

Wellers Hill State School's SunSmart / Sun protection / UV protection policy

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

Purpose

The Wellers Hill State School SunSmart policy aims to ensure all students, staff, parents and visitors attending Wellers Hill are protected from skin damage caused by harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun.

This policy provides guidelines to:

- ensure all students and staff are protected from over-exposure to UV radiation;
- ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for students and staff;
- ensure students are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills
- support duty of care requirements; and
- support appropriate Work Health and Safety (WH&S) strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harm for staff and visitors.

Background

The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can't be seen or felt and generally peaks during the middle of the day. Whatever the weather, it's important for people of all skin types to use sun protection whenever UV levels are three and above.

Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, with two in three Australians developing some form of skin cancer in their lifetime. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer in later life.

Given students and staff attend school at times when UV levels can be damaging, schools can play a major role in providing an environment where policies and procedures can positively influence long-term SunSmart behaviour.

Legislation and Standards

- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011](#)

Procedures

The sun protection times are a forecast for the time of day that UV levels are predicted to reach three and above. To assist with the implementation of this policy, staff and students are encouraged to access and display the daily local sun protection times via the [SunSmart widget](#), the free [SunSmart Global UV app](#), [myUV.com.au](#) or the Bureau of Meteorology website.

Cancer Council's advice is to promote physical activity and active play while being SunSmart. UV levels reach three or above year-round in some parts of Australia, and most months in others. Average annual, monthly and seasonal values of the UV Index are available on the [Bureau of Meteorology](#) website. Further advice specific to states and territories is available on the [Cancer Council](#) website.

UV levels peak in the middle of the day when the sun is directly overhead. Where possible, outdoor activities should be scheduled away from times when UV levels are most damaging. When outdoor activities are scheduled at times when the UV Index is forecast to be three or above, maximum use of shade, sun protective hats, clothing and sunscreen should be applied to protect children and staff.

The sun protection measures listed below are used for all outdoor activities **during the daily local sun protection forecast times.**

1. Slip on sun protective clothing

- Cool, loose-fitting, sun protective clothing made of densely woven fabric is included in the school uniform / dress code and sports uniforms. It includes shirts with collars and elbow-length sleeves, longer dresses and shorts and rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming.

2. Slop on sunscreen

- Students provide their own SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen AND / OR the school supplies SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and student use.
- Sunscreen is applied in accordance with the manufacturer's directions (which state to apply at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours, or more frequently if sweating or swimming).
- Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g. reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies).
- Sunscreen is stored in a cool place, out of the sun and the expiry date is monitored.
- Cancer Council recommends a [usage test](#) before applying a new sunscreen.

3. Slap on a hat

- All students and staff are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears (legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket hat) whenever they are outside. Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.
- Children without a sun protective hat are provided with one where possible.

4. Seek shade

- The school makes sure there are sufficient shelters and/or trees providing shade in outdoor areas particularly in high-use areas e.g. where students have lunch, canteen/tuckshop, assemblies, sports, outdoor lessons and popular play spaces.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning outdoor activities.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- Students who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.
- Shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- A shade assessment is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.

5. Slide on 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.

Learning and skills

- Content on sun protection is included in learning programs for all year levels **or** every second year.
- Students understand why sun safety is important and learn how to take effective sun protection actions.
- Teachers and staff are encouraged to complete Cancer Council's free [online learning modules](#).

Engaging the school community

- SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school website/intranet, staff and parent meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/new staff orientation.
- Students are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school community including taking leadership roles in managing sun protection e.g. accessing daily UV levels and sun protection times, hat reminders and management of sunscreen.

WH&S and risk management

- As part of WH&S UV risk controls and role-modelling, staff, families and visitors:
 - wear a sun protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
 - apply sunscreen; and
 - seek shade whenever possible.
- UV radiation exposure is considered as part of a school's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities on and off-site e.g. UV radiation protection strategies (hats, clothing, shade, sunscreen) are included in school camp activities, excursions, sports days and interschool sports events.

Monitoring and review

- The school council and staff monitor and review the effectiveness of the Wellers Hill State School SunSmart policy and revise the policy when required (at least once every three years) by completing a policy review. Wellers Hill State School SunSmart policy updates and requirements will be made available to staff, families and visitors.

Next policy review: January 2027

Please note: Certain health conditions and medications mean some people are more sensitive to UV radiation and need to use sun protection at all times regardless of the UV levels. Please make sure your policy includes the particular needs of these children and staff at your school.

Relevant documents / links

- [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) (APST) – Standard 4.4 and 7.2
- ARPANSA [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/NZS 4399:2020, 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](#)
- 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