

## SUNSMART



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Ripponlea Primary School on:

(03) 95275728

[ripponlea.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:ripponlea.ps@education.vic.gov.au)

Ripponlea Primary School (RPS) is a 'SunSmart School' in line with SunSmart Victoria.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at RPS to minimise the risk of skin and eye damage and skin cancer.

This policy provides guidelines to:

- support staff and students to use a combination of sun protection measures when UV index levels are 3 or 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.

The purpose of being a 'SunSmart School' is to:

- promote an awareness of the damage caused by overexposure to the harmful ultra violet rays of the sun;
- protect students from potential sun damage and encourage safe sun exposure by practising SunSmart strategies throughout the year.

### SCOPE

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

## POLICY

Excessive exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause health problems including sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer in later life.

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 SunSmart widget on the school's website, the free SunSmart app, or at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au) or [bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au).

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

### Shade

RPS will provide sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- where students congregate for lunch
- outdoor lesson areas
- popular play areas
- Italian Garden

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at RPS 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.

Staff and students will be encouraged to use shade areas for outdoor activities.

- RPS School Council makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the RPS school grounds particularly in areas where students congregate e.g. lunch, canteen, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning all other outdoor activities and excursions.
- A 'Hot Day' timetable will be implemented at the Principal's discretion, enabling respite from outside conditions.

- Outdoor activities will be planned in consideration of this policy.

### **Sun protective uniform/clothing**

RPS's school uniform and dress code and sports uniform includes sun-protective clothing, including:

- loose, cool, closely woven fabric
- shirts with a collar
- tops with elbow length or long sleeves
- longer style shorts, leggings and skirts
- rash vests or t-shirts are encouraged for outdoor swimming activities.

From mid-August (exact date to be set by the school annually) to 30 April, all students **must** wear a sun protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears for all outdoor activities. Hats may also be worn for all outdoor activities outside of the August to April time period, by parent or student choice.

Students are required to wear a RPS school hat that protects the face, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket. Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or a hat may be asked to play in the shade.

### **Sunscreen**

RPS 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](#).

RPS has strategies in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors. At RPS students are welcome to attend First Aid to access sunscreen. Staff and students who may suffer from allergic reactions from certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to contact the Principal or Assistant Principal to implement a management plan to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction at school.

Staff and families should role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside.

### **Sunglasses**

Where practical RPS encourages students and staff engaged in outdoor activities 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.

### **Curriculum**

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure. RPS will address sun and UV safety education each year as

part of the Physical Education and Health curriculum as well as through the teaching of school-wide positive behaviour support.

Staff are encouraged to access resources, tools, and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun smart behaviour across the school community.

### **Engaging students, staff and families**

SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school website/intranet, staff and parent meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/new staff orientation.

Families and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety at school and at home. Example School may provide families and staff with information through [insert communication strategies i.e. newsletters, noticeboards, school website, school assemblies].

### **Communication**

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Discussed in student forums
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

### **FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES:**

- The Department's Policy Advisory Library:
  - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
  - [Duty of care](#)
- [SunSmart](#)
- [Achievement Program](#)'s SunSmart policy

### **RELATED POLICIES:**

- Duty of Care
- Student Engagement and Wellbeing

**Policy Last Reviewed: August 2022**  
**Ratified by School Council: August 2022**  
**Next review date: August 2025**