

## BUSH KINDER: IDENTIFICATION AND VISIBILITY POLICY

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### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to clearly provide:

- Ways in which Bush Kinder participants are clearly visible to staff and volunteers, and clearly identifiable to other users of Home Road Kindergarten, Newport Lakes Reserve and other local parklands to protect the safety of all participants
- The manner in which the Bush Kinder site is marked and signed to enable identification by users of Home Road Kindergarten and to communicate some key messages to optimise the Bush Kinder program and experience.

### POLICY STATEMENT

#### 1. VALUES

Home Road Kindergarten is committed to:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment for children, staff and volunteers participating in the Bush Kinder program;
- Being respectful of the community space that the Bush Kinder site offers, whilst ensuring the safety of participants at all times in response to external influences and risks;
- Being respectful that members of the public may be interested in the Bush Kinder program, but ensuring that the program is not interrupted or disturbed by other local parkland users.

#### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Home Road Kindergarten, including during offsite excursions and activities.

#### 3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

##### Background

Home Road Kindergarten's Bush Kinder program is conducted at Newport Lakes Reserve, a community parkland which is enjoyed by members of the public and allows dogs to be walked off leash in designated areas. It is important that children, staff and volunteers participating in the Bush Kinder program are easily identified to each other and other parkland users as a discrete group. It is also critical that children participating in the program are clearly visible to all staff and volunteers.

In addition, appropriate signage must be visible to members of the public so that they respect the education program underway and not disturb the program in any way.

##### Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation includes but is not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law 2010 (Vic)*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (Vic)*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Compliance Codes,*
- *First Aid in the Workplace (2008)*

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>
- Commonwealth Legislation – ComLaw: <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/>

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

**Identifiable clothing:** Children and volunteers participating in the Bush Kinder Program will be provided with fluoro coloured vests, clearly marked with Home Road Kindergarten's phone number printed on the back. Staff will be provided with a different colour fluoro vest, with "Staff" printed on the back, to distinguish them from other adult volunteers. In winter, the children will be provided with wet weather clothing, and due to mud and wet weather, educators may choose not to allocate the vests. This is where the silicon wrist bands will be of priority.

**Identifiable silicon wrist bands:** Children participating in the Bush Kinder program will be clearly identified with Home Road Kindergarten silicon wrist bands with the centre's telephone and mobile numbers printed on them. These wrist bands will be allocated at the beginning of the session, and returned at the end of the session, to be reused.

**Kinder-issued Sun Smart Hats:** These are the hats provided to all kindergarten children at the start of the year. Pursuant to our Sun Protection Policy, this hat is required to be worn when UV rating is 3 or above.

**Visible signage:** Visible signage will be posted at the entrance/path to the Bush Kinder site and around the boundary. The signage will be displayed to make it clear to other users of the parkland that there is a kindergarten session in progress, requesting that members of the public don't linger at the site so as not to disrupt the session.

Suggested/sample wording for the signage is detailed in Attachment 1.

#### 5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

##### Service policies

- *Bush Kinder: Extreme Weather Policy*
- *Dog Awareness Policy*
- *Bush Kinder: Emergency Evacuation Policy*
- *Clothing Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Hygiene Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*
- *Excursions and Service Events Policy*
- *Sun Protection Policy*
- *Occupational Health & Safety Policy*

#### PROCEDURES

##### The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Providing appropriate identifiable fluoro vests and silicon wrist bands as detailed in this policy for participants
- Providing appropriate signage for the Bush Kinder site as detailed in this policy.

##### Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisors and all other Bush Kinder Staff are responsible for:

- Placing Bush Kinder signage as detailed in this policy in appropriate places at the Bush Kinder site
- Ensuring children are wearing their identifiable wrist bands and/or fluoro vests, and when UV rating is 3 or above, their Kinder-issued Sun Smart hats
- Requesting, in as diplomatic fashion as possible, that interested onlookers move on so as not to disturb the education program underway.

**Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- Reading and being familiar with the policy
- Assisting educators to ensure their child is wearing required clothing, wrist band and hat
- Bringing relevant issues to the attention of both staff and committee.

**Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.**

**EVALUATION**

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes the Committee of Management will:

- Where deemed appropriate, 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 parent satisfaction 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.
- Notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any substantial changes to this policy, which would impact on the supervision or care of children.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Sample wording for Bush Kinder signage

**AUTHORISATION**

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Home Road Kindergarten on 15 April 2020.

**REVIEW DATE: MARCH 2022**

## **ATTACHMENT 1 - SAMPLE WORDING FOR BUSH KINDER SIGNAGE**

### **Short version of wording:**

BUSH KINDER SESSION IN PROGRESS

Our children at play in nature

Thank you for sharing the park

Please be mindful of your dogs near our group

### **Long version of wording:**

BUSH KINDER SESSION IN PROGRESS

Home Road Kindergarten is running a Bush Kinder program at this site. Whatever the weather, the children are encouraged to take the lead in playing, exploring, and learning in a bush environment.

We respect that Newport Lakes Reserve is a community space, but we ask for your co-operation in the following ways:

- Please be mindful that we are running an education program, and ask that you refrain from lingering at the site or disturbing the program in any way
- Please respect our safety by leaving your dogs on leash in the immediate vicinity of the Bush Kinder site
- We welcome your interest in the program, but our staff will be unable to discuss it while supervising children
- We thank you for sharing your parklands with us and for your co-operation.