All Weather Play

Yarralea's Philosophy states "All-weather, indoor/outdoor authentic play programs provide nurturing, stimulating, responsive and adventurous environments for learning."

The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) Outcome 2 states that "Children are connected to and contribute to their world." Engagement in an all weather learning environment supports this outcome by enabling children to connect with their environment and learn about it first hand. Children are able to experience temperature, both warm and cold, and connect that with the seasons- Summer, Autumn, Winter, Spring.

They are also able to connect with Country and the Wurundjeri seasons
1- Biderap, Dry Season (Jan-Feb)
2- Iuk, Eel Season (March)
3- Waring, Wombat Season (April-July)
4- Guling, Orchid Season (Aug)
5- Poorneet, Tadpole Season (Sept-Oct)
6- Buarth Gurru, Grass Flowering Season (Nov)
7- Garrawang, Kangaroo-Apple Season (Dec)

First hand connection with the water cycle and the opportunity to experience rain, fog, mist, mud and frost is afforded in all weather play programs.
This in turn provides a platform to explore sustainability principles such as water use and conservation and drought.

Bush Kinder operates all year round apart from days it is cancelled in accordance with our Extreme Weather Policy as follows. Temperature above 30 degrees forecast, wind speeds of greater than 40km/hour, thunderstorms or heavy rain forecast, total Fire Ban Days and high forecast of Thunderstorm asthma (according to Melbourne Pollen Count app.) Staff are experienced and skilled in assessing, planning and delivering outdoor learning with the children's best interests as paramount.

For some children and families, experiencing cold or rainy weather is a new thing. Here are some frequently asked questions.

Will children get cold and wet?

There is an old Scandinavian saying: "There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing choices." While it can be applied to any season, it seems most relevant in winter. At Yarralea in order to support children to be dressed appropriately and get the most out of their all weather play we provide a rain jacket and pants to each child participating in the Bush Kinder program. Families are asked to provide gum boots and spare clothes.

Will children get sick from cold/wet weather?

Apart from Asthma which can be triggered by cold air, there is no evidence to show that wet weather puts children at greater risk of catching cold and flu viruses. Actually quite the contrary. See info
https://healthbeat.spectrumhealth.org/put-your-coat-on-youll-catch-a-cold-myth-germs-winter-frostbite/

Is Yarralea sunmart?

Yarralea is governed by our Sunsmart policy. Families are asked to apply sunscreen prior to attending and staff reapply every 2 hours thereafter when the UV is 3 or above. Children are also expected to bring their own hat and drink bottle of water.

Dressing for cold weather

Layers are good as they can be removed as the day or the child warms up. E.g. singlet, thermal, Tshirt, jumper, warm hat. Children still need the freedom and ability to move their bodies so thin fabric like merino works well.

What's best for COVID?

In relation to the COVID pandemic, one of the Department of Education and World Health Organisation key messages is "Early Childhood services are encouraged to operate their educational programs outdoors where possible to ensure optimum ventilation and reduced risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission." This is something that Yarralea is widely recognised as doing well in both the indoor/outdoor home kinder program and Bush Kinder program.