

## McKellar Stewart Kindergarten

### 1. Hot and Extreme Weather Policy

### 2. Skin Protection Policy

To ensure that all educators take reasonable care to protect their own health and ensure that duty of care is extended to all children so they are protected at all times. At McKellar Stewart Kindergarten these policies outline how we will fulfil our duty of care to adults and children to minimise overexposure to heat and UV radiation during hot weather and manage risks of Extreme weather conditions.

### Hot and Extreme Weather Policy

There is a need to reduce the risk of heat related illness to children due to physiological differences that reduce a child's ability to respond and acclimatise to the temperature of the environment, they are at a greater risk of suffering from heat related illness than adults. *"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. This policy comes into effect where the Bureau of Meteorology forecast the maximum daytime temperature to be **36 C or greater**. We will adhere to the Extreme Heat Strategies determined by the Department for Education. The curriculum and daily timetable will be modified to accommodate the impact of hot weather conditions for both children and educators and may include:

- Play in shaded area only before the maximum temperature is reached. ie cool of the morning.
- Limiting outdoor activities to cooler options with water play etc.
- Limiting access to outdoors and the veranda.
- Indoor play only.
- Hats will be worn to keep heads cool and protected from heat and UV radiation.
- Lunch / snack boxes and water bottles will be stored inside in an air-conditioned room.
- Lunch and snack times will be held indoors in air-conditioned rooms.
- Parents are encouraged to include a cool pack in their child's lunch box.
- Cool filtered water will be available to top up water bottles.
- Children will be reminded to rehydrate frequently with cool water.
- Educators will monitor weather conditions and their own and children's level of heat tolerance, being aware of
  - Children and staff who have allergies and asthma if windy and hot.
  - Children who are showing signs of an excess reaction to the heat ie may be overdressed.

**Extreme Circumstances.** In the event of inadequate provision of cooling (e.g extreme weather power cuts.) and when the kindergarten thermometer indicates a temperature of 36oC or higher, families will be contacted to collect their children early. Children, whose families have been unable to collect them early, will be supervised with water-cooling activities until time of collection.

**Extreme Conditions:** Inclement weather is the existence of abnormal climatic conditions and may include one or more factors ie: high temperatures; high winds; severe dust or electrical storm; High Humidity; Rain; Hail. When such conditions present a hazard to children and staff the default action will be for everyone to move indoors. Modified and amended actions and timetables to ensure safe practises will be determined by the Director (nominated supervisor) or certified supervisor and communicated to all staff. The risk assessment and management plan for Outdoors-Extreme conditions will be followed and parents/guardians will be notified of any changes to usual practise. Further strategies for safe management of a situation may be developed should the conditions prevail.

## **Skin Protection Policy**

**It is important to note that skin and eye damage and skin cancer is caused by overexposure to UV radiation, and the damage is cumulative and irreversible. UV radiation cannot be seen or felt, and differs from infrared radiation that we feel as heat, and therefore UV levels are unrelated to temperature.**

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, and at least two in three Australians will be diagnosed with some form of skin cancer before aged 70. Sun exposure during childhood and adolescence is a critical factor in determining future skin cancer risk. It is estimated 95-99% of skin cancers are caused by overexposure to UV radiation, and can therefore be prevented by adequately protecting the skin when the UV Index is 3 and above.

**The following policy guidelines apply to the months from 1<sup>st</sup> August to 30 April, and when the UV is 3 and above at other times. Staff are encouraged to access the daily sun protection times via the SunSmart app, [www.myuv.com.au](http://www.myuv.com.au) or [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au) to assist with implementing this policy.**

- Children are required to bring and wear each day a named broad brimmed, 'legionnaire' or bucket hat with a wide rim or 5 + cm for outdoor play at kindergarten. Children without a sun safe hat will be required to play in an area protected from the sun.
- Sunglasses (named) that meet the Australian Standard AS/NZS 1067 can also be worn to protect eyes from the UV radiation. Novelty sunglasses do not protect against UV radiation.
- When outdoors children are required to wear loose fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Clothing made from cool, closely woven fabric is recommended. Tops with collars and elbow length sleeves, and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best. Children are required to wear a t-shirt over clothing that leaves their upper body exposed before going outdoors.
- Parents/care givers are requested to have applied sunscreen to their child on arrival the kindy session.
- Sunscreen is provided by the centre for families to access at all times ie to apply at arrival or departure.
- Staff will assist children to apply sunscreen SPF30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors, and reapply 2 hourly if remaining outdoors.
- Outdoor activities where possible, will be held in the shaded areas. The kindergarten is fortunate to have up to 70 % of our yard under summer shade.
- Time spent outdoors may be limited or not available during the peak UV times of the day.
- Sun protection measures are always considered when planning outdoor excursions, play and water based experiences.
- As part of WHS UV risk controls and role modelling, staff will wear appropriate sun protective clothing and hat, apply SPF30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen and seek shade when outdoors.
- It is recommender that parents and visitors also participate in role modelling sun smart behaviours and in particular when participating in centre excursions and experiences.
- Parents have access to this policy through the family portal on the kindy website and it is promoted to families and community through our Sun Smart sign on entry to the centre.

**Curriculum:** Sun protection awareness is included in the learning program. Educators will incorporate opportunities for children to share in discussions on sun safe strategies. Will include songs, stories and sun safe practice strategies to engage children and reinforce the message of being sun safe. Children will monitor the UV level daily before playing outdoors, and display the daily sun protection times and maximum expected UV level alongside the visual reminder to put on their hat.

**During the months of May, June and July and** when UV levels are often below 3 sun protection measures are not required, to assist with production of vitamin D. Children may however wear beanies and hoods as this helps children develop the habit of wearing hats when outdoors. Sensible sun protection when the UV is 3 and above does not put people at risk of vitamin D deficiency. Should the UV rating be above 3 on any of these days, play will be moved into shaded areas and sun protection measures will be in place.

**Policy Review:** Management and staff monitor and review the effectiveness of the Skin Protection Policy, and revise when required (at least once every three years).

Next Review: August 2024 or as required should advice and circumstances change.

## References / Sources

- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Cancer Council SA and the SunSmart Early Childhood Program.
- DE Guidelines for developing a Preschool Hot Weather Policy.
- DE Inclement weather and sun protection Policy

## NQS

- QA2 2.3.2 Reasonable steps are taken to identify and manage risks and every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from hazards and harm.
- QA1 Educational program and practice
- QA3 Physical environment
- QA5 Relationships with children
- QA 6 Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- QA7 Governance and leadership

## EYLF

- LO3 Children are happy, healthy, safe and connected to others. Children recognise and communicate their bodily needs.

## Regulations

- 168 Policies and Procedures
- 114 Outdoor Space – shade requirements