



SUN PROTECTION 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

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.

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

Sun safety is a shared responsibility and staff, parents and students are encouraged to implement a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 or above. Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via or at sunsmart.com.au or bom.gov.au.

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

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 sun protective hat when playing outside.

Students are required to wear a sun protective 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. Hats may also be worn for all outdoor activities outside of the August to April time period, by parent or student choice.

Baseball or peaked caps and sun visors are not considered a suitable alternative, as they do not protect the ears, cheeks or neck.

Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or hats will be asked to use available areas of shade when outdoors or a suitable area protected from the sun.

Sunglasses

Where practical, Riddells Creek encourages students and staff engaged in outdoor activities to wear 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.

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.

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 SPF30 (or higher) 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 meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/new staff orientation.

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter

- Hard copy available from school administration upon request.

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.](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February 2023
Approved by	School Council
Next scheduled review date	Feb 2026