



ASCOT VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

No.2608

## ASCOT VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL SUNSMART POLICY

Reviewed and updated September 2014.

Passed by SC 15th September 2014

### Rationale

A healthy balance of the sun's ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure is important for health. Too much UV from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Two in three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer before they reach the age of 70. Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is known to be a major cause of skin cancer. Sun protection is needed whenever UV levels reach three and above. UV is a known Occupational Health and Safety risk for staff.

In Victoria average UV levels are three and above from the beginning of September to the end of April. During these months particular care should be taken during the middle of the day between 10am – 3pm when UV levels reach their peak. Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D regulates calcium levels in the blood. It is also necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones, muscles and teeth. From May to August in Victoria, average UV levels are below three so sun protection isn't usually needed during these months.

### Objectives

The goals of the SunSmart Policy are to:

- Ensure that all children and staff maintain a healthy UV exposure balance.
- Encourage the entire school community to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above.
- Encourage safe UV exposure whenever UV Index levels are below 3.
- Work towards a safe school environment that provides shade for children, staff and the school community at appropriate times.
- Assist children to be responsible for their own sun protection.
- Ensure that families and new staff are informed of the school's SunSmart policy.

### From September to April in Victoria

- Children and staff use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Particular care is taken between 10am and 3pm when UV levels reach their peak during the day.
- Our SunSmart policy is considered when planning all outdoor events e.g. assemblies, camps, excursions and sporting events. Where possible, we have outdoor activities or events earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon, or we try using indoor venues.

### 1. Shade

- The school council makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the school grounds particularly in areas where children congregate e.g. lunch, canteen, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas.
- In consultation with the school council, shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all outdoor activities.

- Children are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.

## **2. Clothing**

- Sun protective clothing is recommended, including:
  - Shirts with collars
  - Tops with higher necklines
  - Longer styled skirts / shorts
  - T-shirts or Rash Vests when swimming outdoors
  - Sunglasses (meeting Australian Standards CAT 2,3 or 4)

## **3. Hats**

- Children and staff are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad brimmed or bucket hats, whenever they are outside. Baseball caps do not offer enough protection and are therefore not recommended. No hats, no play. Students not wearing appropriate hats will have to remain in the shade that is offered outside the front of unit 4 and 5.

## **4. Sunscreen**

- Students are encouraged to bring to school and apply their own SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant Sunscreen. Children are encouraged to come to school wearing sunscreen during summer. Reapplication every 2 hours is recommended.

## **Role modelling**

Staff act as role models by:

- wearing sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside
- applying SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
- seeking shade whenever possible
- Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.

## **From May to August in Victoria**

When average UV Index levels are below 3.

- To help maintain winter vitamin D levels, sun protection measures are not used from May until August unless the UV Index level reaches 3 and above.

## **Curriculum**

- Health Programs on skin cancer prevention and healthy UV exposure levels are included in the curriculum for all year levels.
- SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school website, parent meetings, staff meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and on student enrolment.

## **Review**

- The school council and staff regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy in 3 years from the last review. This is scheduled for September 2017.

## **Relevant Documents / Links**

1. Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide: 4.5.11 Skin protection  
[www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/referenceguide/enviro/default.htm](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/referenceguide/enviro/default.htm)
2. Building Quality Standards Handbook (BQSH): Section 7.5.5 Shade Areas

3. Education and Training Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools - Government Response [www.parliament.vic.gov.au/etc/fs\\_previous.html](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/etc/fs_previous.html)
4. Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 Sections 21 and 23: Main Duties of Employers Section 25: Duties of Employees [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au) Laws and Regulations > Acts and Regulations
5. Safe Work Australia: Guidance Note for the Protection of Workers from the Ultraviolet Radiation in Sunlight <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/swa/HealthSafety/HazardsSafetyIssues/UltravioletRadiationinSunlight.htm>
6. SunSmart UV Alert (issued whenever the UV Index reaches 3 and above) [www.sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au) or [www.bom.gov.au/announcements/uv/](http://www.bom.gov.au/announcements/uv/)
7. Sun protection: [www.sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au)
8. UV and vitamin D: [www.sunsmart.com.au/vitamin\\_d](http://www.sunsmart.com.au/vitamin_d)