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**SUNSMART POLICY**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Wodonga West Children’s Centre to minimise the risk of skin and eye damage and skin cancer.

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 mid-August – end of April, Term 1 and 4)
* 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
* 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, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

**Policy**

Excessive exposure to the sun’s ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause health problems including sunburn, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer.

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 mid-August – end of April)
* 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 and above (typically from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria, or term 1 and term 4). Wodonga West Children’s Centrehasthe following measures in place to help reduce the risk of excessive UV sun exposure for staff and students.

* A ‘Hot Day’ timetable may operate at the principal’s discretion and is usually considered for 40+ degrees days.

**Shade**

Wodonga West Children’s Centrewill provide sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

* where students congregate for lunch such as the grape vine and veranda areas.
* Gunyah
* Covered junior playground
* Umbrellas and shade sails
* Shade trees scattered around the school.

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Wodonga West Children’s Centre 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.

**Sun protective uniform/clothing**

Wodonga West Children’s Centre recommends that from mid-August to end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, students come to school wearing sun-protective clothing such as:

* loose, cool, closely woven fabric
* shirts with a collar and/or high necklines, school uniform
* tops with elbow length or long sleeves
* longer style shorts and skirts
* rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming activities.

Wodonga West Children’s Centre’s school uniform and dress code includes sun-protective clothing, including:

* 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
* rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming activities.

During term 1 and term 4, 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.

All Staff and students are encouraged to wear hat styles that protect the face, neck and ears when outdoors. Students are required to wear a school hat or another hat style that protects the face, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket. Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or a hat may be asked to play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun.

**Sunscreen**

Wodonga West Children’s Centre encourages all staff and students to apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors, and reapplied every two hours according to [manufacturer’s instructions](https://www.tga.gov.au/book/4-labelling-and-advertising).

Wodonga West Children’s Centre has access to sunscreen and has strategies in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors for example i.e. reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies.

Students who may suffer from allergic reactions from certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to contact their children’s/child’s teacher to implement a management plan to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction at school, or supply their own approved sunscreen to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction at school.

Staff and families should role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside.

**Sunglasses**

Where practical Wodonga West Children’s Centre encourages students and staff engaged in outdoor activities 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 and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure. Wodonga West Children’s Centre will address sun and UV safety education as part of our daily routines and within or curriculum during our Rich Tasks topics which address personal Safety.

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.

SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced, modelled and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school website/intranet, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment and new staff orientation.

**Further Information and Resources**

* the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library:
  + [Sun and UV Protection Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/sun-protection/policy)
  + [Duty of care](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/duty-of-care/policy)
* [SunSmart](http://www.sunsmart.com.au/)
* [Achievement Program](http://www.achievementprogram.health.vic.gov.au/schools)’s SunSmart

**POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

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| Policy last reviewed | October 2021 |
| Approved by | School Council |
| Next scheduled review date | 2024 |