

SUNSMART POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at River Gum Primary School that reflect a healthy UV exposure balance, ensuring some sun exposure for vitamin D while minimising the risk of 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 September – April) and allow sun exposure when UV levels are below 3 (generally May – August)
- 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

A balance of sun exposure is important for health. Excessive exposure to the sun can cause health problems including sunburn, dehydration, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer.

Too little UV exposure from the sun can lead to low Vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy muscles and bones, and overall health.

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 September - April)
- peaks during school hours

A combination of sun protection measures should be put in place from September to the end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

River Gum Primary School **has** the following measures in place to help reduce the risk of excessive UV sun exposure for staff and students.



Shade

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

- where students congregate for lunch
- outdoor lesson areas
- popular play areas
- assembly areas

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at River Gum 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

River Gum Primary School'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

At recess and lunch times from September to April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, all students **must** wear a hat when playing outside and staff **must** wear a hat while on duty outside.

Staff and students are to wear hat styles that protect the face, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket. Students who may not be 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

River Gum Primary School encourages all staff and students to apply SPF 30+ (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily at a minimum from September to the end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors, and reapplied every two hours if necessary.

Staff and families should role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF 30+ (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside from September to the end of April or whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices, and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure. River Gum Primary School will address sun, UV safety and Vitamin D education as part of VCHPEP lessons.



Staff are encouraged to access resources, tools, and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun smart behaviour and Vitamin D education across the school community.

Engaging students, staff and families

River Gum Primary School may provide families and staff with information through school website and staff via internal platform Sentral.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- School Policy Advisory Guide:
 - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
 - [Duty of care](#)
- [SunSmart](#)
- [Achievement Program](#)'s SunSmart policy
- Sentral

REVIEW CYCLE

PREPARED BY	PHILIP O'REILLY
REVIEWED IN	SEPTEMBER 2021
REVIEWED BY STAFF	SEPTEMBER 2021
REVIEWED BY C.C	SEPTEMBER 2021
REVIEWED & RATIFIED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL	SEPTEMBER 2021
NEXT REVIEW DATE	SEPTEMBER 2024

