



"Dare to Dream"

SUNSMART POLICY

Rationale

It's important to have a healthy balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure. Too much UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer.

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with two out of three Australians developing some form of skin cancer during their lifetime. Over-exposure to the sun during childhood and adolescence is known to be a major cause of skin cancer.

Too little UV can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

A SunSmart policy encourages schools to minimise the danger of excessive UV radiation exposure for both staff and students thereby ensuring a healthier environment with long term health benefits.

Ultra-violet (UV) radiation is part of the sun's light which burns and damages the skin. Most children and adults can be sunburned after only ten minutes exposure to the sun, particularly at times when UV radiation levels are highest.

Schools have the potential to create a major impact on the level of sun exposure that students may sustain for the following reasons:

- Children are at school throughout the high risk period each day for five days a week.
- The crucial period for sustaining damaging levels of sun exposure occurs during the school years.
- Schools can play a significant role in changing behaviours through education.
- Teachers, School Council and parents owe their students and children a duty of care and should take reasonable steps to protect them against risks of injury which the teacher, School Council and parents can reasonably foresee.

Staff are encouraged to access the SunSmart UV Alert at www.sunsmart.com or www.aspsmoe.vic.edu.au to find out daily local sun protection times to assist with the implementation of this policy.

We use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities from **September to the end of April** and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, the level that can damage skin and eyes.



Education:

- That parents and students be advised, through the school newsletter and school Facebook page of the harmful effects that can be sustained due to exposure to the sun's Ultra Violet (UV) Radiation.
- That parents be informed through the newsletter and Facebook of the types of hat which comply with the Cancer Council Victoria Guidelines.
- That at assembly in terms 1 and 4, students be advised of the schools SUN SMART POLICY and of the suitable area to play without a hat.

Dress Code:

- Wear a Sunsmart hat at all times outside.
- The emphasis of the Sunsmart Policy will be:

NO HAT - play in the undercover area

When?

- From September to the end of April - students and staff will be expected to wear hats when outside and within the school grounds and at other organised outdoor functions such as sporting carnivals, excursions etc.
- There will be one weeks grace from the time of the policy being adopted before the disciplinary policy is fully introduced to allow time for an education process to take place.

Consequences

- If students are not being Sunsmart (in the sun without wearing a hat) – they will be redirected to the undercover area.

Incentives

Recommendations

- That Albert Street School Council adopt the attached SunSmart policy.
 - That a campaign to educate the staff, students and parents of Albert Street on the effects of UV radiation and of the schools Sunsmart policy be introduced through the school newsletter and Facebook.
 - That a concerted effort be made to plant shade trees, by the grounds committee.
 - That contact be made with Local Government organisations requesting adequate shade be provided at recreational venues.
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SUNSMART POLICY FOR ALBERT STREET SCHOOL, MOE

This policy is to ensure that all children attending Albert Street Primary School are protected from skin damage by the harmful ultra-violet rays of the sun. It is to be implemented throughout the year with sun protection measures used from September to the end of April.

Immediate goals - hats, sunblock and tree planting to increase shaded play areas.

A. As part of general skin protection strategies:

1. Ensure that hats worn are appropriate and satisfy Cancer Council Victoria Guidelines. All hats protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad brimmed or bucket hats, whenever they are outside. Baseball or peak caps are not considered a suitable alternative. Sun protective clothing is included in our school uniform / dress code and sports uniform. School clothing is cool, loose fitting and made of densely woven fabric. It includes shirts with collars and longer sleeves, and shorts. Rash vests or t-shirts are required for outdoor swimming.
 2. Ensure that adequate shade is provided at sporting carnivals and outdoor events.
 3. Increase the number of shelters and trees that provide shade in school grounds.
 4. Children may bring their own SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen if parents desire. It is encouraged that sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours if outdoors.
 5. Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g. posters).
 6. Incorporate programs on skin cancer prevention into the curriculum.
 7. Regularly reinforce the SunSmart Policy in a positive way through newsletters, Facebook, parent meetings, student and teacher activities.
 8. The school will require children to wear hats which protect the face, neck and ears whenever they are outside (e.g. Recess, lunch, sport, carnivals, excursions and activities.)
 9. Direct children who do not have their hats with them to play in an area protected from the sun.
 10. Encourage children to use available areas of shade or outdoor play activities.
 11. Organise outdoor activities to be held in areas of shade, whenever possible.
 12. Encourage staff to act as role models by practising SunSmart behaviours.
 13. Wearing appropriate hats and clothing for outdoor activities.
 14. Seeking shade whenever possible
 15. For the buildings and grounds committee to make a concerted effort to plant established shade trees around play equipment and in the school ground immediately.
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B. When enrolling their children, parents will be:

1. Informed of the SunSmart Policy.
2. Requested to provide an appropriate hat for their child's use
 - 2.1 School broadbrim hats are highly recommended to parents and children.
 - 2.2 Hats to be kept in lockers or bag. If preferred children may wear another hat/cap to and from school.
3. Encouraged to provide SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for their child's use.
4. Encouraged to practice sun protective behaviours themselves.

The Cancer Council Victoria has developed the following recommendations for skin protection on school excursions:

1. Plan to conduct the excursion early in the day rather than later. This will minimise exposure to ultra-violet radiation (UVR) during the peak period between 11:00am and 3:00pm (summertime)
2. Plan excursions for venues where adequate shade is available. Alternatively, provide your own shade by umbrellas or tents.
3. Ensure that all participants (staff, students and parents) wear appropriate clothing. Wide brimmed or legionnaires style hats, loose-fitting baggy shorts or skirts also offer good protection. Fabric should be of close weave to maximise protection against UVR.
4. Ensure that all participants use a suitable sunscreen on exposed areas of skin. The CCV recommends the use of an SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen. Use zinc cream on the nose, cheeks, lips and tips of the ears. Take additional sunscreen for re-applying every 2-3 hours and after swimming.
5. Where swimming is involved, encourage participants to wear a T-shirt in the water (if appropriate for the type of activity and permitted by the swimming pool management.) Ensure that a second **dry** shirt is available, as wet T-shirts allow some UVR to penetrate.
6. Discourage sunbaking or unnecessary exposure to the sun when not actually participating in a swimming event.

Relevant Documents / Links

- DEECD School Policy & Advisory Guide (SPAG) Sun & UV protection (2011)
 - DEECD Health, Safety & Workcover
 - Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)
 - Building Quality Standards Handbook (BQSH): Section 7.5.5 Shade Areas
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- Education and Training Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools -Government Response
 - Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
 - Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation (2006)
 - Safe Work Australia: Guidance Note for the Protection of Workers from the Ultraviolet Radiation in Sunlight.

