoors, or 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.

Clothing

- Loose fitting and closely woven fabrics assist in protection children from exposure to the sun.
- It is recommended that shirts have a collar to protect the nape of the neck and long sleeves that cover the shoulder adequately.
- 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 will need to change their clothing (kindy will provide T-Shirt) or not be allowed to access outdoor play.**

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.
- On days of extreme heat water will be offered to children throughout the day regardless of indoor or outdoor play settings. Staff will aim to use a "Drink Water" bell hourly and/or at transition times
- Children bring water bottles from home and staff will fill them as required throughout the day

Food

Parents are encouraged to pack food in insulated containers with a freezer brick or frozen water. The kindergarten is to provide a cool place to store food. If it is not in an insulated container ie. Lunch box, we will store lunch in the fridge.

Excursions/Bush Kindy/Local Walks

Staff will perform a risk assessment and make decisions on the day or prior to the event regarding cancelling or continuing with excursions

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.

<u>Extreme Heat</u>

Lobethal has a number of days each year of extreme temperature (in the 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.

Sunscreen

In terms 1,3 and 4 and whenever the UV rating is 3 and above, and in accordance to our Skin protection policy, Children will supply their own named roll-on sunscreen. Sunscreen is to be applied before children arrive at kindy and staff will support children to reapply 2 hourly in line with our Skin Protection Policy. The site will have spare sunscreen available for those children who do not provide, or have run out of a roll-on sunscreen.

Inclement Weather

The aims of the Lobethal Kindergarten Hot and Inclement weather policy are to always provide a safe environment for staff and children to reduce the risk of temperature related illnesses during inclement weather. Lobethal Kindergarten staff recognise that children are at a greater risk of suffering from temperature related illness than adults. A child's ability to respond to and acclimatise to the weather is due to physiological differences.

Managing the physical environment

Staff will monitor severe weather danger warnings on the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) to identify any risks.

Staff will conduct a safety check of the outdoor area prior to children/staff accessing the area. Staff will look out for –

- Tree debris such as leaves nuts and branches that may pose a slip or trip hazard
- Damaged tree limb or branches that may fall
- Wet floors or stairs
- Flooding and blockages to drainage

Protective behaviours and practices

Electrical storms

- In Electrical storms children and staff will remain inside until the storm passes.

Severe weather conditions (including high winds, heavy rainfall, hail, extreme cold and flooding)

- Staff will monitor the BOM website for extreme weather warnings for the Mt Lofty ranges area.
- In Severe weather conditions children and staff will remain inside until safe to play in the outdoor area again.

Clothing

- When the severe weather has past, children who access the outdoors must wear warm and waterproof clothing sufficient enough to protect them from the elements.

Excursions/Bush kindy/ Local Walks

Staff will perform a risk assessment and make decisions on the day or prior to the event regarding cancelling or continuing with excursions.

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 will wear warm waterproof clothing.

Communication with different stakeholders

Children

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

Families

Hot and inclement weather behaviours and practises are outlined, newsletters and excursion permission forms when required.

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, will be encouraged to wear a wear sun protective hat and clothing when volunteering on excursions.

Policy Review

The service will review the Hot and inclement weather Policy and procedures and related documents, including behaviours and practices every 12 months.
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

- Skin protection
- Enrolment, Orientation & Settling-in
- Supporting Children's Individual needs
- Workplace health & safety
- Child protection

Sources and further reading

- Occupation Health and 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
- 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/Pos_St_Sun_Protection_infants_May_2005.pdf
- The Cancer council Australia (2005c) Positions statement: Risks and benefists of sun exposure. Retrieved November 15, 2006, from http://www.cancer.org.au./documents/Risks_benefits_sun_exposure_MAR05.pdf
- The Cancer Couuncil Australia. (2005d) Posistion statement: Eye protection from ultraviolet radiation. Retrieved November 15, 2006, from http://www.cancer.org.au/documents/AUG06_eye_procection.pdf
- The cancer Council Austrlaain. (2005e) Position statement: Use of SPF30+ sunscreens. Retrieved Novemeber 15, 2006, from http://www.cancer.org.au/documents/use_of_SPF_sunscreen_june%202005.pdf

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Signatures - Director :

Governing Council Chairperson: