



# Sun Protection Policy

This policy applies to all outdoor school activities on-site and off-site and is considered in the planning of all outdoor events.

## Definitions

The school	St. Patrick's School, Nhill
Daily sun protection times	the time-of-day UV levels are predicted to reach 3 or higher

## Rationale

Too much ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. More than two in three Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime. As the sun's UV radiation (which cannot be seen or felt) is the major cause of skin cancer, most skin cancers can be prevented by using sun protection measures whenever UV levels are three or higher.

## Purpose

Given school hours fall within peak UV periods of the day, this comprehensive evidence-informed policy provides guidelines on effective UV protection strategies.

This policy provides guidelines to:

- ensure all students and staff are protected from over-exposure to UV radiation;
- ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for students and staff;
- ensure students are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills to help them be responsible for their own sun protection;
- support our school's strategies to meet its duty of care and occupational health and safety obligations to minimise harmful UV exposure for students, staff and visitors.

## Implementation

Daily sun protection times are forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology for the time-of-day UV levels are predicted to reach 3 or higher, based on location. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types. In Victoria, UV levels typically reach 3 or higher daily from mid-August to the end of April.

Certain health conditions and medications mean some people are more sensitive to UV radiation and need to use sun protection at all times regardless of the UV levels. The school will include the particular needs of these children and staff when implementing this policy. (Reference: Relevant Documents/Links 1.e SunSmart Risk factors for skin cancer).

To assist with the implementation of this policy, staff and students are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times via the SunSmart widget on the school's intranet (SIMON). The sun protection measures listed in this policy are used for all outdoor activities during the daily local sun protection times.

## Procedures

### School Responsibilities

#### Physical environment

Shade: *Seek shade*

- The school ensures there is enough shade (natural, built, temporary) available in the school grounds, particularly in high-use areas, e.g. where students have lunch, popular play spaces/equipment, assemblies, sports and outdoor lessons.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning all outdoor activities and excursions.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- The school ensures shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- A shade assessment is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.

#### Social-emotional environment

School uniform/dress code

- The school's uniform/dress code for students and staff applies to all outdoor events on-site and off-site, including PE and sports lessons, interschool sports activities, excursions, camps and free-dress days.

Clothing: *Slip on sun protective clothing*

- Both the school uniform/dress code and sports uniform/dress code include:
  - Cool, loose-fitting, sun protective clothing made of densely woven fabric;
  - Shirts with collars and elbow-length sleeves;
  - Longer-style dresses, skirts, shorts and pants; and
  - Rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming and water sport activities.
- Students without appropriate covering clothing will be asked to use shaded areas or suitable areas protected from the sun.

#### Hats: *Slap* on a sun protective hat

- All staff and students wear broad-brimmed or bucket hats that protect their face, head, neck and ears, whenever they are outside during the daily local sun protection times.
- Caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.
- Students without an appropriate hat will be asked to use shaded areas or suitable areas protected from the sun.

#### Sunscreen: *Slop* on sunscreen

- The school supplies SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and students to use.
- Students may provide their own SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen.
- Strategies are in place to remind and encourage students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors, e.g., reminder notices, with time for this scheduled into the daily routine.
- The school community is educated about the correct use of sunscreen and the level of protection it provides (apply 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every 2 hours, or more frequently if sweating or swimming, e.g. towel dry and then re-apply).

#### Sunglasses: *Slide* on sunglasses [*if practical*]

- Where practical, students are encouraged 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.

### Governance and leadership

#### Staff role-modelling and OHS

- As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, staff:
  - 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.
- SunSmart information is included in staff handbook/orientation materials.
- Staff are supported to access resources, tools and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun protection education across the curriculum.
- UV radiation exposure is considered as part of the school's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities on and off-site, e.g. UV radiation protection strategies (hats, clothing, shade, sunscreen) are included in school camp activities, excursions, sports days and interschool sports events.

## School and community partnerships

### Families and visitors

- For their own safety and to reinforce our school's sun protection strategies, families, visitors and volunteers are also asked 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.

## School curriculum

### Learning

- Sun protection and UV safety education is incorporated into classroom learning for all year levels.
- Students are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures at the school including taking leadership roles in managing sun protection for the whole school community, e.g. accessing daily sun protection times, hat reminders and supporting sunscreen application.
- SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through a variety of channels such as newsletters, school website/intranet/noticeboard, staff meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/new staff orientation.

### Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

- Annually provide permission (Appendix 1).
- Provide details of particular needs, e.g. more sensitive to UV radiation and need to use sun protection at all times regardless of the UV levels, or sensitive skin requiring particular sunscreen (and provide the sunscreen).

## Monitoring and review

- School staff monitor and review the effectiveness of our SunSmart policy (at least every three years) and revise the policy when required.
- SunSmart policy updates and requirements will be made available to staff, families, students and visitors.
- The school's SunSmart policy is easily accessible to staff, students and parents via the school website.
- Our school is committed to our SunSmart membership and complete a policy review and membership renewal with SunSmart.
- As registered SunSmart members, we have submitted a copy of our policy to SunSmart and commit to implementing the sun protection measures as documented.

## Legislation and standards

- [Duty of Care - School Operations - Victoria Department of Education](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004](#)
- [Education and Training Reform Act 2006](#) Sch. 5 Reg. 1 (1.2)

## Relevant documents / links

1. SunSmart
  - a. [Sun protection resources and information for primary schools](#)
  - b. [Sun protection advice for parents and carers](#)
  - c. [Sun protection information in different languages](#)
  - d. [Sun protection information for workplaces](#)
  - e. [Risk factors for skin cancer](#)
2. Department of Education and Training (Vic): Policy & Advisory Library (PAL)
  - a. [Sun and UV Protection](#) / SunSmart policy template (DET portal) (Feb 2023)
  - b. [Shade Sails](#)
  - c. [Outdoor activities and working outdoors](#)
  - d. [Outdoor Education Schools](#)
  - e. [Risk management – schools](#)
3. Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) [Building Quality Standards Handbook](#) (BQSH):
  - a. Section 5.1 Landscape architecture, 5.1.5 Shade Areas (May 2022)
4. Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) [Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration](#) - Care, safety and welfare of students p.23 (January 2022)
5. Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT), [The Victorian Teaching Profession's Code of Conduct](#) - Principle 3.2 (May 2021)
6. [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) (AITSL) – Standard 4.4 and 7.2
7. [Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework \(VEYLDF\)](#) (May 2016)
8. Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) [Your Child's Health Wellbeing and Safety](#) (Parent Handbook )
9. Independent Schools Victoria – [isComply](#) (ISV portal)
10. Education and Training Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into [Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools – Final Report](#) (2007)
11. Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Authority [Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation](#) (2006)
12. Safe Work Australia: [Guide on exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation \(UVR\)](#) (Mar 2020)
13. AS 4174:2018 Knitted and woven shade fabrics
14. AS/NZS 1067.1:2016 (Amd 2021), Eye and face protection - Sunglasses and fashion spectacles
15. AS 4399:2020, Sun protective clothing - Evaluation and classification
16. AS/NZS 2604:2012 Sunscreen products - Evaluation and classification
17. 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
18. [Healthy Schools Achievement Program](#) – Sun protection
19. United Nations. 1989. ["Convention on the Rights of the Child."](#) Treaty Series 1577 (November): 3

20. World Health Organization and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Health Promoting Schools – [global standards and indicators](#)

## Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Sun protection agreement and permission form for families

## Evaluation and review

This policy will be reviewed in the school's three year review cycle.

## Document history

V003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 2023 Updated: reference SunSmart template.</li><li>● Next review due 2026.</li></ul>
V002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Policy ratified 19/09/2017. Next review 2020.</li></ul>
V001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Policy ratified 27/05/2014. Next review 2017.</li></ul>

## Sun protection agreement and permission form for families

I understand St. Patrick’s School, Nhill (“the school”) is a registered member of the SunSmart Schools Program and follows SunSmart and Cancer Council Victoria guidelines to use a combination of sun protection measures (clothing, sunscreen, a hat, shade, and if practical, sunglasses) whenever UV levels reach 3 or higher. In Victoria UV levels are typically 3 and above from mid-August to the end of April.

I agree to support the school’s SunSmart membership to help minimise my child’s potential risk of skin and eye damage and skin cancer by doing the following:

- Support the school uniform policy and ensure my child is wearing cool clothing that covers as much skin as possible e.g. tops that cover the shoulders, arms and chest, has higher necklines or collars, and long shorts and skirts. I understand that singlet tops or shoestring dresses do not provide adequate sun protection and are best layered with a shirt or t-shirt.
- Remind my child to bring and wear a sun-protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears (e.g. wide-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire hat). I understand that baseball / peak style caps or visors do not provide adequate sun protection and are not appropriate for outdoor play and activities.
- Remind my child to bring and wear a sun protective hat for the walk to and from school each day (if my child’s hat is kept at school).
- Provide my child with appropriate close-fitting wrap-around sunglasses labelled AS:1067 to help protect their eyes, if practical.
- Provide my child with their own supply of SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to use at school, or use the school’s supply of sunscreen.
- Provide opportunities at home for my child to practise and develop independent, self-help skills to apply their own sunscreen.
- Give permission for my child to apply their own SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to all exposed parts of skin including their face, neck, ears, arms and legs.
- Being informed of the sunscreen brand and ingredients supplied by the school (this information is available by request from the school office).
- Give permission for my child to apply sunscreen supplied by the school.

<b>Child’s name</b>		<b>Year Level</b>
<b>Parent/Guardian’s name</b>	<b>Signature of Parent/Guardian</b>	<b>Date</b>
		/ /