



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

This SunSmart 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.

Scope

This policy applies to all;

- students, staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors,
- activities and events on and off-site including; recess/lunch, outdoor lessons, assemblies, PE and sports classes, interschool sports activities, excursions, camps and free dress days,
- school environments and environments where school-related events occur.

Definitions

- **Ultraviolet (UV) radiation** - a type of energy produced by the sun and some artificial sources, such as solariums. UV can't be seen or felt. The sun's UV can reach you directly and also indirectly (reflected off different surfaces and scattered by particles in the air). At least 95% of skin cancers are caused by UV exposure.
- **Sun protection times** - a forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology for the time-of-day UV levels are predicted to reach 3 or higher (when 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. Sun protection times are available for various locations across Victoria, nationally and globally on the free SunSmart Global UV app.
- **Sun protection** - a combination of strategies (clothing, hats, sunscreen, sunglasses and shade) to protect from UV.

- **Shade** - a barrier (built, natural or temporary) that protects from direct UV. Good quality shade can reduce UV by up to 75%. Shade design should also incorporate indirect UV protection through the choice or modification of surrounding surfaces (e.g., dark, natural rough surfaces that reflect less UV).

Implementation

Staff and students are encouraged to access, display and communicate the daily local sun protection times via the [SunSmart widget](#) on the school's staff and student home pages.

The sun protection measures listed in this policy are used for all outdoor activities **during the daily local sun protection times**.

Procedures

1. Environment

Shade: *Seek shade*

- The school council ensures there is enough shade (natural, built, temporary) available in the school grounds, particularly in high-use areas– for example where students have lunch, canteen, popular play spaces/equipment, assemblies, sports and outdoor lessons.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning all outdoor activities and excursions.
- The school council ensures shade provision and UV reflective surfaces are considered in plans for refurbishments and future buildings and grounds.

2. Behaviours

School uniform/dress code

Hats:

- All staff and students wear broad-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire hats that protect their face, head, neck and ears, whenever they are outside.
- Students without an appropriate hat will be asked to use shaded areas or suitable areas protected from the sun.

Sunscreen:

- The school supplies SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and students to use AND
- Students are encouraged to bring their own personal SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen which can be kept in their school bags.
- Strategies are in place to remind and encourage students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors with time for this scheduled into the daily routine during eating times.

Governance and leadership

Staff role-modelling and OHS

- As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, staff;
 - wear a sun-protective hat and covering clothing.
 - apply SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, and
 - seek shade whenever possible.

- 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 engagement

Families and visitors

- For their own safety and to reinforce our school's sun protection strategies, families, visitors, contractors and volunteers are also encouraged to;
 - wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses,
 - apply SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, and
 - seek shade whenever possible.

Monitoring and review

- The school staff review the effectiveness of our SunSmart policy (at least every five 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 Holy Cross website.

Policy last reviewed:	January 2025
Approved by:	Kellie McDonald (Acting Principal)
Next scheduled review date:	January 2027