

	<p style="text-align: center;">Thornbury Kindergarten.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Policies</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Policy Title</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Protective Clothing (Bush Kinder)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Quality Area</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2 – Children’s Health and Safety</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Category</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Best Practice</p>

1. Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Set out clear guidelines for parents/guardians and staff regarding appropriate clothing to be worn by children attending Bush Kinder in various weather conditions to ensure their safety and wellbeing (including a description of clothing which should not be worn).
- Provide clear guidelines regarding the change of clothes requirements for Bush Kinder participants.
- Provide an appropriate mechanism for communication of the protective clothing requirements for Bush Kinder sessions to parents/guardians.

2. Values

Thornbury Kindergarten is committed to:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment for children participating in the Bush Kinder program.
- Facilitating a Bush Kinder experience in a variety of (safe) weather conditions, including rain, to allow children to experience nature across as broad a spectrum as possible and without compromising the safety of the participants.
- Ensuring clothing worn by children in the program allows for free movement and does not obstruct the children in their activities in the Bush Kinder setting, through assisting them in remaining comfortable.
- Facilitating communication to parents and guardians to ensure compliance with this policy.

3. Scope

This policy applies to children, parents/guardians, staff, committee members, authorised persons, volunteers and students on placement working at Thornbury Kindergarten.

4. Background and legislation

Thornbury Kindergarten's Bush Kinder program is intended to operate across a broad spectrum of weather conditions, allowing children to experience nature and its elements across the seasons. Whatever the weather, children are encouraged to take the lead in playing, exploring and learning in a bush or natural environment.

For this reason, there are some particular clothing requirements in the Bush Kinder setting that may differ from requirements in a centre-based environment.

Relevant legislation includes but is not limited to:

- The Children's Services Act 1996 (CSA)
- Children's Services Regulations 2009 (CSR)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

5. Definitions

Protective and appropriate clothing & footwear:

It is important that Bush Kinder participants wear appropriate and protective clothing and footwear which:

- allows children to move freely and undertake activities such as climbing, balancing, running.
- keeps children warm and dry in cold/wet weather.
- protects children from the damaging effects of the sun, UV rays in warm weather and high UV conditions.
- prevents sunburn, bites, scratches and stings (even in warm weather, long sleeve tops and long pants are recommended - this clothing should be loose fitting and light).
- Where possible is made from natural fabrics which allow the body to breathe and is comfortable against the skin.
- In the case of footwear, keeps feet and toes covered and has a flexible sole to allow children to climb and balance on uneven surfaces.

The following table provides examples of recommended clothing, clothing which is not recommended and unacceptable clothing:

	Warm Weather	Cold Weather /Rain
Recommended clothing and footwear	Light, loose-fitting long-sleeved tops and long pants, broad brimmed hat or legionnaires hat, closed toe shoes suitable for climbing.	Waterproofs (can be purchased through the Merchandise department), long pants, long sleeved top, beanie, waterproof gloves, thermals in very cold weather, gumboots.
Not recommended	Short-sleeved tops, long skirts or dresses, shorts, gumboots.	Skirts, dresses, bulky jumpers (incompatible with Waterproofs).
Unacceptable clothing and footwear	Open toe shoes, sandals, thongs, crocs, singlet tops and dangly jewellery.	Non-waterproof outer clothing. (Waterproofs on top of non-waterproof clothing is recommended). Highly flammable polyester loose and dangly clothing.

Waterproofs: Light rainproof suit worn over clothing, which includes a jacket with a hood, and pants or overalls, which zip up over clothing. Please consider ease of toileting & your child's growth when purchasing waterproofs.

Change of clothes: All children participating in Bush Kinder are required to bring a change of clothes and footwear as these may become wet and muddy. It is recommended that the spare clothing include:

- Spare top and bottoms of appropriate thickness/weight for the weather on the day
- Spare underpants (and singlet in winter)
- 2 pairs of socks
- 1 pair of gumboots (it is not recommended that gumboots are worn at all times due to the restriction of movement they impose).
- Waterproof clothing (if not worn to the session).

6. Sources and related centre policies

- Extreme Weather (Bush Kinder Specific)
- Communication
- Hygiene
- Inclusion and equity
- Program participation
- Supervision
- Excursions and centre events

7. Procedures

General

The Committee is responsible for:

- Implementing and maintaining a *Protective Clothing Policy* which provides clarity to parents/guardians and staff as to the appropriate clothing children are required to wear to Bush Kinder in various weather conditions to ensure their safety and wellbeing (including a description of clothing which should not be worn).
- All parents/guardians being aware of this policy and are provided access to the policy at orientation sessions, in written Bush Kinder material and on the Bush Kinder website, and made available upon request.
- Ensuring staff are appropriately educated on procedures in the event that children are not wearing compliant clothing.

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring all children being dropped off to Bush Kinder are wearing appropriate clothing in line with this policy. If inappropriate clothing is worn, staff are to:
- Highlight to the parent/guardian dropping off the child which clothing is inappropriate and the reasons for it.
- Determine if the change of clothing brought by that child is appropriate and request the parent change the clothes on the child if need be.
- If the clothing has the potential to put the child's safety and wellbeing at risk and there is no suitable alternative clothing, refuse the child's entry to Bush Kinder.
- Checking children's clothing periodically (i.e. asking children if their clothes are wet as they can be absorbed in an activity and not take much notice), on wet days, and changing from the child's change of clothing if need be.
- Encouraging children to tell a staff member if they have wet clothing.
- During orientation sessions, advising parents/guardians of the clothing requirements for Bush Kinder.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Ensuring protective and appropriate clothing is worn to Bush Kinder by their child in line with this policy.
- Changing their child's clothing as instructed by the teacher to enable their child to participate in the Bush Kinder session.
- Ensure their child's change of clothes includes items as set out in this policy.
- Reading and being familiar with the policy.

- Bringing relevant issues to the attention of both staff and committee.

8. Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes the committee will:

- Seek feedback regarding this policy and its implementation with parents/guardians of children participating in the Bush Kinder program. This can be facilitated through discussions and the annual centre survey.
- Ask staff to share their experiences and observations in relation to the effectiveness of this policy.
- Regularly review the policy and centre practices to ensure they are compliant with any new legislation, research or best practice procedures.

9. Attachments

Nil.

10. Authorisation

This policy was approved by the committee of management of Thornbury Kindergarten at a committee meeting December 2017

Review date: December 2019