

## **Sun Protection Policy [Mandatory] (QA 2 Children's Health and Safety)**

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This policy was written in consultation with Cancer Council Victoria's SunSmart Program. The SunSmart Sample Sun Protection Policy was last updated in March 2019 and is incorporated into the ELAA policy. For more detailed information visit the SunSmart website: [www.sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au)

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to ensure to ensure children, staff, volunteers and others participating in Merri-bek Early Years Management (MEYM) service, programs and activities are well protected from overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun and to provide information for parents/guardians, staff, volunteers and children attending MEYM regarding sun protection.

### **Policy Statement**

MEYM is committed to:

- Promoting sun protection strategies for children, families, staff and visitors to minimise the harmful effects of over exposure to the sun's UV radiation;
- Ensuring that curriculum planning will minimise over exposure to the sun's UV radiation and also promote an awareness of sun protection and sun safe strategies;
- Providing information to children, staff, volunteers, parents/guardians and others at the service about the harmful effects of exposure to the sun's UV radiation.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to:

- a) The Approved Provider (MEYM) or Persons with Management or Control,
- b) Nominated Supervisor;
- c) Persons in Day to Day Charge;
- d) Educators;
- e) Staff;
- f) Students;
- g) Volunteers;
- h) Parents/guardians;
- i) Children; and
- j) Others attending programs and activities of MEYM.

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This policy will apply whenever the sun's UV levels reach three or higher. Whenever this occurs a combination of sun protection measures are to be used for all outdoor activities.

In Victoria UV levels are usually three or higher from mid-August to the end of April. Please check the daily local sun protection times (refer to *Definitions*) to be sure you are using sun protection when it is required. Active outdoor play is encouraged throughout the day all year, provided appropriate sun protection measures are used when necessary.

### Background and Legislation

#### Background

Over exposure to the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world.

Children up to four years of age are particularly vulnerable to UV damage due to lower levels of melanin and a thinner stratum corneum (the outermost layer of skin). UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

A combination of sun protection measures (hats, clothing, sunscreen, shade and sunglasses) is recommended whenever UV levels are three or higher during daily sun protection times (refer to *Definitions*).

It is a requirement under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 that employers provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

Legislation that governs the operation of approved children's services is based on the health, safety and welfare of the children and requires that children are protected from hazards and harm.

#### Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for Children)
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Section 167
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: including Regulations 100, 101, 113, 114, 168(2)(a)(ii)
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
  - Standard 2.3: Each child is protected
    - Element 2.3.2: Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

### Policy Details

#### **The Approved Provider and Persons with Management and Control is responsible for:**

- Meeting the standards and requirements of the sunsmart early childhood program;
- Ensuring that this policy is up to date with current sunsmart recommendations: [www.sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au);

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- Ensuring parents/guardians are informed about the *Sun Protection Policy* on enrolment, including the need to provide an appropriate sunhat and clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) for their child when attending the service;
- Providing a supply of sunscreen for use on all persons to whom this policy applies;
- Ensuring parents/guardians provide an authority for staff to apply sunscreen prior to their child commencing at the service (Attachment 1) and that this is stored with each child's enrolment record (refer to *General Definitions*);
- Ensuring children wear appropriate sunhats, clothing for sun protection and sunscreen when attending the service;
- Providing appropriate spare sunhats for children and adults that will be laundered after each use
- Ensuring there is adequate shade in the service grounds to protect children from over exposure to UV radiation (Regulation 114);
- Ensuring that program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy;
- Ensuring that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events (Regulations 100, 101);
- Ensuring that information on sun protection is incorporated into the educational program (refer to the sunsmart website);
- Ensuring all staff, children and other participants at the service wear sunhats, clothing for sun protection and sunglasses (optional) when outside, apply sunscreen and seek shade during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy;
- Ensuring all staff are aware of the special needs of infants. Babies under 12 months should not be exposed to direct sun. They should remain in full shade and always be well-protected through the use of hats and cool, covering clothing when outside. With parental consent small amounts of a suitable SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen may be applied to babies over 6 months;
- Reinforcing this policy by providing information on sun protection (available on the sunsmart website) to service users via newsletters, noticeboards, meetings and websites etc.

### **The Nominated Supervisor or Persons in Day to Day Charge is responsible for:**

- Ensuring parents/guardians are informed of the *Sun Protection Policy* on enrolment, including the need to provide an appropriate sunhat and clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) for their child when attending the service;
- Obtaining a parent's/guardian's authority for staff to apply sunscreen prior to their child commencing at the service (Attachment 1) and storing this with each child's enrolment record (refer to *General Definitions*);
- Ensuring program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy;
- Ensuring the sun protection times on the SunSmart website or the SunSmart app are accessed daily to assist with the implementation of this policy;
- Ensuring information on sun protection is incorporated into the educational program (refer to the Sunsmart website);

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- Ensuring that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events (Regulations 100, 101).
- Ensure that all staff working in the program adhere to the guidelines about the wearing of hats in Term 1 and Term 4.

### **All other educators and other staff are responsible for:**

- Accessing the daily sun protection times on the SunSmart or MYUV websites or the SunSmart app to assist with the implementation of this policy;
- Wearing sunhats, clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) and sunglasses (optional) when outside, applying sunscreen and seeking shade during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy particularly in Term 1 and Term 4;
- Ensuring each child, and any other participant at the service, wears an appropriate sunhat, clothing for sun protection and sunscreen for all outdoor activities during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy;
- Checking that all sunhats brought to the service meet the SunSmart recommendation for adequate protection, are named and stored individually;
- Ensuring spare sunhats are laundered after each use;
- Applying sunscreen (refer to *Definitions*) to children's exposed skin – except in cases where parents/guardians have not given authority. Where possible this should be done 20 minutes before going outdoors. Children, where appropriate, will be encouraged to apply sunscreen with the assistance of an educator (sunscreen is to be reapplied every two hours);
- Storing sunscreen in a cool place and monitoring the expiry date – including for sunscreen supplied by parents/guardians;
- Encourage children without appropriate sunhats or clothing for sun protection to play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun;
- Encouraging children to seek shade when playing outside and utilise shaded areas for outdoor equipment that is not fixed during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy;
- Encouraging children to wear sunhats when travelling to and from the service;
- Ensuring that sun protection strategies are a priority when planning excursions;
- Co-operating with their employer with respect to any action taken by the employer to comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*.
- Discussing the importance of Sunsmart clothing with families at orientation.

### **Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- Providing a named, SunSmart approved sunhat (refer to *Definitions*) for their child's use at the service;
- Applying sunscreen to their child before the commencement of each session during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy;
- Providing written authority for staff to apply sunscreen to their child;
- Providing, at their own expense, an alternative sunscreen to be left at the service if their child has a particular sensitivity to the sunscreen provided by the service;

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- Wearing a sunhat, clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) and sunglasses (optional) when outside at the service, applying sunscreen and seeking shade during the times specified in the Scope of this policy.

**Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.**

### Evaluation

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider and Person with Management or Control will:

- Regularly seek feedback from educators, staff, parents/guardians, children, management and all affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness;
- Monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy;
- Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice;
- Revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required;
- Notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy or its procedures.

### Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

**Clothing for sun protection:** Clothing that is loose-fitting, made from cool, densely woven fabric and covers as much skin as possible: tops with elbow-length sleeves and, if possible, collars and knee-length or longer shorts and skirts. Singlet tops and shoestring tops/dresses do not provide adequate protection in the sun.

**Daily sun protection times:** Times when it is estimated that the sun's UV radiation will be three or higher. Information about the daily sun protection times is available in the weather section of the daily newspaper, on the SunSmart website at: [www.sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au), at [myuv.com.au](http://myuv.com.au), as a free SunSmart app and as a free widget that can be added to websites.

**Shade:** An area sheltered from direct and indirect sun, such as a large tree, canopy, verandah or artificial cover. Shade can be built, natural or temporary and can reduce overall exposure to the sun's UV by 75%. When combined with appropriate clothing, hats and sunscreen, children can be well protected from UV over exposure when outdoors. Research shows that preschool environments with trees, shrubbery, and broken ground not only provides better sun protection in outdoor play but also triggers more physical activity.

**Sunhat:** SunSmart recommends broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket-style hats that shade the face, neck and ears. Baseball caps and visors offer little protection to the cheeks, ears and neck, and are not recommended.

**Sunglasses:** Sunglasses are optional. If worn, it is recommended that glasses are a close fitting, wrap-around style that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible. Wearing a hat with a brim that shades the eyes can also reduce UV radiation to the eyes by 50%.

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**Sunscreen:** SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen. Sunscreen should be reapplied every two hours, even when labelled 4 hours water resistance. Monitor the expiry date and store in a cool, dry place. From 3 years of age, children are encouraged to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of staff to help develop independent skills ready for school.

SunSmart: **The name of the program conducted by Cancer Council to help prevent skin cancer:**  
[www.sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au)

### Supporting Documents and Templates

#### Attachments

- Attachment 1: Authority for staff to administer sunscreen

#### Sources

- AS/NZS 4685.0:2017, Playground equipment and surfacing - Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation.6.2.1 General considerations, 6.3.9 Shade and sun protection, Appendix A Shade and sun protection
- Safe Work Australia: [Guidance Note – Sun protection for outdoor workers](#) (2016)
- Cancer Council Australia: [www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart](http://www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart)
- *Get Up & Grow: Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood*. Department of Health resources. Particularly Section 2 of the Director/Coordinator Book and the Staff Book: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-early-childhood-nutrition-resources>
- SunSmart: [www.sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au)
- Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) [The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct](#) - Principle 3.2
- [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) (APST) – Standard 4.4 and 7.2
- ARPANSA [Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation](#) (2006)
- [Belonging, Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework](#) (July 2009)
- [Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework](#) (VEYLDF) (May 2016)
- Victorian School Building Authority [Building Quality Standards Handbook](#) (BQSH): Section 5.1.4 Shade Areas (2018)
- AS 4174:2018 Knitted and woven shade fabrics
- AS/NZS 1067.1:2016, Eye and face protection - Sunglasses and fashion spectacles
- AS/NZS 4399:2017, Sun protective clothing - Evaluation and classification
- AS/NZS 2604:2012 Sunscreen products - Evaluation and classification
- Australian Government Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA) – Australian regulatory guidelines for sunscreens: [4. Labelling and advertising – directions for use of the product](#)

#### Service policies

- *Excursions and Service Events Policy*
- *Nutrition and Active Play Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

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### Policy Control

Approving Authority	MEYM Board
Date Approved	July 2023
Date Effective	July 2023
Policy Owner	MEYM Board of Management
Policy Category	Mandatory
Edition	V3
Review Date	2025

This policy and its contents were referenced from Early Learning Association Australia (ELAA) and reviewed and approved by Cancer Council Victoria on August 30th 2019.

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**Attachment 1**

**Authority for Staff to Administer Sunscreen Provided by the Service**

I \_\_\_\_\_, give/do not give permission for the staff at MEYM to apply, as appropriate, SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to all exposed parts of my child's body.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of child)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (parent/guardian)  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Authority for staff to administer sunscreen provided by the parent/guardian**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, give permission for the staff at MEYM to apply, as appropriate, to all exposed parts of my child's body the sunscreen that I have supplied and labelled with my child/children's name. This sunscreen is an SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen. I understand that this sunscreen will be kept at the service.

It is my responsibility to ensure there is always an adequate supply of this sunscreen at the service.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of child)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (parent/guardian)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date