

SUN PROTECTION POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Mill Park Heights Primary School

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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to support sun protection behaviours at Mill Park Heights Primary School to minimise risk of health problems from sun overexposure, including 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 on and off-site, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

Policy

Overexposure 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 damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

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 day and the year (highest from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria)
- 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. Information about the daily local sun protection times is available on the school's website, the free SunSmart app, or at sunsmart.com.au or bom.gov.au.

Mill Park Heights Primary School has the following measures in place for all outdoor activities during the daily sun protection times to help reduce the risk of over-exposure to UV radiation for staff and students.

Shade

Mill Park Heights Primary School will provide sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds.

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The school council makes sure there are sufficient shelters and trees providing shade in outdoor areas particularly in high-use areas e.g. where students have lunch, canteen, assemblies, sports, outdoor lessons and popular play spaces. The availability of shade is considered when planning all other outdoor activities. Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.

Students who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.

In consultation with the school council, shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.

A shade assessment is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.

In extreme heat conditions a Extreme Weather Timetable is followed where students remain indoors.

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Mill Park Heights 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

Mill Park Heights Primary School recommends that from mid-August to end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, students come to school wearing sun-protective clothing such as:

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

Mill Park Heights Primary School's uniform or dress code applies on and off-site unless otherwise advised. When students are not required to wear school uniform (such as school camps, free dress day), Mill Park Heights Primary School will ensure steps are taken to encourage students to wear sun-protective clothing whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

HATS

From mid-August to 30 April, all students **must** wear a 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.

Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or hats will be asked to use available areas of shade when outdoors or a suitable area protected from the sun.

Sunscreen

Mill Park Heights 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 arriving to school, and reapplied every two hours according to manufacturer's instructions.

Staff and families should role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to supply their own sunscreen and apply SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside.

Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors. Teachers or monitors are to remind students to put on their sunscreen at the:
10.50 recess and 1:20 Lunch inside Eating bell.

Sunglasses (if practical)

Mill Park Heights 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. They are supported to understand effects of sun exposure and are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school. Mill Park Heights Primary School will address sun and UV safety education as part of curriculum.

Staff role-modelling and OHS

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.

UV radiation exposure is considered as part of our school's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities, i.e. UV radiation protection strategies are included in school camp activities, excursions, sports days and interschool sports events.

Families and visitors

Families and visitors participating in and attending outdoor school activities are encouraged to:

- wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
- apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and
- seek shade whenever possible when outdoors.

Community engagement

Sun protection behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school website/intranet, staff and parent meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/new staff orientation.

Families, students and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety at school and at home. Mill Park Heights Primary School may provide information through newsletters, school website, school assemblies.

COMMUNICATION

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
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

Further Information and Resources

- the Department's Policy and Advisory Library:
 - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
 - [Heat Health](#)
 - [Outdoor Activities and Working Outdoors](#)
 - [Risk Management – Schools](#)

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- [Shade Sails](#)
- [Student Dress Code](#)
- [SunSmart and Cancer Council Victoria.](#)
- [Primary schools free education resources, sample policies and information about the free SunSmart Schools Program.](#)
- [Sunscreen reactions.](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed (DET)	18 June 2024 (changes to policy only required when next updating policy)
Reviewed	Feb 2024
Approved by School Council	Feb 2024
Next scheduled review date	Feb 2027