

Sample SunSmart Policy for Schools



Rationale

Cancer Council Tasmania recognises the importance of promoting healthy sun protection practices through policy development in schools, therefore, has developed this policy to ensure that students and staff are protected against overexposure to UV.

Over-exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation in childhood and adolescence is a major risk factor for developing skin cancer later in life. Schools can play a significant role toward reducing the life time risk of skin cancer. Given school hours fall within peak UV periods of the day, this comprehensive evidence-informed policy provides guidelines on effective UV protection strategies.

This sun protection policy has been developed to ensure that all students, teachers and the school community are protected from skin damage caused by harmful UV radiation from the sun.

Sun protection is required when UV levels are 3 and above. In Tasmania, the UV is 3 and above from September to April. Therefore, schools need to implement sun protection measures from the beginning of the school year until the end of April and again from the beginning of September until the end of the school year. Implementing sun protection measures throughout Terms 1 and 4 only is insufficient to protect against UVR risks.

Objectives

- Ensure staff and students are protected from over-exposure to UV;
- Educate staff and students on appropriate sun protection;
- Ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for staff and students;
- Ensure students are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills to help them be responsible for their own sun protection;
- Support our school's strategies to meet its duty of care and occupational health and safety obligations to minimise harmful UV exposure for students, staff and visitors.

Strategies

- Staff and students are encouraged to check and record the sun protection times on a daily basis at <http://www.cancertas.org.au/>, <http://www.bom.gov.au/tas/uv/>, www.myuv.com or on the free SunSmart Global UV app.
- Staff and students will use the following sun protection measures when UV levels are 3 and above:

Physical Environment

Seek shade

- The school ensures there is enough shade (natural, built, temporary) available in the school grounds, particularly in high-use areas– for example where students have lunch, canteen, popular play spaces/equipment, assemblies, sports and outdoor lessons.
- Students are actively encouraged to use available areas of shade when outdoors.
- Availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all outdoor activities.
- The school council/board ensures shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds

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A shade assessment is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade. Students without a sun-safe hat or clothing must remain in the shade.

Social-emotional environment

The school's uniform/dress code for students and staff applies to all outdoor events on and off-site including PE and sports lessons, interschool sports activities, excursions, camps and free dress days.

Slap on a sun protective hat

- All students and teachers are required to wear sun-safe hats that protect the face, neck and ears when outside. Recommended sun-safe hats include legionnaire, broad-brimmed and bucket hats. Caps and sun visors do not offer enough protection and are not recommended.
- Students without a sun protective hat are provided with a spare hat where possible (optional)

Students without an appropriate hat will be asked to use shaded areas or suitable areas protected from the sun.

Slip on sun protective clothing

- Both the school uniform/dress code and sports uniform/dress code include:
 - Cool, loose-fitting, sun protective clothing made of densely woven fabric
 - Shirts with collars and elbow-length sleeves
 - Longer-style dresses, skirts, shorts and pants.
 - Rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming and water sport activities.
- Students without appropriate covering clothing will be asked to use shaded areas or suitable areas protected from the sun

Slop on sunscreen

- The school supplies SPF50 broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and students to use in places such as classrooms and around the school yard.
- Students provide their own SPF50 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen. This could be included on the school's booklist each year.
- 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 more frequently if sweating or swimming e.g. towel dry and then re-apply).
- Sunscreen should be stored in a cool, dry place and the expiry date monitored.
- Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g., reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies) with time for this scheduled into the daily routine.
- Students and staff are encouraged to apply sunscreen before coming to school.

Slide on sunglasses [if practical]

Where practical, students are encouraged to wear close-fitting wrap-around sunglasses that comply with Australian Standards 1067 (Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

Governance and leadership

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As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, staff:

- wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
- apply SPF50 (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. Cancer Council Tasmania has self-guided learning modules available. We can also provide annual Professional Development for staff.

UV radiation exposure is considered as part of the 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.

School and community partnerships

For their own safety and to reinforce our school's sun protection strategies, families, visitors and volunteers are also asked to:

- wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
- apply SPF50 broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and
- seek shade whenever possible.
- SunSmart policy updates and requirements will be made available to staff, families and visitors.

SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through a variety of channels such as newsletters, school website/intranet/noticeboard, staff meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/new staff orientation.

School curriculum

- Sun protection and UV safety education is incorporated into the curriculum for all year levels.
- Students are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures at the school including taking leadership roles in managing sun protection for the whole school community e.g. accessing daily sun protection times, hat reminders and supporting sunscreen application.

Planning

- Ensure SunSmart policy is reflected in the planning of all outdoor events and excursions.
- Where possible, outdoor activities will be planned away from the middle of the day during the period September to April (when UV levels reach 3 and above).

Monitoring and review

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- The school council, staff and students/SRC monitor and review the effectiveness of our SunSmart 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.
- The school's SunSmart policy is easily accessible to staff, students and parents via
- Our school is committed to our SunSmart membership and complete a 3 yearly policy review and membership renewal with Cancer Council Tasmania.
- As registered SunSmart members, we have submitted a copy of our policy to SunSmart and commit to implementing the sun protection measures as documented.

Relevant documents/links

[Work Health and Safety Act 2012 Tasmania](#)

<https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety>

[Sun Protection Policy \(education.tas.gov.au\)](http://www.generationsunsmart.com.au/)

<http://www.generationsunsmart.com.au/>

<https://www.sunsmart.com.au/>

[Sun protection resources and information for primary schools](#)

[Sun protection resources and information for secondary schools](#)

[Sun protection advice for parents and carers](#)

[Sun protection information in different languages](#)

[Safe Work Australia: Guide on exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation \(UVR\)](#)

[Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#)

Date:

Review date:

This information is based on current evidence available at time of review. Last updated: July 2023

For more information:

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