

OBERON PRIMARY SCHOOL

SUN and UV PROTECTION POLICY



Our Sun and UV protection policy has been developed in accordance with guidelines set out in the *SunSmart (Cancer Council Victoria)* website¹ and the Victorian Government, Department of Education and Training (DET) School Policy and Advisory Guide, Sun and UV protection (2011)².

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- create healthy environments and encourage appropriate behaviours to allow some UV exposure for vitamin D and minimise overexposure, so as to reduce skin and eye damage and skin cancer risk.
- encourage behaviour change through education and role-modelling.
- protect staff and students from harm caused by overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation.

Background

A balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure is important for health. Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Exposure to the sun's UV during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer in later life, with melanoma being the most common cancer in Australians aged 13–24 years². Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

GUIDELINES/IMPLEMENTATION

In order to comply with the *Victorian Cancer Council SunSmart Guidelines*¹ **sun-protection** must be used from January 1st to April 30th (inclusive) and from September 1st to the end of the school year.

Exception: If sport or physical education activities (undertaken between January–April 30th and September 1st–December 31st) occur on a day, or at a time, when the UV levels are predicted to be below 3, the class teacher or Principal may allow students to participate without their hats.

To assist with the implementation of this policy, staff are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times via the SunSmart website or the free SunSmart app at (sunsmart.com.au).

Behaviour

From January 1st to April 30th (inclusive) and from September 1st to the end of the school year, our school will:

- require children to wear hats which protect the face, neck and ears whenever they are outside (e.g. recess, lunch, sport and excursions). Students without hats approved hats will be restricted to designated shade areas. The only exception to this requirement is detailed above.
- encourage students to bring their own sunscreen (SPF 30+ or above) to school.
- encourage the daily application of sunscreen before school and prior to any break (where possible, at least 20 minutes before going outside. Sunscreen should be reapplied every two hours). The school will make sunscreen available to students. Students will apply the lotion.
- encourage children to use available areas of shade for outdoor activities.
- encourage staff and parents to act as role models by practising SunSmart behaviours.

NOTE: On days of very high UV, in May to August, the Principal may encourage students to follow the above mentioned SunSmart behaviours.

Curriculum

As part of general SunSmart strategies, our school will:

- endeavour to incorporate programs on sun protection and vitamin D into the curriculum at all grade levels.
- attempt to reinforce SunSmart behaviour in a positive way through newsletters, parent meetings, student and teacher activities.
- consider the Sun and UV Protection Policy when planning outdoor events (e.g. camps, excursions and sporting events).

Environment

As part of general SunSmart strategies, our school will:

- schedule outdoor activities, as far as practicable, so as to avoid the times when the sun's rays are most dangerous.
- use areas of shade for outdoor activities, whenever practicable.
- work toward increasing the number of shelters and trees so as to provide adequate shade in the school grounds.

Evaluation

As part of our general Sun and UV Protection strategies selected staff and members of the OPS School Council will review the effectiveness of this policy.

They will:

1. Review the SunSmart behaviour of students, staff, parents and visitors and make recommendations for improvement.
2. Assess shade provision and usage and make recommendations for increases in shade provision.
3. Update and promote curriculum material relevant to SunSmart activities.

Review

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle. Sun and UV Protection Policy updates and requirements will be made available to staff, families and visitors.

Related Policies:

- Duty of Care

References/resources used in the development of this policy:

¹ SunSmart (Cancer Council Victoria) website, <http://www.sunsmart.com.au/communities/early-childhood-primary-schools/sample-policies>

² The Victorian Government, Department of Education and Training (DET) School Policy and Advisory Guide, Sun and UV protection (2017), <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/sun.aspx>

This policy was ratified by the School Council on: 31/10/2017

NEXT REVIEW DATE: October 2020

Policy prepared by Genefor Walker-Smith — October 2016