# **SUN PROTECTION  POLICY**

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﻿POLICY STATEMENT:

This Sun Protection policy provides guidelines to:

ensure all children, educators and staff are protected from over-exposure to UV radiation;

ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for children, educators and staff;

ensure children are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills;

support duty of care and regulatory requirements; and

support appropriate WH&S strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harms for educators, staff and visitors.

**Background**

Too much of the sun’s uv radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Infants and toddlers up to four years of age are particularly vulnerable to uv damage due to lower levels of melanin and a thinner stratum corneum (the outermost layer of skin). Uv damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

By teaching sensible sun protection habits from an early age and implementing best-practice sun protection measures, early childhood services can play a significant role toward reducing the lifetime risk of skin cancer.

Our Sun Protection policy has been developed to ensure that all children, employees and visitors attending our service are protected from skin damage caused by harmful UV radiation from the sun.

## PROCEDURES:

To assist with the implementation of this policy, educators and children are encouraged to access their local sun protection times via the SunSmart widget on the service’s website, the free SunSmart app, myUV.com.au or at the Bureau of Meteorology.

The sun protection measures listed are used for all outdoor activities **during the daily local sun protection times, when the UV Index is 3 or above.** The sun protection times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology for the time of day UV levels are forecast to reach 3 or higher. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types.

**ACT**

Sun protection is necessary for part or most of each day between August to May when UVR levels reach 3 and above. Minimise outdoor activities and events as much as reasonably practicable between 11am and 3pm during the daylight saving/summer period.

Parents who would like their children to wear hats during the warmer months even when the UV is below 3 should advise the service.

**1.Seek *shade***

Management makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the outdoor area particularly in high-use areas.

The availability of shade is considered when planning all outdoor activities.

Children are encouraged to choose and use available areas of shade when outside.

Play activities will be set up in the shade and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns.

Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to choose a shady play space or a suitable area protected from the sun.

In consultation with the service’s committee, shade provision is considered in future plans and upgrades.

A shade assessment is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.

***2.* Slip *on sun-protective clothing***

Children are required to wear loose-fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible.  Clothing made from cool, densely woven fabric is recommended. Families are asked to choose tops with elbow-length sleeves, higher necklines (or collars) and knee-length or longer style shorts and skirts for their child. If a child is wearing a singlet top or shoestring dress, they will be asked to choose a t-shirt/shirt to wear over this before going outdoors.

***3.* Slap *on a hat***

All children are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears (legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket style). Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.

***4.* Slop *on sunscreen***

SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is supplied by the service and/or families.

Sunscreen is applied in accordance with the manufacturer’s directions (which state to apply at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours, or more frequently if sweating or swimming).

To help develop independent skills ready for school, children from three years of age are given opportunities to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of staff, and are encouraged to do so.

Sunscreen is stored in a cool place, out of the sun and the expiry date is monitored.

***5.* Slide *on sunglasses [if practical]***

Where practical, children 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.

**Learning and skills**

Sun protection is incorporated into the learning and development program.

The SunSmart policy is reinforced by educators and through children's activities and displays.

Educators are encouraged to complete Cancer Council’s free Generation SunSmart online learning modules.

**Engaging children, educators, staff and families**

* Educators, staff and families are provided with information about sun protection through family newsletters, service handbooks, noticeboards and the service’s website.
* When enrolling their child, families are:
* informed of the service’s Sun Protection policy;
* asked to provide a suitable sun protective hat, covering clothing and sunscreen for their child;
* required to give permission for educators to apply sunscreen to their child; and
* encouraged to use SunSmart measures themselves when at the service.
* As part of WH&S UV risk controls and role-modelling, educators, staff and visitors:
* wear a suitable sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
* apply sunscreen; and
* seek shade whenever possible.

**Legislation and standards:**

[Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-regulations)

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| Part 4.2: Children’s health and safety |
| Reg 100 | Risk assessment must be conducted before excursions  |
| Part 4.3: Physical Environment |
| Reg 113 | Outdoor space: natural environment |
| Reg 114 | Outdoor space: shade |
| Part 4.7: Leadership and service management |
| Reg 168 (2)(a)(ii) (2)(a)(ii) | Policies and procedures: Sun protection |
| Reg 170  | Policies and procedures to be followed |
| Reg 171 | Policies and procedures to be kept available |
| Reg 172  | Notification of change to policies or procedures |

**RELEVANT DOCUMENTS / LINKS**

* [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/38678/Opportunities-for-demonstrating-the-APST-through-Inquiry-approach.pdf) (APST) – Standard 4.4 and 7.2
* ARPANSA [Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation](http://www.arpansa.gov.au/pubs/rps/rps12.pdf) (2006)
* Safe Work Australia: [Guidance Note – Sun protection for outdoor workers](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/info/__data/assets/pdf_file/0012/198687/WorkSafe_WSV17410108.16_FactSheet_final.pdf?ct=t(SunSmart_at_work9_23_2016)&mc_cid=e61cd5e247&mc_eid=88ecea834d) (2016)
* *AS 4174:2018 Knitted and woven shade fabrics*
* AS/NZS 1067.1:2016, Eye and face protection - Sunglasses and fashion spectacles
* AS/NZS 4399:2017, Sun protective clothing -  Evaluation and classification
* AS/NZS 2604:2012 Sunscreen products - Evaluation and classification
* Australian Government Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA) – Australian regulatory guidelines for sunscreens: [4. Labelling and advertising – directions for use of the product](https://www.tga.gov.au/book/4-labelling-and-advertising)
* AS/NZS 4685.0:2017, Playground equipment and surfacing - Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation.6.2.1 General considerations, 6.3.9 Shade and sun protection, Appendix A Shade and sun protection

 

**Citations:**

* Education and Care Services National Law (ECSNL)
* Education and Care Services National Regulations (ECSNR)

**------------------------------------------------- END DOCUMENT -----------------------------------------------**