

Sun Protection

POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Our organisation recognises the value of outdoor play and learning in a sun safe way. We are committed to ensuring all children and staff are protected from ultraviolet (UV) radiation for all outdoor activities.

This includes:

- Providing shade in the outdoor environment.
- Ensuring all sun protection measures are promoted and utilised.
- Encouraging and supporting children to develop independent sun protection skills.
- Providing learning opportunities for children, staff and families.

BACKGROUND

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to sun protection, and that outdoor spaces include adequate shaded areas to protect children from overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation.

LEGISLATION

- National Law Act – 167
- National Regulations – 100, 101, 113, 114, 116, 168, 170 – 172
- National Quality Standard – 1, 2, 3, 5, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1

RELEVANT POLICIES

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| • Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations | • Health, Safety and Wellbeing |
| • Administration of First Aid | • Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness |
| • Dealing with Medical Conditions | • Interactions with Children |
| • Emergency and Evacuation | • Providing a Child-Safe Environment |
| • Enrolment and Orientation | • Safe Arrival of Children |
| • Excursions | • Safe Transportation of Children |
| • Bush Kinder | • Staffing Arrangements |
| • Governance and Management | |

LOCATION OF INFORMATION

- Centre Hallway
- Kids on Mullum Child Care Centre Website

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is required to be reviewed at least annually by the approved provider, in conjunction with nominated supervisors, responsible persons, staff, families and children.

- Dates of Review:
January 2026, May 2025, January 2024, January 2023, January 2022

Sun Protection

PROCEDURES

BACKGROUND

- The sun's UV can't be seen or felt. Whatever the weather, it's important for people of all skin types to use sun protection whenever UV levels are three or higher.
- Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. More than two in three Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime. Infants and toddlers 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 strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.
- By teaching sensible sun protection habits from an early age and implementing sun protection measures, early childhood services can play a significant role in reducing skin cancer risk.

PURPOSE

- This sun protection policy provides guidelines to:
 - Ensure all children and staff are well protected from over-exposure to UV radiation by using a combination of sun protection measures during the daily local sun protection times (issued whenever UV levels are 3 and above).
 - Ensure the outdoor environment is sun safe and provides shade for children and staff.
 - Ensure children are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills.
 - Support duty of care and regulatory requirements
 - Support appropriate OHS strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harms for staff and visitors.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Staff and children are encouraged to access, display and communicate the daily local sun protection times via the SunSmart widget on the service's website, the free SunSmart app or at sunsmart.com.au.
- The sun protection measures listed below are used for all outdoor activities during the daily, local sun protection times (issued whenever UV levels are 3 and above), typically from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria.
- Where possible, active, outdoor sun safe play is encouraged throughout the day.
- Sun protection practices consider the special needs of infants. All babies under 12 months are kept out of direct sun when UV levels are three or higher.
- The organisation acknowledges that the best sun protection can be achieved when a combination of physical sun protection measures such as shade, clothing and hats are used.
- For those small areas of exposed skin not protected by clothing or hats, staff apply approved sunscreen to infants six months and older.

ULTRAVIOLET (UV) RADIATION

- Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is a type of energy produced by the sun and some artificial sources, such as arc welders and solariums. The sun's UV is the main cause of skin cancer. Too much UV exposure also causes sunburn, tanning, premature ageing and eye damage.
- You can see the sun's light. You can feel the sun's heat. But you can't see or feel the sun's UV radiation. UV can reach you directly from the sun. It can also be reflected off different surfaces and scattered by particles in the air. Your senses cannot detect UV radiation, so you won't notice it is all around you and you won't immediately notice any damage.
- UV radiation is not related to how hot or cold it is. You can still get burnt on cool or cloudy days.
- 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 day and the year (highest from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria)
 - is at its peak during school hours.
- Overexposure to UV radiation can cause:
 - sunburn
 - skin damage
 - eye damage
 - premature ageing
 - skin cancer.
- A combination of sun protection measures is recommended for all skin types when UV levels reach 3 or higher. At these levels, damage can occur to skin and eyes.
- Each time skin is damaged by UV, changes take place in the structure and function of the skin cells. If UV damage continues, skin cells become less able to repair, increasing the risk of skin cancer.

UV INDEX

- The UV Index is a tool you can use to protect yourself from UV radiation as it tells you the UV level.
- As soon as the UV index reaches three (Moderate), you need to cover up to prevent UV radiation from damaging your skin using all five forms of sun protection.
- The UV level is affected by a number of factors including the time of day, time of year, cloud cover, altitude, location and surrounding surfaces.
- The UV Index measures UV levels on a scale from 0 (Low) to 11+ (Extreme). The UV Index divides UV radiation levels into:
 - low (1-2)
 - moderate (3-5)
 - high (6-7)
 - very high (8-10)
 - extreme (11 and above).

- As the UV index goes up, the amount of time it takes for your skin to be damaged goes down. If the UV reaches 11 (Extreme), only 11 minutes outside without sun protection causes damage.
- There are many ways to check the UV index:
 - download the SunSmart Global UV app on your phone.
 - on the weather page of all Australian daily newspapers.
 - on the Bureau of Meteorology website and app.
 - on some smart speakers, radio and mobile weather forecasts.
- These sources will also tell you the sun protection times, which are the times during the day when sun protection is recommended as the local UV levels are forecasted be 3 and above.

SUN PROTECTION TIMES

- The sun protection times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology showing when UV levels will be 3 and above. At this level there is a risk of skin damage for most Australians.
- In Victoria, UV levels regularly reach 3 and above from mid-August to the end of April.

SHADE

- Well-designed and positioned shade can significantly reduce direct and indirect UV exposure and create cool, comfortable spaces for outdoor learning and play.
- Shade can be natural (trees, shrubs or shadow cast from nearby buildings), built (pergola, shade sails, etc.), portable (shade umbrellas, marquees, etc.) or a combination of these.
- Ensure shade is easily accessible, aesthetically pleasing, in good condition and regularly maintained.
- Use surfaces that reflect less UV, *e.g., natural, dark or rough surfaces such as grass, soil and tanbark.*
- When combined with appropriate clothing, hats and sunscreen, children can be well protected from UV when outdoors. Research shows that early childhood environments with trees, shrubbery, and broken ground not only provides better sun protection in outdoor play but also triggers more physical activity.
- Shaded areas will be used for play experiences. Play experiences will be monitored throughout the day and moved as required to remain in the shade.

SUN PROTECTIVE HAT

- All children and staff are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears.
- Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.
- A hat should shade the face, neck and ears such as a wide-brimmed or bucket hat (at least 5cm brim for young children) or legionnaire hat (make sure the front peak and back flap overlap at the sides).
- Children without a sun protective hat are provided with a spare hat where possible.
- Broad-brimmed hat
 - Brims should be wide and flat and create shade for the face, neck and ears.
- Bucket hat
 - Bucket hats should have a deep crown and sit low on the head.

- The angled brim should provide the face, neck and ears with plenty of shade.
- Legionnaire hat
 - Legionnaire hats should have a flap that covers the ears and back of the neck to the collarbone/shoulder.
 - The side flap and front peak should overlap to protect the side of the face.
- When choosing a hat look at:
 - the quality of sun protection it offers.
 - whether it is practical, e.g., *easy to keep on and doesn't interfere with activities*
 - safety
 - ventilation
- Families are required to purchase a labelled hat for their child to use at the service.
- Due to the risk of transmitting infectious organisms, such as head lice, children will be actively discouraged from sharing hats.
- All spare hats will be washed after each use.

SUN PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

- Cover as much skin as possible with cool, loose-fitting clothing made from densely woven fabric like cotton. This includes tops that cover the chest, shoulders and arms and longer style shorts or skirts.
- If a child is wearing a singlet top or dress with thin straps, they add a t-shirt or shirt before outdoor play.
- Darker colours absorb UV radiation better than white or pastel colours of the same fabric.

SUNSCREEN

- Sunscreen should be labelled SPF30, SPF50 or SPF50+ and be broad-spectrum and water-resistant.
- For all children over 6 months, apply sunscreen to any skin not protected by clothing 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours or after water activities.
- Make sure it has an Australian Licence (Aust L) number and monitor the expiry date.
- Sunscreen does expire and may no longer be effective once it does. Check the expiry date before applying and store below 30°C and out of direct sunlight.
- Cancer Council recommends a usage test before applying a new sunscreen.
- The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended.
- Encourage children to put a dot of sunscreen on each cheek, their nose and chin and rub it in (avoiding the eye area) with squiggles on their arms and legs.
- The risk of allergies and cross infection from sunscreen use is very low. But where a student has experienced a reaction to sunscreen, families should be encouraged to try a sensitive or alternative formula, consult their doctor or seek a referral to a dermatologist to understand what may have caused a reaction and gain advice on ingredients that should be avoided in the future. Other sun protection measures should be followed when sunscreen can't be used.

SUNGLASSES

- If practical for your setting, 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.
- Wearing a hat with a brim that shades the eyes can also reduce UV radiation to the eyes by 50%.
- Protect your eyes by wearing sunglasses that are labelled with UV protection and are large enough to cover your eyes fully and provide sun protection from all angles.
- Polarised sunglasses reduce glare from the sun and make it easier to see on a sunny day, but they don't increase the level of UV protection.

ENVIRONMENT

- **Seek Shade**
 - The organisation makes sure there are enough shelters and trees providing shade in the outdoor area particularly in high-use areas.
 - The availability of shade (natural, built, temporary) is considered when planning all outdoor activities.
 - Children are encouraged to choose and use available areas of shade when outside.
 - Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to choose a shady play space or a suitable area protected from the sun.
 - Shade provision is considered in future plans and upgrades.
 - A shade assessment is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
 - All outdoor activities will be planned to occur in shaded areas.
 - Play activities will be set up in the shade and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns.

BEHAVIOURS

- **Slip on Sun Protective Clothing**
 - Children are required to wear loose-fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible.
 - Clothing made from cool, densely woven fabric is recommended.
 - Families are asked to choose tops with elbow-length sleeves, higher necklines (or collars) and knee-length or longer style shorts, skirts and dresses for their child.
 - If a child is wearing a singlet top or shoestring dress, they will be asked to choose a t-shirt or shirt to wear over this before going outdoors.
- **Slap on a Sun Protective Hat**
 - All children and staff wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears (legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket style).
 - Caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.
 - Children without a sun protective hat are provided with a spare hat where possible.
- **Slop on Sunscreen**
 - SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is supplied by the service and/or families.
 - Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours, or more frequently if sweating, playing with water or swimming.
 - To help develop independent skills ready for school, children from three years of age are encouraged and given opportunities to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of staff.
 - Sunscreen is stored in a supervised, cool place, out of the sun. The expiry date is monitored.

- Where children have allergies or sensitivities to sunscreen, families are asked to provide an alternative sunscreen or children are encouraged to play in the shade.
- **Slide on Sunglasses (if practical)**
 - Where practical children 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.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR INFANTS

- Infants are particularly vulnerable to UV damage due to lower levels of melanin and a thinner stratum corneum (the outermost layer of skin).
- All babies under 12 months are kept out of direct sun when UV levels are 3 or higher.
- Physical protection such as shade, clothing and broad-brimmed hats are the best sun protection measures. If babies are kept out of the sun or well protected from UV radiation by clothing, hats and shade, then sunscreen need only be used occasionally on very small areas of a baby's skin.
- In these cases, choose a sunscreen that is suitable for babies such as a sensitive or toddler sunscreen. These are just as protective, but much gentler on their skin.
- It is recommended to do a usage test on a small area of the child's skin to check for any skin reactions to the sunscreen.
- The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended.
- When choosing a hat for young children, consider:
 - the size and comfort.
 - the amount of shade it provides.
 - if it will obstruct vision or hearing.
 - safety.
- Hats that can be adjusted at the crown are best.
- If the hat is secured with a long strap and toggle, ensure it has a safety snap. Place the strap at the back of the head or trim the length so it doesn't become a choking hazard.
- Many babies and toddlers do not like to wear hats. Persistence is needed to teach them that a hat is part of their outside routine. It is also helpful if adults role model sun protective behaviours.
- For babies, choose a fabric and design such as a soft bucket hat that will crumple easily when they put their head down.
- Ensure babies are always situated completely in full shade.

VITAMIN D

- Sensible sun protection does not put people at risk of vitamin D deficiency.
- When the UV index level is 3 or above (generally from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria) most children and staff can maintain adequate vitamin D levels by spending a few minutes outdoors on most days of the week.
- When the UV index level falls below 3, sun protection is not usually required unless at high altitudes, near highly reflective surfaces like snow, or outside for extended periods.

OUTDOOR SPACES

- Rough, uneven natural surfaces, e.g., *grass, tanbark, soil*, reflect less UV than smooth, shiny, light-coloured surfaces.
- Shade can be natural, built and temporary.

HYDRATION

- Children are provided with easy access to clean, drinking water throughout the day.
- Children are encouraged to regularly drink water throughout the day.

EXTREME HEAT AND SUN EXPOSURE

- Heatwave conditions occur when excessively high temperatures are combined with high humidity levels and are sustained over days. Young children and older adults are at risk during extreme heat conditions.
- Staff will:
 - Monitor children and one another for heat-related illness signs such as swelling of hands and feet, cramps, exhaustion and heatstroke.
 - Provide accessible drinking water to children, staff and visitors, and encourage hydration.
 - When applicable and whilst remaining sun smart, reduce clothing or dress children in loose fitted clothing.
 - Encourage children to seek shade.
 - Adapt program to suit local weather conditions.
 - Use cooling devices such as air conditioners and fans.
 - Provide children with opportunities for water play.
 - Draw blinds and curtains to keep heat out.
 - Maintain hydration.
 - Test outdoor equipment temperatures before allowing children to play.
 - Cool down cement paths with water.
 - Remind children to wear shoes.

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

- Sun protection is incorporated into the learning and development program.
- Sun protection information will be promoted to all staff, children, families and visitors.
- The sun protection policy is reinforced by staff and through children's activities and displays.
- Children are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures at the service including taking leadership roles in managing sun protection, e.g., *accessing daily UV levels and sun protection times, hat reminders & management of sunscreen*.
- Staff and families are provided with information about sun protection through newsletters, family handbook, noticeboards, social media updates and the service's website.
- When enrolling their child, families are:
 - informed of the service's sun protection policy.
 - asked to provide a suitable sun protective hat and covering clothing for their child.
 - asked to provide written authority for staff to apply sunscreen to their child.
 - encouraged to use sun protection measures themselves when at the service.

ROLE MODELLING

- Staff, children, families and visitors will act as positive role models and demonstrate sun protection behaviour when attending the service by:
 - wearing sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside.
 - applying SPF30 or higher broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen.
 - using and promoting shade.
- When families are participating in activities or attending events at the service, they are expected to follow these sun protection procedures.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (OHS)

- As part of Occupational Health and Safety UV risk controls and role-modelling, staff and visitors:
 - wear a suitable sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses.
 - apply sunscreen.
 - seek shade whenever possible.
- Sun protection considerations and actions are included in risk assessments for excursions and excursion checklists.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

- All staff, including the approved provider, nominated supervisor, and responsible persons, monitor and review the effectiveness of the Sun Protection policy, with input from families and children where possible, and revise the policy as required.
- The service is committed to maintaining SunSmart membership and complete a policy review and membership renewal with SunSmart at least once every three years.
- The Sun Protection policy is available to all staff, families and visitors.
- Sun protection procedures are part of staff induction and ongoing training.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Sun protection is used during the daily sun protection times or whenever UV levels are 3 or higher.
- Active outdoor play is encouraged throughout the day, all year long, provided appropriate sun protection measures are used when necessary.
- At a minimum, sun protection measures are implemented from mid-August to the end of April (when Victoria's UV levels are typically three and above). It is not only implemented during Terms 1 and 4 as this is not sufficient at protecting children and staff from UV.
- Certain health conditions and medications mean some people are more sensitive to UV radiation and need to use sun protection at all times regardless of the UV levels.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Approved Provider	• Provide adequate shading in outdoor spaces for both active and passive outdoor play. • Facilitate access to an adequate supply of in-date sunscreen for children, staff, families and visitors. • Ensure staff uniform includes sun protective clothing and hats. • Provide easy access to clean, drinking water throughout the day for all children, staff, families and visitors. • Adapt program to suit local weather conditions. • Use cooling devices such as air conditioners and fans. • Act as a positive role model by promoting positive attitudes and sun protection practices. • Ensure sun protection is included in service risk assessments for excursions and routine outings. • Wear sun protection clothing when outdoors. • Ensure children under 12 months of age are not exposed to direct sunlight. • Read, understand, follow and enforce the organisation's policies and procedures.
Nominated Supervisor and Responsible Persons	• Provide adequate shading in outdoor spaces for both active and passive outdoor play. • Facilitate access to an adequate supply of in-date sunscreen for children, staff, families and visitors. • Ensure staff uniform includes sun protective clothing and hats. • Provide easy access to clean, drinking water throughout the day for all children, staff, families and visitors. • Adapt program to suit local weather conditions. • Use cooling devices such as air conditioners and fans. • Monitor children, staff, families and visitors for heat-related illness signs such as swelling of hands and feet, cramps, exhaustion and heatstroke. • Encourage children to seek shade. • Provide children with opportunities for water play. • Draw blinds and curtains to keep heat out on hot days. • Act as a positive role model by promoting positive attitudes and sun protection practices. • Ensure sun protection is included in service risk assessments for excursions and routine outings. • Wear sun protection clothing when outdoors. • Ensure children under 12 months of age are not exposed to direct sunlight. • Monitor the daily sun protection times for the service's location. • Provide families with regular sun safety information through newsletters, updates, and displays. • Create opportunities for children to learn and develop sun safety skills, including incorporating sun protection awareness and experiences into the program. • Encourage families and visitors to role model positive sun safe behaviours when at the service. • Maintain SunSmart status by updating and submitting the services sun protection policy to the <i>Cancer Council</i> every 3 years. • Read, understand, follow and enforce the organisation's policies and procedures.

Educators and Staff Members	• Provide easy access to clean, drinking water throughout the day for all children, staff, families and visitors. • Adapt program to suit local weather conditions. • Use cooling devices such as air conditioners and fans. • Monitor children, staff, families and visitors for heat-related illness signs such swelling of hands and feet, cramps, exhaustion and heatstroke. • Encourage children to seek shade. • Provide children with opportunities for water play. • Draw blinds and curtains to keep heat out on hot days. • Act as a positive role model by promoting positive attitudes and sun protection practices. • Ensure sun protection is included in service risk assessments for excursions and routine outings. • Wear sun protection clothing when outdoors. • Ensure children under 12 months of age are not exposed to direct sunlight. • Monitor the daily sun protection times for the service's location. • Provide families with regular sun safety information through newsletters, updates, and displays. • Create opportunities for children to learn and develop sun safety skills, including incorporating sun protection awareness and experiences into the program. • Encourage families and visitors to role model positive sun safe behaviours when at the service. • Monitor and adjust outdoor play experiences to minimise direct and indirect UV exposure. • Apply sunscreen to children upon arrival, when required. • Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours or if the sunscreen has washed off. • When sunscreen is supplied by a family, only apply to relevant child. • Read, understand, follow and enforce the organisation's policies and procedures.
Parents, Guardians and Families	• Ensure their child is dressed in appropriate sun protective clothing which covers as much skin as possible. • Supply a suitable, named sun safe hat for their child that protects their face, ears and neck. • Supply a suitable, named water bottle for their child. • Inform staff if their child is oversensitive to the sun. • Give permission for staff to apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to all exposed parts of their child's skin including their face, neck, ears, arms and legs. • Apply sunscreen to their child before attending the service each day. • Where their child has sensitivity to sunscreen, provide sunscreen that is suitable for them to use. • Encourage their child to seek shade. • Act as a positive role model by promoting positive attitudes and sun protection practices when at the service. • Wear sun protective clothing and sunscreen when attending excursions. • Read, understand and follow the organisation's policies and procedures.



Kids on Mullum Child Care Centre

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www.kidsonmullumchildcare.com.au



SOURCES

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- ACECQA – *Sun Protection Policy Guidelines* – August 2021
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- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 – July 2023
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