



ASCOT VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL SUNSMART POLICY

Approved by School Council 21 May 2018

Rationale

A healthy balance of the sun's ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure is important for health. Sun protection is needed whenever UV levels reach three and above. UV is a known Occupational Health and Safety risk for staff.

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. Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is a major factor in determining skin cancer risk. 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.

Objectives:

The goals of the Victorian Department of Education and Training 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

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. AVPS requires all children to wear a hat when outside from 1 Sept to 30 April each year.

- Children and staff use a combination of sun protection measures during the times of the year when the UV ratings average 3 or 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., 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.

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, from 1 September to 30 April. 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.

5. 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

From May to August in Victoria, average UV levels are below three so sun protection isn't usually needed during these months.

- To help maintain winter vitamin D levels, sun protection measures (hats and sunscreen) are not mandated from 1 May until 31 August.

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.

SunSmart - Sun protection times

The daily sun protection times let you know when you do and don't need sun protection each day. They are available via the free SunSmart app and widget, on the [SunSmart](#) and [Bureau of Meteorology](#) websites and in the weather section of the newspaper.

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 May 2021.

Relevant Documents / Links

1. <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/sun.aspx>
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 <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/57th-parliament/etc/inquiries/inquiry/101>
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 Laws and Regulations > Acts and Regulations
5. Safe Work Australia: Guidance Note for the Protection of Workers from the Ultraviolet Radiation in Sunlight https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1702/guidancenote_protectionofworkers_ultravioletradiationinsunlight_2008_pdf.pdf SunSmart UV Alert (issued whenever the UV Index reaches 3 and above) www.sunsmart.com.au or www.bom.gov.au/announcements/uv/
6. Sun protection: www.sunsmart.com.au