



## SUNSMART POLICY

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

### Rationale:

A balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure is important for health. Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Sun exposure in the first 10 years of life is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk. Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

### Aims:

This SunSmart Policy has been developed to encourage behaviours that minimise the risk of skin and eye damage and skin cancer.

This policy provides guidelines to:

- ensure all students and staff have some UV exposure for vitamin D.
- encourage the entire school community to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above (generally mid-August – end of April).
- 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

### Implementation:

Excessive exposure 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 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 year (highest in Victoria from mid-August – end of April)
- 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 and above (typically from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria). Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via the free SunSmart app, or at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au) or [bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au).

Moonee Ponds Primary School has the following measures in place to help reduce the risk of excessive UV sun exposure for staff and students.

#### 1. Shade

The school will provide sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds particularly in areas where students congregate e.g. lunch, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas. Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.

The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and outdoor activities.

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Moonee Ponds 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.

## **2. Clothing**

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

- cool, loose-fitting, densely-woven fabric
- shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
- tops with elbow length or long sleeves
- longer style shorts and skirts

Rash vests are encouraged during outside swimming

## **3. Hats**

From September 1<sup>st</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup>, all students must wear a sun protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears for all outdoor activities i.e. legionnaire, broad brimmed or bucket hats, whenever they are outside. Baseball or peak caps are not considered a suitable alternative.

Students who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are required to sit/play in a designated undercover area protected from the sun.

Hats may also be worn for all outdoor activities outside of the September to April time period, by parent or student choice.

## **4. Sunscreen**

Moonee Ponds 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 according to manufacturer's instructions. Students must provide their own SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen.

Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors. These may include reminder notices, verbal reminders from teachers, instruction from foundation teachers, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies.

### Staff OHS and Role modelling

As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, from September 1<sup>st</sup> to end of April, staff:

- wear sun protective hats, clothing when outside
- apply SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
- seek shade whenever possible

Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, sunglasses, sunscreen and shade) when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.

### Curriculum

SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school homepage, parent meetings, staff meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and on student enrolment.

### Relevant Documents / Links

- DET School Policy & Advisory Guide (SPAG) Sun & UV protection
- DET Health, Safety & Workcover
- Building Quality Standards Handbook (BQSH): Section 7.5.5 Shade Areas
- 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 (2008)

### Relevant resources

- **SunSmart UV Alert:** The SunSmart UV Alert indicates daily weather forecasts including temperature, local UV levels and times sun protection is or isn't needed. This is available in the weather section of the newspaper, on the SunSmart website at [www.sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au) , as a free smart phone app or as a widget that you can add to your website.
- **Creating effective shade:** This online shade audit tool allows you to assess whether the existing shade at your school is adequate. It also helps you develop a list of practical recommendations to improve both built and natural shade. <http://www.sunsmart.com.au/shade-audit/>
- **Create your own SunSmart poster:** online SunSmart poster templates where children choose the scene, text, upload an image of their own face to place into the scene and print off their very own poster with them as the SunSmart star. There are sun protection, vitamin D and snow posters to choose from <http://www.sunsmartposter.com.au/>
- **SunSmart Millionaire:** How SunSmart are you? An innovative online game-based resource for year 5–7 students that promotes the science behind the SunSmart message. Visit <https://www.generationsunsmart.com.au/sunsmart-millionaire/>
- **SunSmart Songs:** <http://www.sunsmart.com.au/communities/early-childhood-primary-schools/resources-primary-early-childhood/songs>  
**Countdown:** song and associated activities  
**Skin:** Song written by Allan Caswell (who has kindly allowed SunSmart to share it with schools and services), this upbeat song has a focus on tolerance (and sun protection!).
- **Generation SunSmart:** fun and interactive online sun protection modules for teachers, school nurses and year 6 - 9 students. Visit [www.generationsunsmart.com.au](http://www.generationsunsmart.com.au)
- **Video clips, online learning modules, interactive games and curriculum resources** available from <http://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection/sunsmart-schools/primary-school-resource.html>
- **Heat and UV Guide:** provides key information to deal with heat and UV. Available from <http://www.sunsmart.com.au/downloads/communities/sports-clubs/uv-exposure-heat-illness-guide.pdf>

### Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four year review cycle.

### Key Person responsible for development of the MPPS SunSmart Policy:

Principal

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....		
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