



Clothing Procedure

Policy

The Clothing Procedure falls under the Health and Safety Policy. Hawthorn Early Years recognises that all children have the right to high quality education and care in a safe and comfortable environment. The Service will maintain robust procedures to minimise and manage illness and injuries and ensure a safe and healthy environment.

Application of Procedure

This procedure applies to employees, students, volunteers, families, children and others attending the programs and activities of Hawthorn Early Years (HEY).

Hawthorn Early Years is committed to:

Ensuring the safety and comfort of all children and employees by providing appropriate clothing guidelines for children, parents and employees utilising and working at the Service so that they are dressed for warmth during colder months/days and are not over-dressed during warmer months/days. HEY recognises that when children are clothed appropriately they are more at ease, comfortable, and less anxious.

Hawthorn Early Years will:

Ensure that educators are provided with access to personal protective equipment (e.g. gloves, goggles etc.) as required to facilitate food preparation, cleaning and to protect their health and safety.

Provide information for educators and employees about suitable clothing and footwear expectations for the education and care work environment through means of the 12 week Induction Program, Employee Handbook, Educa (service policies) and Food Safety Plan.

Provide information for families about suitable clothing and footwear for their child and encourage families to be responsible for bringing in a variety of different clothing to support all weather conditions. This information will also be available from the Service using a variety of communication strategies including through the Parent Handbook, Newsletters, Service Updates, via Educa, and posters.

Inform families and educators about the benefits of barefoot play whilst ensuring there are adequate safety measures in place to minimise the risks associated with this, including consideration of changing weather, individual children, outdoor elements and longevity of outdoor play.



Ensure educators are aware of and abide by the Sun Protection Procedure and all other service Policies and Procedures including this Clothing Procedures.

All employees, volunteers and students will:

Plan

Consult and communicate with families about the individual needs of children with respect to different values and beliefs associated with clothing and footwear.

Consider clothing and footwear needs associated with excursions and/or planned learning experiences and communicate clearly with families about the need for extraordinary protective clothing requirements.

Protect

Monitor children's clothing and footwear to ensure compliance with the Sun Protection Procedure and to support the safety, comfort, and wellbeing of every child throughout the day.

Provide a range of protective clothing, such as aprons, smocks, gumboots or jumpsuits for messy play experiences and painting. Children will be encouraged by educators to wear protective clothing during messy and water play and when painting. On very hot days educators will assess the need for children to wear protective clothing when children are engaging in water play as it may assist in keeping them cool. This is generally when around 25 degrees or higher however children will be monitored individually for comfort and safety and changed out of wet clothes if they become cold or enter a classroom that is air conditioned.

Model appropriate clothing: for example, wearing hats and sun safe clothing in warmer months and wearing layers such as long sleeves and/or coats, beanies and gloves in the cooler months.

Convey respect for children and appreciate their individuality, whilst developing their understanding of safe clothing and footwear for play and the weather.

Respect children's privacy and modesty when having children change their clothes or dressing themselves, ensuring that individual and/or cultural needs and preferences are understood and catered for.

Assess children's body temperature at all times by observing their skin tone, feeling the temperature of exposed skin and monitoring their behaviour. For example; blue lips, shivering, goose bumps, pale skin and constantly moving about may be indicators of feeling cold. Sweating, lethargy, red flushed looking skin and irritability may be indicators of being too warm. Where children are assessed to be too warm or too cold immediate measures will be put into place to rectify this.

Ensure the use of beanie's, coats and gloves in the winter months and minimise areas of exposed skin when the temperature is below 18 degrees to prevent heat loss.



Ensure children are inside prior to the sun setting during the winter months.

Remove layers of clothing as the temperature rises in the warmer months.

Be aware of and consider the 'feels like' temperature as well as the actual temperature. This information is available via the Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology weather App.

Ensure children are dressed in light clothing, as per the Sun Protection Procedure and limiting outdoor play when the temperature reaches 30 degrees and above.

Be mindful of fluctuating temperatures between indoors and outdoors and adjust children's clothing as needed as they move between the environments.

Monitor the temperature of the classroom environment to ensure it is not too cold or too hot and adjust the heating/cooling as required.

Ensure that messy play experiences are packed away towards the end of the day and that children are changed into clean clothes ready to go home. This would usually be by approximately 4pm when educators begin to finish their shift for the day.

Barefoot play

Encourage children to play barefoot where safe to do so and discuss the benefits of barefoot play with parents.

Store children's shoes and socks in a coordinated way so that children's shoes and socks are not lost and can be easily located by children when needed.

Assess the suitability for barefoot play each day in regards to temperature and limit barefoot play in the winter months to avoid the possibility of children developing chilblains on their toes.

Monitor children's feet and in particular their toes for signs of being cold. If children's feet or toes are cold educators will support the child to either move to a warmer environment or put their socks and/or shoes back on.

Assist children to understand and manage the risks associated with barefoot play by discussing the need to wear shoes when participating in certain experiences that could lead to an injury. For example; when engaged in woodwork experiences, carrying heavy objects such as a rock, using sharp objects such as a spade, riding a bike or walking on rough or jagged surfaces.

Sleeping/resting

Monitor children consistently whilst they are sleeping/resting to ensure they are not too hot or cold as children's body temperature can drop quickly when resting/sleeping. Children who have refused a blanket whilst going to sleep may need a blanket placed on them once they are asleep to ensure they don't wake prematurely due to being cold.



Encourage children to remove shoes and heavy or excess layers of clothing during sleep and/or rest times to reflect the room temperature as recommended by Red Nose. When the room temperature is cool children will remain in layers of light, clean clothing to sleep/rest and will also be offered or given blankets. Sleeping bags are recommended for babies and young children.

Ensure that in the warmer months air conditioning is not set too low, particularly while children are sleeping/resting where the air at ground level is coolest.

Ensure children's jumpers and jackets are removed prior to rest time if they have a hood to ensure their safety.

Educate

Encourage children to use their self-help skills where appropriate to put on and remove clothing and shoes to meet their needs.

Monitor the UV rating regularly and discuss this with children to assist them to understand if they are dressed appropriately for the weather and are adequately protected (e.g. long sleeve shirts).

Discuss suitable clothing and footwear with children and families: for example, the need to wear hats for sun protection, warm clothes including shoes in winter and safe shoes for play e.g. no thongs, clogs, etc.

Discuss suitable footwear with children and families and ensure children understand which shoes are suitable for each experience. For example gumboots are encouraged for gardening and mud/puddle play but are not suitable for climbing and active play as they have a tendency to slip off and hinder movement.

Encourage children to make choices in relation to getting dressed and the clothing they wear, whilst understanding that children's health and safety must remain the priority. If a child refuses to dress appropriately for the weather or experience they are engaging in then clear but respectful limits will be conveyed to the child.

Parents/guardians will:

Dress children appropriately for play and the weather, including suitable footwear. For example, clothing should be loose and cool in the summer months in line with the Sun Protection Procedure. In the cooler weather clothing should be layered and include long sleeved tops, jumpers, beanies, gumboots, coats, gloves etc.

Ensure children have comfortable and well fitted footwear that enables them to play on all equipment and not cause safety concerns. For example, thongs, clogs or backless shoes have a trip factor and do not allow children to use equipment safely.



Provide spare clothing in children's bags to allow for multiple changes of dirty or soiled clothing and the changing weather conditions throughout the day. This includes a spare set of shoes and socks, particularly if the child is toilet training or likely to have toileting accidents.

Avoid dressing children in good/expensive clothing as this may deter children from engaging in all experiences if they think they may get them getting dirty or stained. Active exploration is a large part of the educational program and is encouraged within all classrooms.

Ensure their child is clothed in an appropriate manner which will allow them to explore and play freely and not restrict them from 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.

Ensure children are appropriately protected from the sun - please refer to the Sun Protection Procedure for further directives.

Ensure all clothing and belongings are clearly labelled with the child's name and regularly check the classrooms lost property box.

Be familiar with their child's clothing fabric to minimise allergies and reactions, especially if the child is known to suffer from eczema.

See also:

1. Health and Safety Policy
2. Health and Safety Procedure
3. Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Procedure
4. Sun Protection Procedure
5. Interactions with Children Procedure
6. Behaviour Guidance Procedure

Key Definitions:

Chilblains - Patches of discoloured (red, blue, white), swollen and itchy skin, believed to be caused by a combination of cold weather and poor circulation. The toes are particularly vulnerable, but other extremities that can develop chilblains include fingers, earlobes and the nose. Tight shoes can contribute by further reducing circulation to the toes.

Useful Resources:

- SunSmart App for iPhone and Android: <http://www.bom.gov.au/uv/iphoneapp.shtml>
- Bureau of Meteorology <http://www.bom.gov.au/vic/>