



## SUNSMART AND HEAT POLICY



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office on 54430799.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to support sun protection behaviours at White Hills Primary School to minimise risk of health problems from sun overexposure, including 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 to the end of April in Victoria)
- 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 on and off-site, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

### POLICY

Overexposure 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 damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

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 day and the year (highest from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria)
- 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 or above. Information about the

daily local sun protection times is available via the [SunSmart widget](#) on the school's website, the free [SunSmart app](#), or at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au).

White Hills Primary School has the following measures in place for all outdoor activities during the daily sun protection times to help reduce the risk of over-exposure to UV radiation for staff and students.

## **Shade**

White Hills Primary School provides sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- where students congregate for lunch
- outdoor physical education lesson areas
- popular play areas- eg: sandpits
- assembly areas

Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outdoors during peak sun protection times, particularly if they do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing.

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at White Hills Primary School 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**

White Hills Primary School recommends that from September to April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, students wear sun-protective clothing such as:

- Broad brimmed hat
- loose, cool, closely-woven fabric
- shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
- tops with elbow length or long sleeves
- rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming activities.

White Hills Primary School's school uniform and dress code includes sun-protective clothing, including:

- Broad brimmed hat
- loose, cool, closely-woven fabric
- shirts with a collar and/or high necklines

*White Hills Primary School's dress code applies on and off-site unless otherwise advised. When students are not required to wear school uniform (such as school camps, free dress day), White Hills Primary School will ensure steps are taken to encourage students to wear sun-protective clothing whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.*

## **Hats**

At recess and lunch times from September to April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, 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 September to April time period, by parent or student choice.

Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.

If the temperature reaches 36 degrees or above during break times, students must remain indoors as part of the school's extreme weather procedure.

Students who are not wearing a sun protective hat are required to sit/play in the shade (hat tree near the rebound wall).

White Hills Primary School has its longest outside break between 11:00-12:00pm, generally before UV rays reach their peak.

## **Sunscreen**

White Hills Primary School 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 (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). Teachers are not required to apply sunscreen for students.

White Hills Primary School students can access sunscreen in all classrooms. Staff and students who may suffer from skin reactions from certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to contact the school's first aid officer (Business Manager) to implement a management plan to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction at school. They are also encouraged to provide their own sunscreen to avoid this risk.

Staff and families role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF 30+ (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside from mid-August to the end of April or whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Staff are also required to wear broad brimmed hats from September to the end of April.

## **Sunglasses**

Where practical, White Hills Primary School 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. They are supported to understand effects of sun exposure and are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school.

## **Staff role-modelling and OHS**

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.

UV radiation exposure is considered as part of our school's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities, i.e. UV radiation protection strategies are included in school camp activities, excursions, sports days and interschool sports events.

## **Families and visitors**

Families and visitors participating in and attending outdoor school activities are encouraged to:

- 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 when outdoors.

## Community engagement

Sun protection 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.

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school’s website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Discussed in student forums
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library:
  - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
  - [Heat Health](#)
  - [Outdoor Activities and Working Outdoors](#)
  - [Risk Management – Schools](#)
  - [Shade Sails](#)
  - [Student Dress Code](#)
- [SunSmart and Cancer Council Victoria.](#)
  - [Primary schools free education resources, sample policies and information about the free SunSmart Schools Program.](#)
  - [Secondary schools free education resources and sample policies.](#)
  - [Sunscreen reactions.](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	March 2023
Approved by	School Council
Next scheduled review date	March 2026