



Valley View Kindergarten Hot Weather Policy

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Rationale

Children are at greater risk of suffering from heat 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

At Valley View Kindergarten we aim to keep everyone safe at all times and in particular during hot weather. Reasonable steps will be taken to identify and manage risks, and every reasonable precaution will be taken to protect children from harm and hazards. (NQS Quality Area 2)

The Kindergarten will –

- Provide a comfortable and safe environment for all children.
- Provide heating and cooling to maintain a comfortable temperature for all children
- Implement the site SunSmart Policy
- Recognise the risk of heat stress is a factor of both air temperature and relative humidity levels.

Context:

The Valley View Kindergarten outdoor area has many large trees and structures which provide shade at different times during the day. During periods of hot weather all preschool activities will be set up in these shaded areas and moved to follow the shade from morning to afternoon.

Activities are also provided under the veranda but will be moved when staff feels that the levels are no longer safe for outdoor play.

The centre has three air conditioners covering the indoor play area which allows children to continue their play in a cool climate and fans under the veranda.

In line with the Department for Education “Guidelines for Developing a Preschool Hot Weather Policy” and information from the Anti-Cancer Foundation of S.A., the following strategies are being used to reduce the risk of heat illness in young children.

Strategies are:

Shade: During periods of hot weather activities will be conducted in shaded areas.

Drinks: Drinking water will be accessible at all times.

Children will be reminded to have a drink.

Children will be encouraged to bring a named drink bottle.

Families: Families will be encouraged to dress children in clothing that minimises heat gain, in layers that can be easily removed during activity and a type that is ‘Sun Safe’

Lunch: Lunch is placed in the lunch trolley on arrival which are then stored in the fridge.

Staff: Staff will include in the program, teaching strategies that help children understand how to keep cool and safe in hot weather, e.g. drink lots of water, play in the shade, and keep active play to a minimum.

Staff members are to ensure their own health and safety during times of high temperatures.

Curriculum:

The staff at Valley View Kindergarten will reinforce heat illness awareness through role modelling and including appropriate teaching activities, in line with the ELYF Outcome 3 **Children Having a Strong Sense of Wellbeing-** “Children show increasing independence in personal hygiene, care and safety”.