

Clothing

Background

The clothing children wear while at the Service influences the quality of their experiences and their learning because clothes can affect their health, safety, comfort, level of independence and ability to play. These issues apply to the clothes children wear to the Service, the spare clothes they bring, spares provided by the Service, and to dress-up clothes.

Policy statement

The Policy provides families with information about suitable clothing for their child to wear while at the Service. It is consistent with recommendations from recognised authorities such as Sun Smart, Red Nose and Kid Safe. The Policy also takes into account the range of activities children are involved in at the Service, the weather, and the need to encourage children's independence and self-help skills.

Family preferences and values, cultural or otherwise, with regard to clothing are respected and accommodated without compromising children's safety while at the Service.

Strategies and practices

- The *Clothing Policy* is explained to parents when they enrol their child in the Service, and their attention is specifically drawn to their responsibilities under this Policy. QA 2.1.2
- The Service informs families about suitable clothing for their children while at the Service for safe indoor and outdoor play, sun safety, safe sleep and rest. This information is provided through newsletters, notice boards, information nights, and educator-parent meetings, with special emphasis during change of seasons and unusual weather. QA 2.1.2
- Educators include in the program planned and spontaneous discussions and experiences about appropriate clothing for weather, seasons, and different types of activities. QA 2.1.2
- Educators ensure children are dressed appropriately throughout the day. This includes the possibility that some adjustments may need to be made during the day through changes in weather and in the activities children are involved in (e.g. active play, messy play, sleep and rest). QA 2.1.2
- Educators, students and volunteers are considered to be role models for children and are expected to meet the Service's dress requirements when at the Service. QA 2.1.4
- Parents are asked to label every item of their child's clothing (including spares) brought to the Service.

When dressing their child for a day at the Service, parents are also asked to consider:

Active play

- Children need to wear clothes that are non-restrictive, durable and can be easily laundered so that they can participate freely in all of the activities available at the Service. Such items as: long skirts; hooded jumpers with cords; hats with cords and toggles; and, rubber thongs and other

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loose footwear are not suitable because they pose safety risks when children are climbing, running and riding bikes. QA 2.1.2

Weather conditions

- Parents are asked to dress their children according to weather conditions and temperatures and to provide a supply of clothing in their child's bag for possible changes in the weather through the day. QA 2.1.2

Art and craft activities / messy activities

- Parents are asked to dress their child in clothing that allows participation in messy activities, and can be easily laundered. Good or 'special' clothes are not suitable because children can become distressed if these become marked. QA 2.1.2
- Protective smocks or aprons are available for use when children are participating in art and craft, clay or water play, cooking or any other form of messy play. QA 2.1.2

Independence and self-help skills

- Educators encourage children's self-help skills (e.g. taking off and putting on shoes and socks, removing clothing, pulling up clothing after toileting). Routines and 'dressing times' are unhurried and considered to be opportunities for interaction and conversation with children and developing self-help skills. QA 1.1.3
- In order to facilitate children's self help and independence, parents are asked to dress children in:
 - clothes they can undo easily and remove quickly for toileting. Clothes with elastic waists are preferred to overalls and to trousers with zips and buttons.
 - shoes that are easiest to put on, such as those with velcro clips. QA 1.1.3

Protective behaviours and practices

- Children under the age of three years old are offered assistance when dressing or undressing.
- Children over the age of three are encouraged to dress/undress themselves. Assistance is provided when necessary. QA 2.1.2

Excursions

- The Service provides parents with information about suitable clothing for any planned excursion, and parents are asked to dress their child accordingly, and also to pack spare clothing suitable for the excursion. QA 2.1.2

Footwear

- Children are to wear non-slip shoes or sandals that are flexible and provide a good grip. Thongs, clogs and gumboots are not suitable for running and climbing. QA 2.1.2
- Children may remove their shoes for outside play, weather permitting.

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Sleep and rest

Refer to the *Service's Sleep and Rest Policy*.

Spare clothing

- Parents are asked to provide spare clothing for their child. Older children require at least one change of clothes. Younger children require several changes of clothes because accidents are more frequent. Children who are toilet training also need a sufficient number of underpants or training pants and shorts. QA 2.1.2
- The Service has a supply of spare clothing, consistent with its *Clothing Policy*, to be used when needed. If a child needs to use these clothes, parents are asked to launder and return them as soon as possible. QA 2.1.2

Soiled clothing

- Soiled clothing is rinsed and placed in a plastic bag which is stored in a container out of the reach of children. Parents are asked to collect any soiled clothing at the end of each day. QA 2.1.3, 3.1.1

Responsibilities of parents

- Parents are encouraged to dress toddlers in clothes which allow easy nappy changes.
- To dress their child in accordance with this Policy.
- To provide spare clothing for their child. Older children require at least one change of clothes. Younger children require several changes of clothes because accidents are more frequent. Children who are toilet training also need a sufficient number of underpants or training pants and shorts.
- To label every item of their child's clothing (including spares) brought to the Service.

Links to other policies

- Educator Professionalism, Ethics and Reflection
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Excursion Policy
- Sun Protection Policy

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

QA	1.1.3	The program, including routines, is organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning
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2.1.2	Each child's comfort is provided for and there are appropriate opportunities for sleep, rest and relaxation
2.1.3	Effective hygiene processes are promoted and implemented
2.1.4	Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness in accordance with recognised guidelines
3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources are suitable for their purpose

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011.
- Stonehouse, A. (2009). *NCAC Factsheet: Children's clothing in child care*. http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/educator-resources/factsheets/qias_factsheet_15_children's_clothing%20.pdf accessed 4 February 2016
- Sunsmart. (2012). *Slip on protective clothing: How to choose sun protective clothing!*. http://www.sunsmart.com.au/sun_protection/slip accessed 4 February 2016

Further reading and useful websites

- Sids and Kids – <http://www.sidsandkids.org/> accessed 4 February 2016
- SunSmart – <http://www.sunsmart.com.au/> accessed 4 February 2016

Policy review

Bella Grace Early Learning Centres encourage staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

Date(s) reviewed: April 2017

Next review Date: April 2018