

# SUN & UV PROTECTION (SunSmart]) POLICY

## Rationale

- Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk. Melanoma is the most common cancer in young Australians aged 13-24 years.
- Ultraviolet (UV) radiation cannot be seen or felt, comes directly from the sun and can also be scattered in the air. It is reflected by surfaces such as buildings, concrete, snow, and sand and can pass through light clouds.
- UV radiation varies in intensity across the year and is normally highest during school hours.
- However, **too little exposure** to UV radiation can lead to low vitamin D levels.
- When UV levels are **below 3** (generally from May to August in Victoria)
  - sun protection is not recommended unless near snow or other reflective surfaces
  - spend time outdoors in the middle of the day with some skin uncovered, to support vitamin D production
  - be physically active outdoors to help boost vitamin D levels
  - outdoor workers should use sun protection throughout the year, regardless of the UV level, as they have an increased risk of skin cancer.
- When UV levels are **3 or above** (generally from September to April in Victoria)
  - sun protection, (including hats, sunscreen, clothing, shade and sunglasses) should be used when outdoors
  - avoid deliberate and extended sun exposure if outdoors for extended periods when the UV levels reaches 3 and above.

Note: a few minutes of mid-morning or mid-afternoon sun exposure to arms and hands on most days of the week should be sufficient to maintain adequate vitamin D.

- The daily sun protection times let you know when you do and don't need sun protection each day. They are available via the free SunSmart app on the [SunSmart](#) and [Bureau of Meteorology](#) websites.
- UV radiation is a known workplace hazard for any staff working any part of their day outdoors. OH&S risk controls should consider the school environment including:
  - developing shade
  - modifying highly reflective surfaces
  - higher risk times in Victoria between September and April (inclusive)
  - outdoor programming schedules
  - dress codes

## Purpose

- To create environments and encourage behaviours which reflect a healthy UV exposure balance, ensuring some sun exposure for vitamin D while minimising the risk of skin cancer.
- To ensure Tarneit West Primary School (Interim Name) complies with DET policy and guidelines and the legislative requirements of Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004.

## Definitions

“SunSmart” is a jointly funded initiative of the Cancer Council of Victoria and VicHealth and promotes a balance between the benefits and harms of ultra violet (UV) radiation.

## Implementation

- The school will endeavour to ensure students and staff maintain a healthy balance of UV exposure from the sun.
- The school will assist students to be responsible for their own sun protection.
- New families and new staff will be informed of the programs.

- Safe UV exposure will be encouraged whenever UV Index levels are below 3.
- The school will consider:
  - accessing the daily protection times via the SunSmart application
  - enlisting students to help monitor the daily sun protection times and report them to the school community via assembly or PA announcements
- School Council and staff will:
  - develop and implement a UV communication strategy for the whole school community that includes:
    - newsletters
    - the school's homepage / intranet
    - school diary
    - staff and parent meetings
    - school assemblies
    - excursions, camps, sports carnivals and events
    - student enrolment / new staff orientation
- The school will adopt SunSmart principles.
- The school's sun protection measures will include:
  - provision of shade
  - suitable clothing including hats (dress code)
  - sunglasses
  - sunscreen
  - role-modelling
  - curriculum
  - community awareness
- As part of the dress code, students will be required to wear hats that cover their face, neck and ears when outdoors in fourth and first terms (i.e. between the months September to April).
- Staff also will be required to wear hats whilst on yard duty during this period.
- Students and staff will be encouraged to wear close fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2,3 or 4 and protect and cover as much of the eye as possible).
- Unless there is a specific health issue and for students with naturally dark pigmented skin, all students will be required to use SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sun screen. In consultation with the school community, this can be supplied by the school or provided by students as part of the booklist.
- The school will ensure that education about skin cancer prevention and healthy UV exposure levels are included in the curriculum for all year levels, where appropriate. SunSmart has a number of free resources for schools.
- Parents and visitors to the school will be encouraged to use the full range of sun protection measures when attending outdoor activities.
- Please refer also to the school's Uniform/Dress Code Policy and the Swimming Instruction/Water Safety Policy.

### **Evaluation**

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle or if guidelines change (latest DET update early July 2017).

<u>Ratification Date</u>	<u>Review Date</u>	<u>Policy Number</u>	<u>Version Number</u>	<u>Date Produced</u>
October 2017	2020	81	1	September 2017

Reference:  
[www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/sun.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/sun.aspx)