Curtin Primary School

Sun protection policy
(updated April 2013)

This policy is considered before participating in all outdoor activities and events on and off site. A combination of sun protection measures will be required when UV levels reach 3 and above. In Canberra this will be for most or part of each day between August and May.

Rationale
It's important to have a healthy balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure. Too much of the sun’s UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk. However, too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

Objectives
This Policy has been developed to:
• ensure all students and workers have a balanced approach to sun protection;
• require all children and workers to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above;
• work towards a safe outdoor environment that provides effective shade for children and workers at appropriate times;
• assist students to be responsible for their own sun protection behaviour, and
• ensure that families and new staff are informed of the school's current policy and practices.

Our workers are encouraged to access the daily SunSmart UV Alert for Canberra at http://www.bom.gov.au/nsw/uv/canberra.shtml to find out daily local sun protection times to assist with the implementation of this policy.

We use a combination of the below sun protection measures for all outdoor activities whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, the level that can cause long term damage to unprotected skin and eyes.

1. Shade
• our school board and members makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the outdoor area;
• the availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities and events;
• students are encouraged and directed to use available areas of shade when outside, especially during Term 1 and 4; and
• students who do not wear an appropriate hat or clothing are directed to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.

2. Clothing
• School uniform or house colour T-shirt that covers shoulders and upper arms is encouraged,
• knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best.
• Students will be required to wear a t-shirt or rash style vest if participating in all day outdoor swimming carnivals.

3. Hats
• All students and workers are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket hats. Baseball or peak caps are not considered a suitable alternative and will not be worn.

4. Sunglasses [SUGGESTED]
• Students who choose to wear sunglasses will be encouraged, a 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 is best;
• Workers are also required to wear suitable sunglasses when working outdoors that meet AS 1067.

5. Sunscreen
• SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is available for all student’s and worker’s to access;
• Sunscreen is applied at least 15-20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied after two hours;
• Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g. reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies);
• With parental consent, children with naturally very dark skin (skin that rarely or never burns) are not required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements.

6. Outdoors activities
Outdoor time in the sun will be minimised, when possible, between 11am and 3pm during the daylight saving/summer period (ie Term 1 and 4). This is when UV levels peak in Canberra and the risk of skin and eye damage is significantly increased. Care is always taken during the middle of the day when outdoors.

7. Winter and sun protection
Due to low UV levels experienced in Canberra around the June and July period each day (under 3), sun protection behaviour, like wearing a hat and applying
sunscreen is not generally recommended. Students and teachers will not be required to wear their sun hat during this period- this may be replaced with a beanie.

Teachers are encouraged to educate students during this period around the importance of a balanced approach to sun protection- ie students should know when sun protection is necessary and why?

8. Work Health and Safety & Modelling
As part of our Work Health and Safety (WHS) responsibilities, all teachers and staff members will be required to protect their skin and eyes when working outdoors, when UV levels are 3 and above or if spending extended time in the sun.

Workers at our school will be required to:
- wear sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses;
- apply SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen and reapply every 2 hours;
- seek shade where possible, and
- be aware of the signs of early skin cancer and what to do if they have any concerns.

The Principal will do as much as reasonably practicable to protect workers at our school from over-exposure to UV. Skin cancer is an occupational disease.

Families and visitors to our school are also encouraged to model appropriate sun protection behaviour by adopting a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, sunglasses, sunscreen and shade) when participating in and attending outdoor activities and events on site.

9. Communication and learning activities
Our school will:
- display this SunSmart policy for parents / carers, and discusses it with the students;
- regularly reinforces SunSmart behaviour through correspondence with families via the notice board and displays, website, and through students and staff activities and learning experiences, and
- ensures information about this policy is included in parent handbooks and other important documentation sent to families.

10. Review, monitor and update
- Our policy is regularly monitored and reviewed (at least once every three years) and revised when required.
- As a member of the National SunSmart Schools program this policy will be submitted to Cancer Council ACT every three (3) years to be reviewed.