

# SUNSMART POLICY

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Riddells Creek 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 mid-August – to the end of April) and allow sun exposure when UV levels are below 3 (generally May – mid-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 mid-August - April)
- peaks during school hours

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

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

## Shade

School council approved this policy on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2018.



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

- Maintenance of trees to provide shade where practical
- In master planning, the school will allocate areas where shade will be implemented based on funding received and fundraising monies raised.

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Riddells Creek 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 dependent on funds.

## **Sun protective uniform/clothing**

Riddells Creek 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
- rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming activities.

At recess and lunch times from mid-August to the end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, all students **must** wear a hat when playing outside.

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 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**

Riddells Creek Primary School encourages all staff and students to apply SPF 30+ (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily at a minimum from mid-August 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.

Riddells Creek Primary School has strategies in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors [for example i.e. reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies].

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. Riddells Creek Primary School will address sun, UV safety and Vitamin D education as part of Health Education Prep-Year 6.

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.

School council approved this policy on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2018.



## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated August 2022 and is scheduled for review August 2026 .