

This policy applies to all school events on and off-site.

This policy applies to sun protection from mid-August to the end of April (where Victoria's UV levels are typically three and above).

Rationale

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, with two in three Australians developing some form of skin cancer before age 70. Yet, most skin cancers can be prevented by using sun protection measures at appropriate times of the year.

The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the major cause of skin cancer. Too much UV exposure can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

Given school hours fall within peak UV periods of the day, a comprehensive policy will assist schools to adopt healthy UV practices and meet their duty of care obligations.

Legislation and standards

- [Duty of Care](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004](#)
- [Education and Training Reform Act 2006](#): Sch.5 Reg. 1 (1.2)

Implementation

The sun protection times are forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology for the time of day UV levels are predicted to reach 3 or higher, based on your location. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types. In Victoria, UV levels typically reach 3 or higher daily from mid-August to the end of April.

To assist with the implementation of this policy, staff and students are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times via the [SunSmart widget](#) on the school's website, [free SunSmart app](#), [sunsmart.com.au](#) or [bom.gov.au](#).

The sun protection measures listed in this policy are used for all outdoor activities **during the daily local sun protection times**. This policy is considered in the planning of all outdoor events such as assemblies, camps, excursions and sporting events, and applies to all school events both on and off-site.

[Implementation of this policy is from mid-August to the end of April dependent on UV levels.](#)

Procedures

1. Clothing

- The summer and winter school uniform/dress codes include:
 - A shirt with at least elbow-length sleeves and a collar that sits close to the neck, above the collarbone.
 - Longer-style skirts, shorts and pants at least to the knee.
- The sport uniform/dress code includes:
 - A shirt that covers the shoulders well and a collar that sits close to the neck, above the collarbone.
 - Longer-style skirts, shorts and pants (at least to the mid-thigh).
- The uniform is cool and loose-fitting, and is made from densely woven fabric.
- Rash vests or t-shirts are required during water sport activities, and while students are waiting to compete in outdoor swimming competitions.

2. Hats



- Students are required to wear broad-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire hats that protect their face, neck and ears, whenever they are outside. Caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.

3. Sunscreen

- The school supplies SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and students on special event days and students are reminded and encouraged to bring their own SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to school.
- Strategies are in place to remind and encourage students to use sunscreen, and staff provide time for students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors.
- The school community is educated about the correct use of sunscreen and the level of protection it provides (apply 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every 2 hours, or immediately after sweating or swimming).

4. Shade

- The school council/board ensures shade is available in the school grounds, particularly in areas where students congregate – for example, lunch areas, canteen, and outdoor lesson areas.
- The school council/board ensures shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning all outdoor activities and excursions.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside, particularly if they do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing.

5. Sunglasses [if practical]

- Where practical, students 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.

6. Staff role-modelling and OHS

- As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, staff:
 - Wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
 - Apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and
 - Seek shade whenever possible.
- SunSmart information is included in staff handbook/orientation materials.
- Staff are supported to access resources, tools and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun protection education across the curriculum.

7. Families and visitors

- Families and visitors to the school are asked to do the following when outdoors:
 - Wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
 - Apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and
 - Seek shade whenever possible.
- The school's UV policy is easily accessible to staff, students and parents via school website and sent out to all families via the COMPASS portal.

8. Learning

- Students are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school community.

- Programs on sun protection are incorporated into appropriate areas of the curriculum, including Health.
- SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through a variety of channels such as newsletters, school website/intranet, staff meetings and school assemblies.

Monitoring and review

- The school council, staff and SRC monitor and review the effectiveness of the sun protection policy (at least every three years) and revise the policy when required.
- SunSmart policy updates and requirements will be made available to staff, families, students and visitors.

Next policy review due 04/02/2024

Relevant documents / links

- Department of Education and Training (Vic): Policy & Advisory Library [Sun protection guidelines](#) 2020
- Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) [Building Quality Standards Handbook](#) (BQSH): Section 5.1.4 Shade Areas (2020)
- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) [Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration](#) - Care, safety and welfare of students (2020)
- Department of Education and Training (Vic): Policy & Advisory Library [Outdoor activities and working outdoors](#) (2020)
- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) [Your Child's Health Wellbeing and Safety \(Parent Handbook Secondary\)](#)
- Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) – [Sun Protection](#)
- Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) [The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct](#) - Principle 3.2
- [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) (AITSL) – Standard 4.4 and 7.2
- Education and Training Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into [Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools – Final Report](#) (2007)
- Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Authority [Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation](#) (2006)
- Safe Work Australia: [Guide on exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation \(UVR\)](#) (2019)
- AS 4174:2018 Knitted and woven shade fabrics
- AS/NZS 1067.1:2016, Eye and face protection - Sunglasses and fashion spectacles
- AS 4399:2020, Sun protective clothing - Evaluation and classification
- AS/NZS 2604:2012 Sunscreen products - Evaluation and classification
- Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA): [Australian regulatory guidelines for sunscreens: 4. Labelling and advertising – directions for use of the product](#)
- 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
- Achievement Program for secondary schools: [sun protection benchmarks](#)
- Department of Health and Human Services (Vic): [School shade grants program](#)

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