

HOT WEATHER POLICY

National Quality Standard: 2.3.2

Hackney Kindergarten has developed this Hot Weather Policy to outline specific site arrangements and strategies to reduce the risk of heat illness to all members of the kindergarten community. Particular focus is placed on young children, who are at greater risk of suffering from heat illness than adults due to their physiological differences which decrease their ability to respond and acclimatise to environmental heat.

“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*”, refer to:

www.sma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/beat-the-heat-2008-email-version.pdf

Hackney Kindergarten has an effective cooling system and will remain open for normal operating hours during hot weather.

Aim

The aim of our ‘hot weather policy’ is to ensure that:

- The service will provide a comfortable and safe environment for children
- every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and hazards and reasonable steps are taken to identify and manage risks with the interests of the children being of paramount consideration (National Quality Standards 2.3.2) (Children’s Services Act 1985)
- all employees take reasonable care to protect their own health and safety and that of others in the workplace.
- all site leaders have a duty of care to behave in a manner that ensures no foreseeable harm befalls the individual(s) under their care as a result of any negligence on their part.
- Heating and cooling equipment provided to maintain a comfortable temperature for Children
- Sun protection/advice from the Cancer Council.

Implementation

It is an expectation that the following strategies will be implemented during hot weather:

Shade:

- Activities conducted in periods of hot weather are to be undertaken in shaded areas.
- Increase amount of shaded area where possible to provide greater protection for children and staff.

Drinks:

- Drinking water is to be accessible to children at all times.
- Children are encouraged to bring water bottles and water is provided at 2 water stations.
- Children are reminded to drink water and offered water or fluids at regular intervals ie fruit time and lunch time and during play.

Clothing:

- Parents are to be encouraged to dress children in clothing that minimises heat gain and is Sun safe ie clothing which covers the shoulders and body.
- Layered clothing that can be easily removed during activity is also encouraged.
Refer www.arpansa.gov.au/radiationprotection/factsheets/is_UVProtection.cfm

Lunch:

- Parents are asked to pack food in insulated containers with a freezer brick or frozen water due to limited refrigerator space.
- Food may also be stored in the refrigerator during hot weather.

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Outdoor Equipment:

- Play surfaces and equipment will be assessed by a staff member to ensure children do not access the area or equipment when hot enough to place children at risk of burn injuries.

Refer to

<http://www.childcare.sa.gov.au/ybsproviders/pages/ChildCareLicensingandStandards/news/>

Hot Weather Guidelines for Preschools 7/02/2011

Parents and Caregivers delivering and collecting children are welcome inside to minimise heat stress.

Extenuating Circumstances / Early Dismissal:

- In the event of power cuts or air conditioning breakdown on days when the temperature is above 36 degrees Celsius, kindergarten children may be dismissed early. At this time Parents/ Carers will be contacted by phone.
- Children who are unable to be collected will be adequately supervised by staff and kept as comfortable as possible.
- Staff will remain on duty.

References: Hackney Kindergarten Skin Protection Policy which complies with the recommendations of the Cancer Council of SA; www.cancersa.org.au/asp/sunsmart.aspx

The Governing Council and Staff will monitor, evaluate and review the effectiveness of the Hot Weather policy biannually.

This policy will be shared with all new staff and families, and is available on the website and in the preschool policies folder.

This policy has been developed in consultation with the Governing Council, staff and families of the centre.

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated regularly and modified as required to ensure continued relevance for the centre.

Date: September 2016