



# Sun Smart Policy

## Rationale

Over-exposure to UV (ultraviolet) rays causes sunburn, skin damage and increased risk of skin cancer. **Inappropriate sun exposure in the first 18 years of life contributes significantly to the lifetime risk of developing skin cancer.** However, some skin exposure to the sun's UV rays is needed for the production of vitamin D, vital for maintenance of healthy bones, teeth and general good health.

Being SunSmart is a whole-of-year approach. It means using sun protection when the UV is 3 and above (mid-Sept to mid-April), and safe sun exposure for vitamin D (mid-April to mid-Sept).

The aims of the West Ulverstone Primary School Skin Protection Policy are to promote among children, staff and parents:

- \* Positive attitudes towards skin protection.
- \* Lifestyle practices which can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer.
- \* Personal responsibility for and decision making about skin protection.
- \* Awareness of the need for shaded areas to reduce the level of sun exposure.

## Objectives

- Ensure children and staff maintain a healthy UV balance all year round. Encourage sun protection **when UV Index levels reach 3 and above and safe sun exposure for vitamin D.**
- Educate staff and children on appropriate sun protection measures.

## Strategies

- Staff are encouraged to check the UV Alert on a daily basis.
- Staff and students use a combination of sun protection measures from mid-September to mid-April, when average peak UV levels in Tasmania reach 3 and above:

### 1. Clothing

- Sun-safe clothing is part of our school and sports uniform. This includes shirts with collars, sleeves, longer style dresses and shorts and rash vests or T-shirts for outdoor swimming.
- Clothing exposing large amounts of shoulder and upper torso eg. singlets, tank tops and strappy dresses are not considered suitable.

### 2. Sunscreen

- The use of SPF 30+ (or greater), broad-spectrum sunscreen is encouraged.
- Where possible SPF 30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen is available for use.
- Sunscreen is applied 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every 2 hours.
- Parents of students with sensitive skin are encouraged to pack individual sunscreen.

- Sunscreen will be reapplied every two hours if outdoors for a prolonged period of time, or more frequently if involved in water activities.

### 3. Hats

- Students are required to wear sun-safe hats that protect the face, neck and ears when outside. Recommended sun-safe hats include legionnaire, broad-brimmed and bucket hats. Baseball caps do not offer enough protection and are not recommended.
- Staff are required to wear either a broad brimmed hat (brim width 6cm) or legionnaire in the outside environment (during breaks, excursions, and sporting events).
- Children not wearing hats will be expected to play or sit in the shade.
- Students are required to wear rash vest/t-shirts at swimming events or picnics.

### 4. Shade

- The school community is committed to providing shade in areas where students gather such as for eating, outdoor teaching and popular play areas. The use of these areas is encouraged.
- Availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all outdoor activities.

### 5. Sunglasses

- Close-fitting wrap-around sunglasses that comply with Australian Standards AS1067:2003 (Category 2, 3 or 4) are encouraged but optional.

#### ➤ **Students without a sun-safe hat or clothing must play in areas protected from the sun.**

- **Students with naturally very dark skin** (skin types 5 and 6 – see Fitzpatrick Skin Type Chart) may need 4-6 times as much sun for vitamin D production and do not need long-sleeved tops or sunscreen, unless outdoors for extended periods. However, they should still wear hats or sunglasses to protect their eyes when UV is 3 or above.

- **To help maintain adequate vitamin D levels** sun protection will not be used from mid-April to mid-September, when average peak UV levels are below 3 unless in alpine regions, near highly reflective surfaces such as water and snow or outdoors for extended periods.

#### ➤ **Staff OHS, role modelling and education-**

- Reinforcing the SunSmart message in all school activities and in general school procedures is an important strategy in the adoption of the skin protection behaviours
- When UV is 3 and above staff will role model sun protection behaviours when outside by using the combination of sun protection measures outlined above.
- Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.
- Programs on skin cancer prevention and vitamin D are included in teaching programs for all year levels
- West Ulverstone Primary will keep up to date with new information and resources issued by The Cancer Council of Tasmania.
- Parents/Carers will be encouraged to role model appropriate SunSmart strategies when attending school/events.
- SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, meetings, assemblies and upon enrolment.

#### ➤ **Planning**

- Ensure SunSmart policy is reflected in the planning of all outdoor events and excursions.

- Where possible, outdoor activities will be planned away from the middle of the day during the period mid-September to mid-April (when UV levels reach 3 and above).

➤ **Review**

- School's sun protection policy will be submitted for review to Cancer Council Tasmania once every three years, for updating as new evidence becomes available.

This information is based on current evidence available at time of review. Last updated: July 2013.  
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**DATE: MAY 2014**

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Date

27/06/14

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27/06/14

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