CLOTHING POLICY

Children need protective, comfortable and appropriate clothing and footwear to explore their environment and participate freely in experiences. Clothing, including footwear, needs to be comfortable, protect children from injury and sun exposure whilst promoting self-help abilities. Appropriate footwear will fit a child's foot correctly and ensure comfort. Educators will also dress to prevent injury and sun exposure and will be encouraged to dress in a professional and respectful manner, being positive role models for children.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S. 2A	Paramount consideration—safety, rights and best interests of children
S. 3A	Paramount consideration
S.166A	Offence to subject child to inappropriate conduct Offences relating to inappropriate conduct
S.167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures are to be followed

RELATED POLICIES

Children's Belongings Policy Family Communication Policy Health and Safety Policy Multicultural Policy Nappy Change and Toileting Policy	Respect for Children Policy Sleep and Rest Policy Sun Safe Policy Supervision Policy

PURPOSE

Our Service is committed to ensuring that children's safety, rights and best interests are the paramount consideration in all decisions, actions and practices. We aim to ensure the safety and comfort of all children by providing appropriate clothing guidelines for our children, families and staff utilising and working at the Service.

Children being clothed appropriately enables them to play without risk of sunburn and serious injury caused by inappropriate footwear or clothing. Children are more at ease, comfortable, and less anxious when they are dressed for changing weather conditions and room temperature, wearing safe footwear and having spare clean clothes – allowing them to participate fully and safely in all activities.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Appropriate clothing and footwear are essential to ensure that both children and educators feel comfortable, protected, and able to participate fully and meaningfully in our Service.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- ensure that a *Sun Safe Policy* is developed and reviewed regularly
- ensure educators are aware and abide by the *Sun Safe Policy*
- support the implementation of sun safe practices, including the use of appropriate clothing, hats and sun protection for children and staff
- provide information for educators about suitable clothing and footwear expectations for the education and care work environment during induction

- provide information for families about suitable clothing and footwear for their child to wear at the Service. This information will also be shared with families using a variety of communication strategies, including newsletters, brochures, websites, and posters.
- promote a culturally inclusive environment by respecting and understanding families' cultural traditions regarding clothing and providing information to educators and staff about children's cultural dress requirements
- support educators to monitor and respond to children's clothing needs in changing weather conditions.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- consult and communicate with families about the individual needs of children with respect to different values and beliefs associated with clothing and footwear, health care or any other needs, e.g., the needs of children with sensory and tactile sensitivities (clothing free of seams, tags, buttons or textures).
- monitor children's clothing and footwear to ensure compliance with the *Sun Safe Policy* and to support the safety, comfort, and wellbeing of every child
- consider clothing and footwear needs for excursions or planned learning experiences and communicate clearly with families about the need for special protective clothing requirements
- provide protective clothing, such as aprons, for messy play experiences and painting. Children will be encouraged by educators, to wear protective clothing during messy and water play.
- encourage children to remove shoes and heavy or excess layers of clothing during sleep and rest times to reflect the room temperature, as recommended practice by Red Nose
- take off children's jumpers and jackets with hoods during sleep and rest time to ensure children's safety
- encourage children to use their self-help skills where appropriate to put on and remove clothing and shoes to meet their needs. Educators will observe and monitor younger children to ensure their clothing and footwear is appropriate for the environment and weather conditions
- monitor the UV rating and ensure children are dressed appropriately for the weather and are adequately protected (e.g., long sleeve shirts, appropriate footwear)
- encourage walking without shoes as part of a child's development (when appropriate), but be mindful of the injury risks, including extreme injuries such as foot burns, and avoid it in hot weather
- discuss clothing needs with children: for example, the need to wear hats and shoes for sun protection, or aprons for messy play to protect their clothes, and similar items
- model appropriate clothing: for example, wearing hats and sun safe clothing

- to encourage children to make choices (where appropriate) about what they wear, respecting children's individuality and exercising their independence
- respect children's privacy and modesty by maintaining professional boundaries and handling sensitive situations, such as changing clothes, with care, while adhering to safeguarding protocols to support safe environments for children.

FAMILIES WILL:

- communicate with educators about their child's individual clothing needs - (e.g., cultural diversity, dis/abilities, clothing sensitivities, health care and any other needs)
- provide spare clothing in children's bags to allow for dirty or soiled clothing and changing weather conditions. (This includes supplying a spare set of socks and shoes if possible)
- dress children appropriately for play and the weather, including footwear and an appropriate hat
- ensure their child is clothed in an appropriate manner, which will allow them to explore and play freely and not restrict them using equipment while at play
- ensure clothing also allows easy access for toileting: i.e., elasticised trousers or track pants rather than buttons, zips, belts, etc.
- not dress their child in good/expensive clothing where there is a chance, they will get dirty or stained
- ensure children are appropriately protected from the sun - please refer to *Sun Safe Policy* for further directives on clothing and sun safe hats (bucket, broad-brimmed or legionnaire's hat)
- ensure children's clothing accommodates the weather conditions. For example, be loose and cool in summer to prevent overheating and warm enough for cold weather, including outdoor play.
- ensure children have appropriate footwear that enables them to play comfortably and not cause safety concerns. For example, thongs, clogs, or backless shoes have a trip factor and do not allow children to use the equipment safely
- ensure all clothing and belongings are clearly labelled with the child's name (not just initials)

CLOTHING CHOICES

Clothing is a way of expressing our culture, personality and individuality. The clothes children wear can affect the development of their independence, self-help skills and participation in play-based activities in early education and care services.

We understand that young children are developing their self-concept and individuality and may be intent on wearing particular accessories or clothing items to our Service. We respect their choices and encourage their independence; however, some clothing types or accessories may be risky, dangerous and may hinder their participation in activities. For example, dresses or skirts that have long hems may

cause tripping when children attempt to use play equipment or ride bikes. Long necklaces, drawstrings on jumpers and long ribbons can also be hazardous to children's safety if they become caught in equipment.

We request that parents/guardians talk to their child (where appropriate) about the choice of clothes and activities they will be involved in at our Service and help them to choose clothes that will be safe and practical. Parents/guardians may decide to send additional clothes in their child's bag to assist educators ensure their safety when they are participating in activities that require clothing to be more practical.

SPECIAL CLOTHES/DRESS UP

To facilitate pretend play and celebrate different cultural experiences, children may be invited to dress up according to a theme or particular cultural celebration. Our educators will communicate with families to ensure all children have the opportunity to engage in these activities.

When dressing their child in 'dress up' clothes, parents/guardians are asked to ensure their child's footwear is appropriate for play-based learning at the Service and ensure clothing is sun safe.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Clothing Policy* will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management, and notification of any change to policies will be made to families within 14 days.

RELATED RESOURCES

Supervision Guidelines and Procedure

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). *Starting Blocks. What children wear to early childhood education and care.*
Cancer Council Australia
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
National Health and Medical Research Council. (2024). *Staying Healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (6th Ed.). NHMRC. Canberra.

Raising Children Network
Red Nose
Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth). https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00305

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	[NAME] Amy Flockhart	[POSITION] office admin	[DATE] 18/06/2026
POLICY REVIEWED	JUNE 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	JUNE 2027
VERSION NUMBER	V12.06.26		
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy review • additional information re: paramount consideration • updated to reflect sector incidents (e.g., foot burns) • edits for clarity and consistency e.g., combined some points • edits within policy to improve inclusivity and professionalism • added related resources section • sources updated as required		
PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS			
JUNE 2025	• annual policy maintenance • sources checked and updated as required		