

Flemington Primary School

SunSmart Policy



1. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE:

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours that reflect a healthy UV exposure balance, ensuring some sun exposure for vitamin D while minimising the risk of skin cancer.

A balance of sun exposure is important for health. Excessive exposure to the sun can cause health problems including sunburn, dehydration, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer.

Too little UV exposure from the sun can lead to low Vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy muscles and bones, and overall health.

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 year (highest in Victoria from September - April); and
- Peaks during school hours (usually 11am to 3pm and 10am to 2pm during daylight savings)

2. POLICY STATEMENT:

This policy provides guidelines to:

- Support staff and students to use a combination of sun protection measures when UV index levels are 3 or above (generally September – April) and allow sun exposure when UV levels are below 3 (generally May – August);
- Ensure that there are outdoor environments that provide adequate shade for students and staff;
- Ensure students are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills to help them to be responsible for their own protection; and
- Support the 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.

3. DEFINITIONS:

- **Ultraviolet (UV) Radiation** - is a type of energy produced by the sun and some artificial sources. The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the main cause of skin cancer. UV damage also causes sunburn, tanning, premature ageing and eye damage.
- **UV Levels** - The World Health Organization's Global Solar UV Index measures UV levels on a scale from 0 (Low) to 11+ (Extreme). Sun protection is recommended when UV levels are 3 (Moderate) or higher. The UV level is affected by several factors including the time of day, time of year, and cloud cover.

4. ACTION GUIDELINES:

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

A combination of sun protection measures should be put in place from September to the end of April (Terms one and four), and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. This includes scheduling outdoor activities, whenever possible, before 11am and after 3pm (10am and 2pm during daylight saving times).

4.1 Sun protective uniform/clothing

- Require all children to wear broad brim hats which protect the face, neck and ears whenever they are outside (e.g. recess, lunch, sport, excursions and camps) during terms one and four.
- Require all children to wear appropriate clothing at all times, e.g. tops/dresses that cover their stomachs and shoulders.
- Encourage the parent community to provide SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for student use whenever possible
- Have sunscreen available in each classroom. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before
- Encourage children to use available areas of shade for outdoor activities.
- Expect children who do not have the appropriate SunSmart clothing (hat and shoulders covered) to remain under shade in a designated place or in a suitable area protected from the sun during all outdoor activities and play times
- Encourage the parent community to support the wearing of hats to and from school during terms one and four.
- Expect and request staff and encourage parents to act as role models by practising SunSmart behaviours.
- Expect and request staff to model SunSmart behaviour when participating in outdoor activities and yard duty, especially during terms one and four.

4.2 Uniform

The School's uniform will include sun-protective clothing that is recommended be worn from September to April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 or above. This includes:

- Broad brim style hats that protect the face, neck and ears;
- Loose, cool, closely-woven fabric;
- Shirts with a collar and/or high necklines;
- Tops with elbow length or long sleeves;
- Longer style shorts and skirts; and
- Rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming activities.

4.3 Curriculum

The School shall:

- Incorporate programs on skin cancer prevention and SunSmart behaviours into the curriculum at all grade levels.

- Publish reminders in the school newsletter.
- Regularly reinforce SunSmart behaviour in a positive way through newsletters, parent meetings, student and teacher activities.
- Ensure the SunSmart policy is reflected in the planning of outdoor events where possible (eg. excursions, camps, sporting events).

4.4 Shade

Provide and maintain sufficient options for shelter, shade cloths and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- The amphitheatre area including the covered outdoor learning area;
- Junior play equipment areas including sandboxes;
- Alongside the oval; and
- The quadrangle.

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

4.5 Extreme Heat / UV Conditions

If there are forecast extreme heat or UV conditions, the School may consider alternative arrangements for morning and the midday recess including keeping students indoors.

5. MONITORING, REPORTING AND REVIEW:

School management will monitor staff and student adherence to this policy during terms one and four.

6. RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS:

- Uniform Policy
- Excursions and Camps Policy

7. REFERENCES:

- DET Sun and UV Protection Policy
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/sun.aspx>
- DET Duty of care
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/dutyofcare.aspx>
- DET School Hours
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/Pages/hours.aspx>
- SunSmart website
<http://www.sunsmart.com.au/>
- Bureau of Meteorology – Melbourne UV Index Forecast
<http://www.bom.gov.au/vic/uv/melbourne.shtml>

8. REVISION HISTORY:

This policy was ratified by School Council on October 30th, 2018.

It will be reviewed as determined by School Council or every 3 years.