

Park Ridge Primary School

Sun Protection Policy

October 2024

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Park Ridge Primary School (PRPS) to minimise the risk of health problems from sun overexposure, including skin cancer.

Currently, Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world, with two out of every three Australians developing some form of skin cancer in their lifetime. Protection during childhood and adolescence means lifelong reduced risks.

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

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. For example, overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet 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/carers 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 free [SunSmart app](#), or at sunsmart.com.au or bom.gov.au.

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

Shade

- School Council will ensure there is sufficient shelter and trees providing shade in outdoor areas.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- A regular shade audit is conducted to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
- 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.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities.

Hats

- All children are required to wear a suitable hat in Terms 1 and 4, and any other days where UV levels reach 3 and above.
- A suitable hat is deemed to be a PRPS school uniform hat, or other legionnaire, broad-brimmed, or bucket-style hat that shades the face, neck and ears. Caps and visors are not considered suitable alternatives.
- Children without sun protective hats are required to play undercover.

Clothing

- Cool, loose-fitting, sun protective clothing made of densely woven fabric is included in our school uniform / dress code and sports uniform. It includes shirts with collars and elbow-length sleeves, longer dresses and shorts, and rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming,

Sunglasses (optional)

- Students and staff are encouraged to wear close fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of their eye area as possible.

Sunscreen

- Students and staff are encouraged to apply SPF50+ broad spectrum water resistant sunscreen prior to arrival at school in the morning.
- SPF50+ broad spectrum water resistant sunscreen is to be provided by parents/carers, and is to be kept in the student's school bag.
- Students are not permitted to share sunscreen.
- Students and staff are encouraged to reapply their own sunscreen under supervision of staff throughout the day, in accordance with the manufacturer's directions.
- Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g. reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies).

Outdoor Activities

- Outdoor activities are to be scheduled earlier in the day during the summer months and the availability of shade is to be considered when planning these activities.
- The rules provided above relating to shade, hats, clothing, sunglasses and sunscreen will apply to all activities held outdoors on and off site e.g. sports days, excursions, camps.

Extreme Weather

- In the event of the daily temperature being expected to reach an extreme level, the Principal/delegate will make an assessment as to what timetable adjustments are required throughout the day.

- Timetable adjustments will ensure that students are outside earlier in the day, and that any outdoor activities are relocated indoors where possible.

Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices, and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure. PRPS will address sun and UV safety education in the curriculum across all year levels.

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 SPF50 or SPF50+ 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/carer 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.

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](#)
 - [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](#).
 - [Secondary schools](#) free education resources and sample policies.

- [Sunscreen reactions.](#)

Evaluation This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-yearly internal controls.

Policy:	Sun Protection Policy		
Date Approved:	October, 2024	Person Responsible:	Education Committee / Principal
Date for Review:	October, 2027	Date Updated on Policy Index:	November, 2024