

Mount Nelson Primary School

SunSmart Policy



Rationale

Over-exposure to UV (ultraviolet) rays from the sun causes sunburn, skin damage and increases the risk of skin cancer. **Inappropriate sun exposure in the first 18 years of life contributes significantly to the lifetime risk of developing skin cancer.** However, some skin exposure to the sun's UV rays is needed for the production of vitamin D, vital for maintenance of healthy bones, teeth and general good health.

Being SunSmart is a whole-of-year approach. It means using sun protection when the UV is 3 and above (September to April), and safe sun exposure for vitamin D (May to August). 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 children and staff maintain a healthy UV balance all year round. Encourage sun protection **when UV Index levels reach 3 and above and safe sun exposure for vitamin D.**
- Educate staff and children on appropriate sun protection measures.
- Ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for staff and students;
- Support duty of care and regulatory requirements; and
- Support appropriate WHS strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harms for staff and students.

Strategies

- Staff are encouraged to check the sun protection times on a daily basis at <http://www.cancertas.org.au/>, <http://www.bom.gov.au/tas/uv/> or on the free SunSmart app or widget.
- Staff and students use a combination of sun protection measures from September to April, when average peak UV levels in Tasmania reach 3 and above:

1. Clothing

- Sun-safe clothing is part of our school and sports uniform. This includes shirts with collars, sleeves, longer style dresses and shorts and rash vests or T-shirts for outdoor swimming.
- Clothing exposing large amounts of shoulder and upper torso eg. singlets, tank tops and strappy dresses are not considered suitable.

2. Sunscreen

- The use of SPF 30+ (or greater), broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is required for staff and students use.
 - Students are encouraged to provide their own broad-spectrum, water-resistant SPF 30 or higher sunscreen.
 - Sunscreen is also available and accessible for use at the school in places such as classrooms and around the school yard.
- Sunscreen is applied 20 minutes before going outdoors. If outdoors for extended periods sunscreen is reapplied every 2 hours (more frequently if swimming or heavily sweating).
 - 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.

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3. Hats

- Students and staff 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. Baseball caps do not offer enough protection and are not recommended.

4. Shade

- The school community is committed to providing shade in areas where students gather such as for eating, outdoor teaching and popular play areas. The use of these areas is encouraged.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all outdoor activities.

5. Sunglasses

- Close-fitting wrap-around sunglasses that comply with Australian Standards AS1067 (Category 2, 3 or 4) are encouraged but optional.

➤ **Students without a sun-safe hat or clothing must play in areas protected from the sun.**

➤ **Staff WHS, role modelling and education**

- When UV is 3 and above staff will role model sun protection behaviours when outside by using the combination of sun protection measures outlined above.
- Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.
- Programs on skin cancer prevention and vitamin D are included in teaching programs for all year levels
- 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 newsletters, meetings, assemblies and upon enrolment.

➤ **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).

➤ **Review**

- School's sun protection policy will be submitted for review to Cancer Council Tasmania once every three years, for updating as new evidence becomes available.

This information is based on current evidence available at time of review. Last updated: January 2019.
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