Leigh Creek Kindergarten

Hot Weather Policy

Leigh Creek Kindergarten is situated in an extreme climate during the summer months. This policy aims to outline ways to reduce the risk of heat illness to young children and staff.

The policy recognises that children are at greater risk of suffering from heat illness than adults and that air temperature and relative humidity both affect heat stress.

“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”

Ways to reduce the risk of heat illness

Shade - Activities conducted in periods of hot weather are undertaken in shaded areas - under the shade of trees, pergolas and verandahs.

Drinks - Children are frequently offered water or fluids. Drinking water is available to children at all times.

Clothing - Parents are encouraged to dress children in clothing that minimises heat gain, in layers that can be easily removed during activity and of a type that is sunsafe (refer to Skin Protection Policy).

Lunch - Lunch boxes are stored in the refrigerator. Parents may pack food in insulated containers and include ice bricks.

Equipment - Outdoor equipment will be assessed by a staff member to ensure it is not hot enough to place children at risk of burn injuries.

Cooling – Leigh Creek Kindergarten has split system air conditioning which is used during hot weather. In the event of a blackout or breakdown of the cooling or ventilation systems staff will activate an early dismissal (1 hour prior to regular closing) - this will only occur where the forecast is at least 36 degrees Celsius.

Early Dismissal Procedure:
1. Notify Regional Office of intention to activate early dismissal
2. Notify parents of early dismissal
3. Staff will remain on duty on days of early dismissal
4. Children who are unable to be collected will be adequately supervised by staff and kept as comfortable as possible.

In the case of an extended breakdown of the cooling system during hot weather the kindergarten Director will undertake a risk management process and work with the Regional Office to manage the situation.

Skin Protection Policy – Leigh Creek Kindergarten is a SunSmart centre that has been approved by the Cancer Council of SA and the Skin Protection and Hot Weather Policies work together.

Dated: 30/04/2012