

## University Preschool & Childcare Centre

### Clothing and Comfort Policy

**Date** 28/09/07, revised 5/03/08, revised 10/07/08, reviewed 16/03/11, reviewed 18/02/15, reviewed 22/06/18

**Approved by Management Committee** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Aim**

To ensure that effective clothing and comfort strategies, including sun protection clothing, are implemented by the service to ensure that children feel secure and safe in the care environment.

University Preschool & Childcare Centre will endeavour to consult with families about their child's individual needs and to be aware of the different values and parenting beliefs - cultural or otherwise - that are associated with clothing and footwear.

#### **Rationale**

University Preschool & Childcare Centre defines 'comfort' as a state of reassurance, satisfaction, ease, and free from anxiety or pain.

At University Preschool & Childcare Centre the term 'clothing and footwear' encompasses:

- Safe sleepwear;
- Sun protective clothing, including hats;
- Clothing for messy play;
- Appropriate clothing for changing weather conditions and temperature of play environments;
- Clothing to facilitate self-help, including role play props and clothing; and
- Safe footwear for play experiences such as climbing and running.

It is understood that there is a shared responsibility between the service and the families of children attending the Centre to ensure that the Clothing and Comfort Policy and procedures are adhered to.

#### **Related Policies**

Sun Protection Policy  
Rest Time Policy  
Excursion Policy

#### **Practice**

##### **Centre Responsibilities**

- Clothing and Comfort strategies and practices will be outlined in the Family Handbook, newsletters and excursion permission forms.
- Parents will be informed of what we consider to be suitable clothing for children to wear to University Preschool & Child Care Centre.
- The centre will inform parents of clothing that we consider to be inappropriate or unsuitable for children to wear while attending the centre. These may include:
  - Clothing that poses a potential health and safety risk. For example, hooded jumpers with cords increase the risk of choking, or wearing thongs to climb outdoor equipment;
  - Clothing that restricts movement, the child's ability to play or inhibits the development of self-help skills;
  - Clothing that is too revealing and may potentially place a child at risk. For example, some styles of swimwear, midriff tops;
  - Clothing that contravenes the sun protection policy. For example, strapless tops or singlets; or
  - Clothing that offends others. For example shirts or baseball caps with slogans, images or language that may potentially provoke a negative response or offend another person's beliefs or values.
- Staff will ensure that the children are dressed appropriately for Indoor/Outdoor Environmental conditions and temperatures.
  - Sun hats and clothing consistent with the requirements in the Sun Protection Policy
  - Beanies and Jackets for outside in winter.
  - Heavy or restrictive outer clothing will be removed to prevent overheating during sleep and ensure the children are comfortable (Refer Rest Time Policy)

- The children will be strongly encouraged by staff to wear protective clothing (smocks, aprons) when participating in messy activities.
  - painting and collage experiences;
  - clay or water play; or
  - cooking
  - Whenever possible staff will inform parents in advance of potentially very messy activities so parents can dress their children appropriately (i.e. old, easy to wash clothes).
- Appropriate clothing for the environment and weather conditions will be discussed with children and included in the teaching programs

### **Parent Responsibilities**

- It is the responsibility of parents to dress their children in appropriate/comfortable play clothes that complies with this policy and related policies, ie. Sun Protection Policy while they are attending the Centre.
  - Shirts/tee-shirts/dresses that include sleeves and are an appropriate fit. Loose overly large clothing can impede the children's ability to participate in activities, eg. Trousers that are too long can be a tripping hazard or can interfere with climbing, sleeves that are too long can interfere with children's ability to participate in drawing/painting/ block building activities.
  - Clothing that encourages independence in dressing and undressing. Shoes with velcro straps, pants with elasticised waists
  - Clothing that is age appropriate for the child, eg. overalls are often difficult items of clothing for children to remove when they are toilet training;
- It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their children are wearing footwear that is appropriate for active play. Shoes should ideally have the following features
  - Firm, comfortable fit both lengthways and widthways
  - Rounded toe
  - Plenty of room for the toes
  - Flexible, flat sole
  - Heel support
  - Laces, straps or equivalent to prevent excessive movement or slipping of the foot inside the shoe
  - Shoes should be appropriate for the child's age. Children do not need shoes until they have been walking unaided for a couple of months and then only to protect their feet from sharp objects. Children should not wear shoes with high heels as these will impede the development of balance, coordination and posture.
  - Shoes that are considered suitable for children attending the centre include; sandals with adjustable back straps, fully enclosed shoes and sneakers.
  - Shoes not considered suitable for children attending the centre include; slip-on's, thongs and gumboots (please note that gumboots are not considered appropriate for everyday wear but may be worn outside on rainy days)
- While staff will take every reasonable effort to protect clothing during messy play (as detailed above), parents need to understand that the clothes they dress their children in may become unavoidably damaged. The centre will not provide compensation for clothes damaged during planned or spontaneous curriculum experiences, including outdoor play and messy play.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

- Staff will ensure that they provide good role models for the children with regard to their clothing. Children learn through example and role modelling is an important strategy in children's services to maintain quality standards.
- Staff will wear appropriate/comfortable clothing that does not restrict movement and that complies with this policy and related policies, ie. Sun Protection Policy while they are attending the Centre.
- Clothing that may not be considered appropriate for Staff to wear while attending the centre may include:
  - Clothing that poses a potential health and safety risk. For example, hooded jumpers with cords increase the risk of choking, or wearing thongs or stiletto heeled shoes;
  - Clothing that is too revealing. For example, midriff tops;
  - Clothing that contravenes the sun protection policy. For example, strapless tops or singlets; or

- Clothing that offends others. For example shirts or baseball caps with slogans, images or language that may potentially provoke a negative response or offend another person's beliefs or values.

## Sources

ACECQA, Guide to the NQF, <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about/guide>. Accessed on 22/06/2018

Better Health Channel, fact sheet – Children's Feet and Shoes <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/childrens-feet-and-shoes>

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Cancer Council Australia, <http://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection/sunsmart-schools/>, accessed on 22/06/2018

The Skin Cancer Foundation – What is sun safe clothing, <http://www.skincancer.org/prevention/sun-protection/clothing/protection>, Accessed on 22/06/2018

UNICEF (n.d.). *Fact sheet: A summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Retrieved 22/06/2018, from [http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights\\_overview.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf)

**Policy review date**                      March 2020