

Sun Protection

Quality Area 2



This policy is aligned to the key policies and guidelines of the Healthy Early Childhood Services Achievement Program, in partnership with the Cancer Council, Victoria.

This policy was written in consultation with Cancer Council Victoria's SunSmart Program. The SunSmart Sample Sun Protection Policy and Procedure was last updated in January 2022 and is incorporated into this policy. This policy is for Victorian Early Childhood Education and Care Services. For more detailed information visit the SunSmart website: <https://www.sunsmart.com.au/advice-for/schools-early-childhood>

Purpose

This policy will provide:

- guidelines to ensure children, staff, volunteers and others participating in Hume City Council Early Years programs and activities are well protected from overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun
- information for parents/guardians, staff, volunteers and children attending Hume City Council Early Years Services regarding sun protection
- guidance to the use of outdoor spaces including adequate shading.

Policy Statement

Values

Hume City Council is committed to:

- promoting sun protection strategies for children, families, staff and visitors to minimise the harmful effects of over exposure to the sun's UV radiation
- ensuring that curriculum planning will minimise over exposure to the sun's UV radiation and also promote an awareness of sun protection and sun safe strategies
- providing information to children, staff, volunteers, parents/guardians and others at the service about the harmful effects of exposure to the sun's UV radiation.

Scope

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Persons with Management or Control, Nominated Supervisor, Persons in day to day charge, early childhood teachers (ECT), educators, other staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Hume City Council including during offsite excursions and activities.

This policy will apply whenever the sun's UV levels reach three or higher. Whenever this occurs a combination of sun protection measures are to be used for all outdoor activities.

In Victoria UV levels are usually three or higher from mid-August to the end of April. Please check the daily local sun protection times (refer to Definitions) to be sure you are using sun protection when it is required. Active outdoor play is encouraged throughout the day all year, provided appropriate sun protection measures are used when necessary.

Background and Legislation

Background

Over exposure to the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world.

Children 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 associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

A combination of sun protection measures (hats, clothing, sunscreen, shade and sunglasses) is recommended whenever UV levels are three or higher during daily sun protection times (refer to Definitions).

It is a requirement under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 that employers provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

Legislation that governs the operation of approved children's services is based on the health, safety and welfare of the children and requires that children are protected from hazards and harm.

Legislation and Standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for Children)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 167
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: including Regulations 100, 101, 113, 114, 168(2)(a)(ii)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- Standard 2.2: Each child is protected
- Element 2.2.1: At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation - Victorian Law Today: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>
- Commonwealth Legislation - Federal Register of Legislation: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>

Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the General Definitions section of this manual.

Clothing for sun protection: Clothing that is loose-fitting, made from cool, densely woven fabric and covers as much skin as possible: tops with elbow-length sleeves and, if possible, collars and knee-length or longer shorts and skirts. Singlet tops and shoestring tops/dresses do not provide adequate protection in the sun.

Daily sun protection times: Times when the sun's UV radiation is forecast to be three or higher. Information about the daily sun protection times is available in the weather section of the daily newspaper, on the SunSmart website at: www.sunsmart.com.au, at myuv.com.au, as a free SunSmart app and as a free widget that can be added to websites.

Shade: An area sheltered from direct and indirect sun, such as a large tree, canopy, verandah or artificial cover. Shade can be built, natural or temporary and can reduce overall exposure to the sun's UV by up to 75%. Ensure shade is easily accessible, comfortable, in good condition and regularly maintained. Use surfaces that reflect less UV, e.g. natural, dark or rough surfaces. When combined with appropriate clothing, hats and sunscreen, children can be well protected from UV over exposure when outdoors. Research shows that preschool environments with trees, shrubbery, and broken ground not only provides better sun protection in outdoor play but also triggers more physical activity.

Sunhat: SunSmart advises the use of broad-brimmed or bucket-style hats (at least 5cm brim for young children) or legionnaire hats (make sure the front peak and back flap overlap at the sides) that shade the face, neck and ears. Caps and visors offer little protection to the cheeks, ears and neck, and are not considered a suitable alternative and should be swapped for a UV-protective hat.

Sunglasses: Sunglasses are optional. If worn, it is recommended that glasses are a close fitting, wrap-around style that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible. Wearing a hat with a brim that shades the eyes can also reduce UV radiation to the eyes by 50%.

Sunscreen: SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen. Sunscreen should be reapplied every two hours, even when labeled 4 hours water resistance. Make sure the sunscreen has an Australian License (Aust L) number and monitor the expiry date. Store it in a supervised, cool, dry place out of direct sun. Cancer Council recommends a usage test before applying a new sunscreen. From 3 years of age, children are encouraged to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of staff to help develop independent skills ready for school.

SunSmart: The name of the program conducted by Cancer Council to help prevent skin cancer: www.sunsmart.com.au

Responsibilities

'R' indicates legislative requirement

	Approved Provider and Persons with Management or Control	Nominated Supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early Childhood teacher, educators and other staff	Families	Contractors, Volunteers and Students
Meeting the standards and requirements of the SunSmart early childhood program	R	✓			
Ensuring that this policy is up to date with current SunSmart recommendations: www.sunsmart.com.au	R	✓			
Ensuring parents/guardians are informed about and agree to support the Sun Protection Policy on enrolment, including the need to provide an appropriate sunhat and clothing for sun protection (refer to Definitions) for their child when attending the service	R	✓	✓		
Applying sunscreen (refer to Definitions) to their child before the commencement of each session during the times specified in the Scope of this policy				✓	
Providing, at their own expense, an alternative sunscreen to be left at the service if their child has a particular sensitivity to the sunscreen provided by the service				✓	
Providing a supply of sunscreen for use on all persons to whom this policy applies	R	✓			
Obtaining parents/guardians authority for staff to apply sunscreen prior to their child commencing at the service on each child's enrolment record (refer to Definitions)	R	✓	✓		
Applying sunscreen (refer to Definitions) to children's exposed skin – except in cases where parents/guardians have not given authority. Where possible this should be done 20 minutes before going outdoors. Children, where appropriate, will be encouraged to apply sunscreen with the assistance of an educator (sunscreen is to be reapplied every two hours)		✓	✓		✓
Storing sunscreen in a cool place and monitoring the expiry date – including for sunscreen supplied by parents/guardians		✓	✓		✓
Ensuring each child, and any other participant at the service, wears an appropriate sunhat, clothing for sun protection and sunscreen for all outdoor activities during the times specified in the Scope of this policy	✓	✓	✓		✓
Wearing sunhats, clothing for sun protection (refer to Definitions) and sunglasses (optional) when outside, applying sunscreen and seeking shade during the times specified in the Scope of this policy	✓	✓	✓		✓
Co-operating with their employer with respect to any action taken by the employer to comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004		✓	✓		✓
Providing a named, SunSmart approved sunhat (refer to Definitions) for their child's use at the service				✓	
Checking that all sunhats brought to the service meet the SunSmart recommendation for adequate protection, are named and stored individually	✓	✓	✓		
Providing appropriate spare sunhats for children and adults that will be laundered after each use	✓	✓			
Ensuring that children without appropriate sunhats or clothing for sun protection play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun	✓	✓	✓		✓
Encouraging children to wear sunhats when travelling to and from the service	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Ensuring that program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during the times specified in the Scope of this policy	✓	✓	✓		
Ensuring the sun protection times on the SunSmart website or the SunSmart app are accessed daily to assist with the implementation of this policy	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring there is adequate shade in the service grounds to protect children from over exposure to UV radiation (Regulation 114)	R	✓			
Ensuring that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events (Regulations 100, 101)	R	✓	✓		
Encouraging children to seek shade when playing outside and utilise shaded areas for outdoor equipment that is not fixed during the times specified in the Scope of this policy		✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that information on sun protection is incorporated into the educational program (refer to the SunSmart website)	✓	✓	✓		
Ensuring that sun protection strategies are a priority when planning excursions	✓	✓	✓		
Ensuring all staff are aware of the special needs of infants. Babies under 12 months should not be exposed to direct sun. They should remain in full shade and always be well-protected through the use of hats and cool, covering clothing when outside. With parental consent small amounts of a suitable SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen may be applied to babies over 6 months	✓	✓	✓		✓
Reinforcing this policy by providing information on sun protection (available on the SunSmart website) to service users via newsletters, noticeboards, meetings and websites etc.	✓	✓			

Sources and Related Policies

Sources

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

Safe Work Australia: [Guide on exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation \(UVR\) \(2019\)](#)

Cancer Council Australia: www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart

Get Up & Grow: Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood. Department of Health resources. Particularly Section 2 of the Director/Coordinator Book and the Staff Book:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-early-childhood-nutrition-resources>

SunSmart: www.sunsmart.com.au

Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT)

[The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct - Principle 3.2](#)

[Australian Professional Standards for Teachers \(APST\)](#) – Standard 4.4 and 7.2

ARPANSA [Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation \(2006\)](#)

[Belonging, Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework](#) (July 2009)

[Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework \(VEYLDF\)](#) (May 2016)

Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) [Building Quality Standards Handbook \(BQSH\)](#): Section 5.1.3, 5.1.4 Shade Areas (May 2021)

AS 4174:2018 Knitted and woven shade fabrics

AS/NZS 10671:2016, 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

Australian Government Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA) – Australian regulatory guidelines for sunscreens:

[4. Labelling and advertising – directions for use of the product](#)

Related Policies

- ✓ Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- ✓ Nutrition, Oral Health and Active Play
- ✓ Supervision of Children
- ✓ Excursions and Service Events
- ✓ Occupational Health and Safety

Evaluation

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (Regulation 172 (2)).

Attachments

Nil.

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by Hume City Council Early Years Services on **31 March 2020**.

Review Date: **31 March 2026**.