

Sun Protection Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school on 9802 0663 for support.

Purpose

Too much ultraviolet (UV) from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is known to be a major cause of skin cancer.

Sun protection is needed whenever UV levels reach three and above. In Victoria average UV levels are three and above from middle of August to the end of April. During these months extra care is needed between 10am – 3pm when UV levels reach their peak.

Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D regulates calcium levels in the blood. It is also necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones, muscles and teeth and for general health. From May to August in Victoria, average UV levels are below three so sun protection isn't usually needed during these months.

The policy provides guidelines to:

- Ensure that all students and staff maintain a healthy UV exposure balance
- Encourage the entire school community to use a combination of safe sun protection measures when UV index levels are 3 or above (generally mid-August to the end of April in Victoria)
- Work towards a safe school environment that provides adequate shade for students, staff and the school community at appropriate times
- Encourage and support students to develop independent sun protection skills to help them to be responsible for their own protection
- Support our school's strategies to meet its duty of care and occupational health and safety obligations to minimise harmful UV exposure and associated harm for students and staff.

Scope

This policy applies to all school activities on and off-site, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

Policy

Overexposure to the sun's UV radiation can cause health problems including sunburn, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

UV radiation:

- Cannot be seen or felt
- Can be reflected off surfaces such as buildings, asphalt, concrete, water, sand and snow
- Can pass through light clouds
- Varies in intensity across the day and the year (highest from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria)
- Peaks during school hours.

Sun safety is a shared responsibility and staff, parents and students are encouraged to implement a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 or above. Information about the daily local sun protection times is available sunsmart.com.au or bom.gov.au.

Weeden Heights Primary School has the following measures in place for all outdoor activities during the daily sun protection times to help reduce the risk of over-exposure to UV radiation for staff and students.

This policy is to be read as part of our Uniform Policy.

Shade

- Processes for the planning of outdoor activities and excursions include the consideration of shade
- A shade audit is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade
- Students not wearing appropriate hats or clothing are to remain in shade during sport or play times – NO HAT, NO PLAY (Refer to Uniform Policy)

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Weeden Heights Primary School that may impact on the level of shade available to staff and students, a review of the shaded areas available will be conducted and further shading installed as appropriate.

Sun protective uniform

Weeden Heights Primary School's uniform includes sun-protective clothing, including:

- Loose, cool, densely woven fabric
- T- shirts with a collar that sits close to the neck
- Tops with elbow length or long sleeves (optional tops)
- Longer style shorts and skorts, dresses and skirts
- Rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming activities are compulsory.

Weeden Heights Primary School's uniform applies on and off-site unless otherwise advised. When students are not required to wear school uniform (such as school camps, free dress day), the school will ensure steps are taken to encourage students to wear sun-protective clothing whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

Hats

- From mid-August to 30 April, all students **must** wear a sun protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears for all outdoor activities. Hats may also be worn for all outdoor activities outside of the August to April time period, by parent or student choice
- Students are to wear the approved school's broad brimmed hat (with school logo) that protects the face, head, neck and ears when outdoor

- Baseball or peaked caps and sun visors are not considered a suitable alternative, as they do not protect the ears, cheeks or neck
- Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or hats will be asked to use available areas of shade when outdoors or a suitable area protected from the sun.

Sunscreen

- Students are to bring their own sunscreen to school - SPF 50+ (or higher) broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
- Staff are to encourage students to reapply sunscreen before going outside
- The school community is educated about the correct use of sunscreen and the level of protection it provides
- Staff and students who may suffer from skin reactions from certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to attend sickbay to implement a plan to reduce the risk of a sunscreen reaction at school, such as families sending their child to school with a suitable alternative sunscreen.

Sunglasses

- Students and staff are encouraged to wear close fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices. They are supported to understand effects of sun exposure and are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school. The school will address sun protection and UV safety education as part of inquiry investigations.

- Educational programs on skin cancer prevention and healthy UV exposure for Vitamin D are incorporated into appropriate areas of the school curriculum
- Students are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model appropriate UV exposure measures to the whole school community
- Appropriate UV exposure measures are regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through a variety of channels such as newsletters and school assemblies.

Scheduling

- This policy is considered in the planning of all outdoor events e.g. camps/excursions and sporting events
- Where possible, outdoor activities/events will be scheduled to minimise time in direct sun, e.g. earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon. Shaded and indoor venues will be considered.

Staff role modelling and OHS

- Staff are encouraged to access resources, tools, and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun smart behaviour across the school community
- UV radiation exposure is considered as part of our school's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities, i.e. UV radiation protection strategies are included in school camp activities, excursions, sports days and interschool sports events
- Staff are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures (clothing, hats, sunglasses, sunscreen and shade) when outside.

Families and visitors

- Families/visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, sunglasses, sunscreen and shade) when participating in, and attending, outdoor school activities:
 - Wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses
 - Apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen
 - Seek shade whenever possible when outdoors.

Community engagement

- Sun protection behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, School Stream, staff and parent meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/new staff orientation
- Families, students and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety at school and at home
- The School Council will consider shade provision in plans for future buildings and grounds and endeavor to provide and maintain adequate shade structures (shelters and trees) to provide adequate shade in the playgrounds
- The School will maintain accreditation as a 'SunSmart' School (Cancer Council of Victoria).

Resources

This Policy is underpinned by the:

- a) Child Safe Policy
- b) Uniform Policy

Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request.

Further information and resources

- The Department's Policy and Advisory Library:
 - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
 - [Heat Health](#)
 - [Outdoor Activities and Working Outdoors](#)
 - [Risk Management – Schools](#)
 - [Shade Sails](#)
 - [Student Dress Code](#)
- [SunSmart and Cancer Council Victoria.](#)

- [Primary schools free education resources, sample policies and information about the free SunSmart Schools Program.](#)
- [Secondary schools free education resources and sample policies.](#)
- [Sunscreen reactions.](#)

Policy Review and Approval

Policy last reviewed	2024
Consultation	Principal Staff Education Sub Committee and School Council Newsletter item to the school community
Approved by	School Council
Next scheduled review date	2028 <i>Mandatory review cycle for this policy is 3 - 4 years.</i>