

Skye Primary School
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SUN SMART



Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Skye Primary School administration office via phone: 03 9786 1555 or email: skye.ps@education.vic.gov.au

RATIONALE

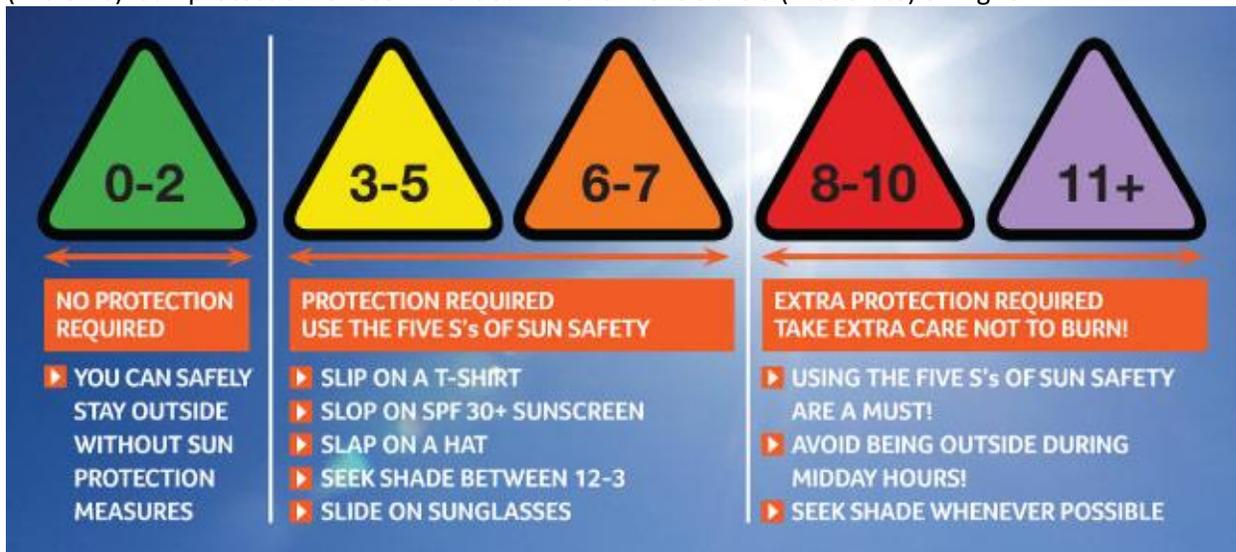
A healthy balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure is important for health. Too much of the sun's UV can result in acute and chronic health effects on the skin, eyes and immune system. Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Two in three Australian's will develop some form of skin cancer before they reach the age of 70. Over exposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is now a major cause and increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

Sun protection is needed whenever UV levels reach three or above. In Victoria UV levels are three and above from mid August until the end of April. During these months, particular care should be taken during the middle of the day, particularly between 10am – 3pm when UV levels reach their peak. From May to August in Victoria, average UV levels are below three so additional sun protection is not usually needed during these months.

UV cannot be seen or felt. It is not like the sun's light which we see, or the sun's warmth (infrared radiation) which we feel. Our senses cannot detect UV so it can be damaging without us knowing. There is a huge variation in UV levels across Australia. UV levels are affected by a number of factors including the time of day, time of year, cloud cover, altitude, and proximity to the equator, scattering and reflection.

The World Health Organization's Global Solar UV Index measures UV levels on a scale from 0 (Low) to 11+ (Extreme). Sun protection is recommended when UV levels are 3 (Moderate) or higher.



PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Skye Primary School to minimise the risk of skin and eye damage and 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 mid-August – end of April)
- 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, staff and visitors.

SCOPE

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

POLICY

Excessive exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause health problems including sunburn, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer.

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 mid-August – end of April)
- peaks during school hours.

Sun safety is a shared responsibility and staff, parents and students are encouraged to implement a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 and above (typically from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria). Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via the SunSmart widget on the school's website, the free SunSmart app, or at sunsmart.com.au or bom.gov.au.

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

Shade

Skye 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 eating snack and lunch

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- outdoor lesson areas
 - popular play areas
 - play equipment.

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Skye Primary School that may impact on the level of shading available to staff and students, a review of the shaded areas available will be conducted and further shading installed as appropriate.

Sun protective uniform/clothing

Skye Primary School recommends that from mid-August to end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, 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
- broad-brimmed hats*.

*From mid-August (exact date to be set by the school annually) to 30th April, all students **must** wear a broad-brimmed sun protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears for all outdoor activities. Hats may also be worn for all outdoor activities outside of the August to April time period, by parent or student choice.

- baseball/peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative and are not permitted to be worn at school
- school hats can be purchased from the office
- all hats should be labeled clearly on the inside with permanent pen
- students will be encouraged to drink plenty of water and play quiet games on very hot days or if the temperature or weather is extreme an inclement weather timetable will be implemented and students remain indoors.

Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or hat will be asked to play under the shade sails area, protected from the sun.

Sunscreen

Skye Primary School encourages all staff and students to apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours according to manufacturer's instructions.

Families are asked to supply their child with broad spectrum 30+ or higher sunscreen suitable for child. This should not be shared with other students as there may be issues relating to allergies and skin conditions that we are unaware of.

Students are also welcomed to attend sickbay to see the school nurse to access sunscreen. Skye Primary School has strategies in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors.

Sunglasses

Where practical Skye Primary School encourages students and staff engaged in outdoor activities to wear close-fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure. Skye Primary School will address sun and UV safety education as part of our curriculum.

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

COMMUNICATION

Sun Smart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted throughout the school . This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- available publicly on our school's website
- included in staff induction processes
- included in staff handbook/manual
- discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- reminders in our school newsletter
- discussed in student forums
- hard copy available from school administration upon request.

Role Modelling

Staff act as role models by:

- wearing sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses while outside (this is essential when staff are on duty or when teaching/supervising outside)
- Seek shade whenever possible
- apply SPF 30+ water resistant sunscreen as needed
- families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/> - Education department

www.sunsmart.com.au – Sun Smart

www.who.int/uv/en/ - World Health Organisation

www.worksafe.vic.gov.au – Work safe Victoria

The Department's Policy and Advisory Library:

- Sun and UV protection policy
- Duty of care

Legislation and Standards

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006: Sch.5 Reg. 1 (1.2)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	8/08/2021
Approved by	Rachael Dekker – School Council
Next scheduled review date	1/08/2024