
SUN PROTECTION POLICY

Mandatory – Quality Area 2

PURPOSE

This policy will provide:

- guidelines to ensure children, staff, volunteers and others participating in Gray Court Pre-School programs and activities are well protected from overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun
- information for parents/guardians, staff, volunteers and children attending Gray Court Pre-School regarding sun protection.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

Gray Court Pre-School is committed to:

- promoting sun protection strategies for children, families, staff and visitors to minimise the harmful effects of over exposure to the sun's UV radiation
- ensuring that curriculum planning will minimise over exposure to the sun's UV radiation and also promote an awareness of sun protection and sun safe strategies
- providing information to children, staff, volunteers, parents/guardians and others at the service about the harmful effects of exposure to the sun's UV radiation.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Person with Management or Control, Nominated Supervisor, Person in day to day Charge, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Gray Court Pre-School.

This policy will apply for terms 1 and 4. Particular care will be taken during the middle of the day between 10 am and 2 pm (11 am and 3 pm daylight saving time) when UV Index levels reach their peak.

3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

Over exposure to the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world.

Children up to four years of age are particularly vulnerable to UV damage due to lower levels of melanin and a thinner stratum corneum (the outermost layer of skin). UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

A combination of sun protection measures (hats, clothing, sunscreen, shade and sunglasses) is recommended during terms 1 and 4, particularly during daily sun protection times (refer to *Definitions*).

It is a requirement under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 that employers provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

Legislation that governs the operation of approved children's services is based on the health, safety and welfare of the children and requires that children are protected from hazards and harm.

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for Children)

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Section 167
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: including Regulations 100, 101, 113, 114, 168(2)(a)(ii)
- *National Quality Standard, including Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

Clothing for sun protection: Clothing that is loose-fitting, made from cool, densely woven fabric and covers as much skin as possible: tops with elbow-length sleeves and, if possible, collars and knee-length or longer shorts and skirts. Singlet tops and shoestring tops/dresses do not provide adequate protection in the sun.

Daily sun protection times: Times when it is estimated that the sun's UV radiation will be three or higher. Information about the daily sun protection times is available in the weather section of the daily newspaper, on the SunSmart website at: www.sunsmart.com.au, at myuv.com.au, as a free SunSmart app and as a free widget that can be added to websites.

Shade: An area sheltered from direct and indirect sun, such as a large tree, canopy, verandah or artificial cover. Shade can be built, natural or temporary and can reduce overall exposure to the sun's UV by 75%. When combined with appropriate clothing, hats and sunscreen, children can be well protected from UV over exposure when outdoors. Research shows that pre-school environments with trees, shrubbery, and broken ground not only provides better sun protection in outdoor play but also triggers more physical activity.

Sunhat: SunSmart recommends broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket-style hats that shade the face, neck and ears. Baseball caps and visors offer little protection to the cheeks, ears and neck, and are not recommended.

Sunglasses: Sunglasses are optional. If worn, it is recommended that glasses are a close fitting, wrap-around style that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible. Wearing a hat with a brim that shades the eyes can also reduce UV radiation to the eyes by 50%.

Sunscreen: SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen. Sunscreen should be reapplied every two hours, even when labelled 4 hours water resistance. Monitor the expiry date and store in a cool, dry place. From 3 years of age, children are encouraged to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of staff to help develop independent skills ready for school.

SunSmart: The name of the program conducted by The Cancer Council Victoria to promote an awareness of the need to provide sun protection. For more information visit www.sunsmart.com.au

5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- AS 4685.1: 2014 Playground equipment and surfacing – General safety requirements and test methods
- Safe Work Australia: [Guidance Note – Sun protection for outdoor workers](#) (2016)
- Cancer Council Australia: www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart
- *Get Up & Grow: Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood*. Department of Health resources. Particularly Section 2 of the Director/Coordinator Book and the Staff Book: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-early-childhood-nutrition-resources>
- SunSmart: www.sunsmart.com.au
- Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) [The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct](#) - Principle 3.2
- [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) (APST) – Standard 4.4 and 7.2

- ARPANSA [Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation](#) (2006)
- [Belonging, Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework](#) (July 2009)
- [Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework](#) (VEYLDF) (May 2016)
- DET [Building Quality Standards Handbook](#) (BQSH): Section 8.5.5 Shade Areas

Service policies

- *Excursions and Service Events Policy*
- *Nutrition and Active Play Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Approved Provider and Person with Management or Control is responsible for:

- meeting the standards and requirements of the SunSmart early childhood program
- ensuring that this policy is up to date with current SunSmart recommendations:
www.sunsmart.com.au
- ensuring parents/guardians are informed about the *Sun Protection Policy* on enrolment, including the need to provide an appropriate sunhat and clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) for their child when attending the service
- providing a supply of sunscreen for use on all persons to whom this policy applies
- ensuring parents/guardians provide an authority for staff to apply sunscreen prior to their child commencing at the service (Attachment 1) and that this is stored with each child's enrolment record (refer to *General Definitions*)
- ensuring children wear appropriate sunhats, clothing for sun protection and sunscreen when attending the service
- providing appropriate spare sunhats for children and adults that will be laundered after each use
- ensuring there is adequate shade in the service grounds to protect children from over exposure to UV radiation (Regulation 114)
- ensuring that program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- ensuring that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events (Regulations 100, 101)
- ensuring that information on sun protection is incorporated into the educational program (refer to the SunSmart website)
- ensuring all staff, children and other participants at the service wear sunhats, clothing for sun protection and sunglasses (optional) when outside, apply sunscreen and seek shade during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- ensuring all staff are aware of the special needs of infants. Babies under 12 months should not be exposed to direct sun. They should remain in full shade and always be well-protected through the use of hats and cool, covering clothing when outside. With parental consent small amounts of a suitable SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen may be applied to babies over 6 months
- reinforcing this policy by providing information on sun protection (available on the SunSmart website) to service users via newsletters, noticeboards, meetings and websites etc.

The Nominated Supervisor, Person in day-to-day charge and early childhood teachers are responsible for:

- ensuring parents/guardians are informed of the *Sun Protection Policy* on enrolment, including the need to provide an appropriate sunhat and clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) for their child when attending the service
- obtaining a parent's/guardian's authority for staff to apply sunscreen prior to their child commencing at the service (Attachment 1) and storing this with each child's enrolment record (refer to *General Definitions*)

- ensuring program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- ensuring educators and staff are aware of the special needs of infants. Babies under 12 months should not be exposed to direct sun. They should remain in full shade and always be well-protected through the use of hats and cool, covering clothing when outside. With parental consent small amounts of a suitable SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen may be applied to babies over 6 months.
- ensuring the sun protection times on the SunSmart website or the SunSmart app are accessed daily to assist with the implementation of this policy
- ensuring information on sun protection is incorporated into the educational program (refer to the SunSmart website)
- ensuring that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events (Regulations 100, 101).

All educators are responsible for:

- accessing the daily sun protection times on the SunSmart or MyUV websites or the SunSmart app to assist with the implementation of this policy
- wearing sunhats, clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) and sunglasses (optional) when outside, applying sunscreen and seeking shade during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- ensuring each child, and any other participant at the service, wears an appropriate sunhat, clothing for sun protection and sunscreen for all outdoor activities during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- keeping babies under 12 months out of direct sun whenever UV levels are three or higher
- checking that all sunhats brought to the service meet the SunSmart recommendation for adequate protection, are named and stored individually
- ensuring spare sunhats are laundered after each use
- applying sunscreen (refer to *Definitions*) to children's exposed skin – except in cases where parents/guardians have not given authority. Where possible this should be done 20 minutes before going outdoors. Children, where appropriate, will be encouraged to apply sunscreen with the assistance of an educator (sunscreen is to be reapplied every two hours)
- storing sunscreen in a cool place and monitoring the expiry date – including for sunscreen supplied by parents/guardians
- ensuring that children without appropriate sunhats or clothing for sun protection play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun
- encouraging children to seek shade when playing outside and utilise shaded areas for outdoor equipment that is not fixed during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- encouraging children to wear sunhats when travelling to and from the service
- ensuring that sun protection strategies are a priority when planning excursions
- co-operating with their employer with respect to any action taken by the employer to comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- providing a named, SunSmart approved sunhat (refer to *Definitions*) for their child's use at the service
- applying sunscreen to their child before the commencement of each session during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- providing written authority for staff to apply sunscreen to their child
- providing, at their own expense, an alternative sunscreen to be left at the service if their child has a particular sensitivity to the sunscreen provided by the service
- wearing a sunhat, clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) and sunglasses (optional) when outside at the service (such as when on Kinder Duty), applying sunscreen and seeking shade during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy.

Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider and Person with Management or Control will:

- welcome feedback from educators, staff, parents/guardians, children, management and all affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy or its procedures.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Authority for staff to administer sunscreen
- Attachment 2: Background information

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Committee of Management of Gray Court Pre-School on 11/01/2019.

REVIEW DATE: 11/01/2022

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or more frequently in response to legislative and/or other changes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This policy was written in consultation with Cancer Council Victoria's SunSmart Program

ATTACHMENT 1
Authority for staff to administer sunscreen

Authority for staff to administer sunscreen provided by the service

I, _____, give/do not give permission for the staff at Gray Court Pre-School to apply, as appropriate, SPF 30 (or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to all exposed parts of my child's body.

(Name of child)

Signature (parent/guardian)

Date

Authority for staff to administer sunscreen provided by the parent/guardian

I, _____, give permission for the staff at Gray Court Pre-School to apply, as appropriate, to all exposed parts of my child's body the sunscreen that I have supplied and labelled with my child/children's name. This sunscreen is an SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen. I understand that this sunscreen will be kept at the service.

It is my responsibility to ensure there is always an adequate supply of this sunscreen at the service.

(Name of child)

Signature (parent/guardian)

Date

ATTACHMENT 2

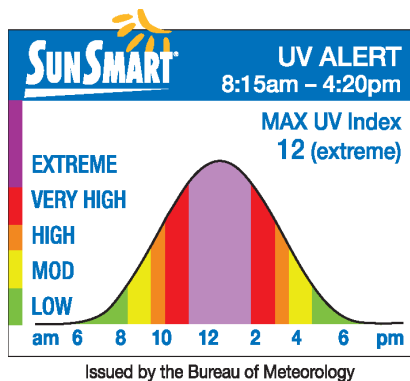
Background Information

Although our senses can easily detect sunlight and infrared radiation (heat), they cannot detect the level of ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun. UV radiation can't be seen or felt and can be damaging to our skin on cool, cloudy days as well as hot, sunny ones. Whenever UV radiation index levels reach 3 (moderate) and above, sun protection is required. At that level UV radiation is intense enough to damage our skin and contribute to the risk of skin cancer.

In Victoria from September to April, the UV radiation index levels are 3 and above for most of the day. Particular care should be taken between 10 am and 2 pm (11 am and 3 pm daylight saving time) when UV levels reach their peak.

From May to August, the UV radiation index levels in Victoria are usually low (below 3). Therefore sun protection measures are not necessary during these months unless you are in alpine regions, or near highly reflective surfaces like snow or water.

The Sun Smart UV Alert



The Sun Smart UV Alert is a quick and easy tool that helps you know when UV Index levels will be high enough to damage the skin and when you need to encourage children to use sun protection measures.

When the UV Index is forecast to reach 3 and above, the Bureau of Meteorology issues the Sun Smart UV Alert. It is reported daily in newspapers around Australia, some mobile phone and radio weather forecasts and on the Bureau of Meteorology website at; www.bom.gov.au (do a search for UV Alert).

The effect of too much UV radiation – skin cancer

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. One in two people living in Australia will develop skin cancer during their lifetime, however most skin cancer can be prevented.

The role of early childhood kindergartens

There is enormous potential for early childhood kindergartens to prevent skin cancer in future generations.

Early childhood kindergartens are central to protecting children's skin. This is because:

- Children attend kindergartens at times when ultraviolet (UV) radiation levels are high.
- Most damage due to sun exposure occurs during the early years.
- Kindergartens can play a significant role in changing behaviours through role modelling and education.

Protecting children from foreseeable harm is part of a kindergarten's duty of care to children. As part of an employer's general duty of care under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, staff working all or part of their day outside should be protected from the sun's UV radiation.

THE 'OUTSIDE 5'

Sun Smart recommend using a combination of these five important sun protection measures:

1. Shade

Try to use shade whenever possible. Even while in the shade, UV radiation can reflect from surfaces such as water, sand and concrete so it is important that children continue to wear a hat, appropriate clothing and sunscreen.

2. Sun-protective clothing

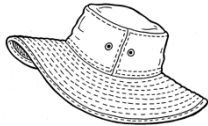


As well as hats, Sun Smart recommends loose fitting, close weave clothing that covers as much skin as possible during outside activities. Tops with elbow length sleeves, and if possible, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best.

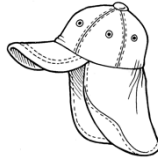
Garments especially designed for sun protection will carry a UPF (ultraviolet protection factor) level on their tags. The higher the number, the greater the protection from UV radiation. Fabric rated above UPF 30 provides very good protection.

3. Hats

To protect the neck, ears, temples, face and nose, encourage children to wear a broad brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hat.



Broad brimmed hat



Legionnaire hat



Bucket hat

Broad brimmed hats should have a brim of at least 7.5 cm (6 cm for very young children).

A legionnaire hat should have the front peak and the long, back flap meet at the sides to protect the side of the face, neck and ears.

Bucket hats should have a deep crown and a brim of at least 5 cm for young children.

Baseball caps and visors offer little protection to the cheeks, ears and neck and are therefore not recommended.

4. Sunglasses



Eyes, like skin, can be damaged by exposure to UV radiation. Sun Smart suggests, where practical, wearing close fitting, wrap around sunglasses that cover as much of the eye area as possible. The sunglasses should meet Australian Standard 1067 (sunglasses: category 2, 3 or 4) and preferably be marked EPF 10 (eye protection factor). There are products available that have been specifically designed for babies and toddlers and have soft elastic to keep them in place. You can also get swimming goggles with EPF 10.

Please remember that the colour or darkness of the lenses doesn't indicate the level of sun protection and you will need to check the label. It is also good to find sunglasses that are polarised as these reduce the glare.

If your kindergarten prefers not to introduce the wearing of sunglasses, or a child is reluctant to wear them, you can still protect the eyes by avoiding peak UV times, wearing a hat and staying in the shade.

5. Sunscreen



It is good to teach children to apply SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen before going outside and to reapply it every two hours. Sunscreen screens out UV radiation but does not completely block it out so some UV radiation still reaches our skin. It is recommended that you inform families of the brand/type. Some children may be sensitive to some sunscreens, so families may wish to supply an alternative for their child. However, even if all families are asked to provide SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, the kindergarten should still have a supply available.

Role models

Children often copy those around them and learn by imitation. If you adopt sun protection behaviours the children in your care are more likely to do the same.

Sun exposure for staff is also an Occupational Health & Safety issue. For information on sun protection in the workplace contact Sun Smart on 9635 5148.

Family information

It is helpful if families understand the kindergarten's sun protection policy and are aware of how they can assist by providing appropriate clothing, hats, and possibly sunglasses, and being good role models themselves. Newsletters and noticeboards are an ideal way of keeping families informed. The above information could be displayed on the noticeboard or provided in a newsletter.

Sun Smart can provide materials (posters, brochures and information sheets) for this purpose. Their website also has useful information. Visit www.sunsmart.com.au. This includes frequently asked questions from early childhood kindergartens.

UV and Vitamin D

Some UV radiation exposure is important for a child's vitamin D production. Vitamin D is necessary for bone, joint, muscle and neurological function and is produced in the skin by exposure to UV radiation. Low levels are also present in some foods.

A balance is required between avoiding an increase in a child's risk of skin cancer and achieving enough UV radiation exposure to maintain their vitamin D levels.

During peak UV months in Victoria (from September to April), children usually receive enough sun for Vitamin D production from incidental sun exposure during their day-to-day activities, even if they are adopting recommended Sun Smart behaviour. Five minutes of sun exposure in the morning and another five minutes in the late afternoon on most days of the week is generally all that is required. Extra care should always be taken during the middle of the day when UV Index levels reach their peak. Children with dark skin may need slightly longer periods of sun exposure, about 5 minutes more in the morning and again in the afternoon.

From May until August UV Index levels in Victoria reach below 3 (low). Generally the lower UV Index levels are not intense enough to damage the skin.

When UV Index levels are low, children need greater exposure time to maintain vitamin D stores. Asking children to follow sun protection throughout the entire year in Victoria is not necessary and may lead to other health concerns for them.

Resources

Sun Smart Early Childhood Program
The Cancer Council Victoria
1 Rathdowne St
CARLTON VIC 3053
Ph: 9635 5161 Fax: 9635 5260

www.sunsmart.com.au