



## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Heathmont East 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 and staff.

## SCOPE

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

## 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](http://sunsmart.com.au) or [bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au).

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

## Shade

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

- outdoor lesson areas
- popular play areas

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at HEPS 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

HEPS'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.

From mid-August (exact date to be set by the school annually) 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 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 are not 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

HEPS 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](#).

HEPS has strategies in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors, including, reminder notices in school newsletter and teacher reminders before play.

HEPS students are welcome to attend the sick bay to access sunscreen. Staff and students who may suffer from allergic reactions from certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to contact our school nurse 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.

## Sunglasses

Where practical HEPS 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. HEPS will address sun and UV safety education as part the 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

To remind the school community of the actions that this policy outlines, the policy will be communicated through:

- the school newsletter in term 1 and 4,
- Compass push notification to all families at the start of term 1 and 4,
- regular Monday morning whole school assemblies in term 1 and 4, and
- at a staff meeting at the start of term 1 and 4.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- School Policy Advisory Guide:
  - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
  - [Duty of care](#)
- [SunSmart](#)

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy is scheduled for review every 3 years.