



SUNSMART



Help for non-English speakers.

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Whittlesea Primary School.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Whittlesea Primary School that reflect a healthy UV exposure balance, ensuring some sun exposure for vitamin D while minimising the risk of 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 September – April) and allow sun exposure when UV levels are below 3 (generally May – August)
- 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.

SCOPE

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

POLICY

A balance of sun exposure is important for health. Excessive exposure to the sun can cause health problems including sunburn, dehydration, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer.

Too little UV exposure from the sun can lead to low Vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy muscles and bones, and overall health.

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 September - April)
- peaks during school hours

A combination of sun protection measures should be put in place from September (T3) to the end of April (T2), and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

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

Shade

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

- where students congregate for lunch
- the canteen
- outdoor lesson areas
- popular play areas, including playgrounds
- assembly areas

When building works or grounds maintenance is occurring at Whittlesea Primary School and that these works may influence the level of shading available to staff and students, a review of the shaded areas available will occur and further shading be provided as appropriate.

Sun protective uniform/clothing

Whittlesea Primary School's school uniform and dress code includes sun-protective clothing, including:

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

During outdoor learning and break times, during September (T3) to the end of April (T2), and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, all students **must** wear a hat when playing outside.

Staff and students are required to wear a school hat or another hat style that protects the face, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket. Students who may not be wearing appropriate protective clothing or a hat may be asked to play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun.

Sunscreen

Whittlesea Primary School encourages all staff and students to apply SPF 30+ (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily at a minimum from September to the end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours if necessary.

Whittlesea Primary School has strategies in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors, for example, reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies.

At Whittlesea Primary School, students are welcome to attend the Wellbeing Centre or staffroom to access sunscreen during break times. Staff and students who may suffer from allergic reactions from certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to contact the First Aid officer 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 from September to the end of April or whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure. Whittlesea Primary School will address sun, UV safety and Vitamin D education as part of their curriculum at the start of Term 1 and Term 4.

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

Engaging students, staff and families

Families and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety and Vitamin D education at school and at home. Whittlesea Primary School may provide families and staff with information through i.e., newsletters, noticeboards, school website, school assemblies.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last reviewed and approved by school council on Tuesday 23rd May 2023 and is scheduled for evaluation and review in March 2026.