

## INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

### AIM

*To ensure that in cases of extreme weather, children are safe from the risk of hyper/hypothermia or weather related injuries. This policy includes the Centre's **Hot Weather** procedures.*

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### Leadership will:

- Review policy as needed
- Contact SA Power Network on 131 366 in the case of a power failure/blackout. If the temperature in the designated sleep rooms reaches over 25 degrees and the blackout is expected to last over an hour, Leadership may decide to send children home.
- Close the Centre at their discretion if a power failure is expected for longer than a day.
- Manage and oversee incidents where inclement weather causes injuries or property damage.
- Have the capacity to make a judgement about outdoor play for children where a severe weather warning is in place but conditions are visually fine and considered safe for outdoor play. This allows the risk of injury from weather conditions to be assessed against the risk of injury from high amounts of children being kept indoors for extended periods.
- If outside during a warning, conditions will be visually monitored every half hour by the Director or delegate who will report to the Director for reassessment of safety.

#### Team Leaders will:

- Ensure this policy is understood by educators and implemented in their room.

#### Educators will:

- Ensure outside play areas will be shaded as much as possible and encourage children to play in covered areas.
- Ensure children wear hats outside when the UV rating is higher than 3.
- Ensure children wear appropriate clothing for the weather i.e. layers for cold weather, light clothing for hot days, dry clothes after playing in rain etc.
- Offer outdoor play most days to encourage children to engage with the natural environment and active play. During hot weather, outdoor play may be conducted under shade and during low UV periods. During cold weather, children will be dressed in appropriate layers and under cover during wet weather.
- Offer and encourage indoor play on days with extreme hot weather, storms or strong winds.
- Undertake risk assessments for outdoor play experiences if the weather is unpredictable or there are weather warnings.
- Activate appropriate cooling systems for comfort and relief in times of hot weather. All air conditioning and heating systems are adjustable to suit the weather and temperature.
- Ensure water is provided for children at all times. Each room will be responsible for providing access to cool drinking water and serve it in an age appropriate way i.e. providing liquids frequently to babies, allowing older children to pour their own drinks from an urn etc.
- Remind children to drink liquids more frequently on days with excessive temperatures.
- During hot weather, offer experiences such as water play (see **Water Safety Policy**).
- Contact parents/caregivers and follow first aid/emergency procedures if a child shows signs of dehydration, heat stroke or hypothermia.
- Monitor the temperature in their rooms during a blackout/power failure and alert Leadership if it exceeds 25 degrees.
- Ensure all children are brought inside **one hour prior** to anticipated arrival of severe weather as predicted by the Bureau of Meteorology.

- Exercise caution when arranging outdoor play experiences if Marine Weather warnings have been issued, even if a Severe Weather warning is not yet in place.

**The Centre Chef will:**

- Store perishable foods and meals in fridges or freezers until they are prepared or served. This is to reduce the risk of spoilage and food poisoning. (See **Healthy Food and Nutrition Policy**).
- Dispose of potentially hazardous food or food that has sat between 5° and 60 ° for longer than four hours. During a blackout or if the fridge/freezer is malfunctioning, this food should be monitored every fifteen minutes.

**Administration staff will:**

- Check the Bureau of Meteorology site each morning and place a note in the Communication diary that indicates the UV rating and if there are any severe weather warnings indicated.
- Check the Bureau of Meteorology throughout the day where strong wind warnings are present to monitor the possibility of severe weather warnings developing.
- Inform educators if a Marine Weather warning has been updated to a Severe Weather warning at any point during the day.

**Families will:**

- Ensure they send children to care in weather appropriate clothing. In hot weather, this may include thin layers that can be removed throughout the day or during sleep time. In cold weather, children should have a jacket and gum boots packed for outdoor play. Spare clothing is provided by the Centre should children need it. Children who sweat excessively may be given spare clothes to prevent discomfort and lower the chances of hypothermia.
- Ensure children are dressed in appropriate clothing for sun exposure, including clothes that cover their shoulders, hats and sunscreen. (See **Skin Protection Policy**).
- Be required to collect children if they display signs of dehydration, heat stroke or hypothermia.
- Be required to collect children if a blackout onsite is expected to last longer than an hour.

**EVALUATION:**

This policy is seen to be working effectively when:

- Steps are taken to decrease children's risk of heat stroke/dehydration/hypothermia.
- The Centre has procedures in place to provide comfort and relief for children and families in time of excessive heat, storms, severe weather and power outages.

**National Quality Standards:**

2. Children's Health and Safety

2.2.1. At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazards

**Implemented:** July 2016

**Reviewed:** August 2019

**Next Review:** August 2020

**Source:**

DECD. '[Guidelines for developing a Preschool Hot Weather Policy](#)'. Last Updated 2009.

DECD, 'Inclement Weather Policy' (draft) Last updated June 2016