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School Procedure: SUN (UV) PROTECTION

Published: 2016
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Contact: Injury Prevention and Management

Related Policies:

- Excursions – Policy and Mandatory Procedures*
- Health, Physical Education and Sport – Policy and Guidelines*
- Outdoor Adventure Activities – Policy and Mandatory Procedures*
- First Aid*
- Work Health and Safety*
- Uniform/Dress Code*

The ACT Education Directorate (the Directorate) has a duty of care and responsibility to ensure that adequate sun protection is provided for all students and workers, including pre-service teachers and volunteers. This applies while they are on school premises during school hours or undertaking outdoor school activities when Ultra Violet (UV) levels are 3 and above.

Rationale

Australia has one of the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world. Over-exposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation (UV) during childhood and adolescence is known to be a major cause of skin cancer. Overexposure during adulthood also plays a contributing factor toward the development of skin cancers.

Our Sun (UV) Protection policy has been developed to ensure that all students and staff attending the school are protected as far as reasonably practicable from skin (and eye) damage caused by the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun.

This policy will be reflected in the planning of all outdoor activities and events. A combination of the five sun protection measures are recommended when UV levels are three and above, strong enough to damage unprotected skin. In Canberra this will be for part or most of each day between August and May.

In Canberra annual UV levels peak during the daylight saving/summer period between 11am and 3pm. ACT Schools will therefore aim to reduce time outdoors during this period, or otherwise take particular care if outdoors during this peak UV period i.e. seek shade at all times.

During the winter June and July period, sun protection is generally not required in Canberra due to 'low' UV levels experienced all day, every day. This will also assist students and workers with their winter vitamin D maintenance.

Aim

Our aim at Florey Primary School is to ensure that everyone in the school community understands the need for protection from the sun's UV and takes adequate precautions when engaged in outdoor activities.

Objectives

The objectives of the Sun Protection policy are to:

- increase student and community awareness of skin safety
- adopt practical skin protection measures
- develop strategies that encourage responsible decision making about skin protection
- work towards a safe school environment that provides shade for students and staff
- require students, teachers, volunteers and staff to wear protective clothing, hats and sunscreen when UV levels are 3 and above
- ensure Work Health and Safety responsibilities and duty of care when working outdoors
- actively encourage all visitors to the school to role model sensible sun protection behaviour
- inform parents are informed of the school's current Sun Protection policy and practices.

Implementation

As part of general Sun Protection strategies, our school will adopt: "A no hat no play" policy.

PROCEDURES

Curriculum

Through the school's curriculum, students will be made aware of the healthy balance required between UV exposure, sun UV protection and vitamin D exposure across the year.

- Regularly reinforce Sun Protection behaviour in a positive way through newsletters, website, parent meetings, student activities at all levels including class meetings, assemblies and the SRC, and teacher activities.
- Ensure the Sun (UV) Protection policy is reflected in the planning of all outdoor activities (eg. camps, excursions and sporting events).
- Encourage workers to familiarize themselves with daily UV protection periods via the school's SunSmart Widget (website).

Protective Clothing and Hats

- Require students and workers to wear broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hats with a deep crown and that covers the face, ears and neck whenever they are outside (eg. recess, lunch, sport, excursions etc), when UV levels are 3 and above.
- Cancer Council ACT does not recommend sun protection in the winter months when UV levels are low (ie June and July) as children and workers need sun exposure to maintain winter vitamin D levels.
- Sun smart hats are not required during the June and July period even when the UV index is over 3.
- Schools must support the wearing of sun protective clothing. Loose fitting, closely woven cotton fabrics and shirts with a collar and longer sleeves to at least elbow length and longer skirts and shorts are recommended.
- Sun protection clothing is incorporated into the school uniform/dress code. Sensible uniform design requires covering as much skin as possible.
- All students will be required to wear at least a t-shirt or a rash vest ('rashie') when attending all day outdoor swimming carnivals.
- Encourage students that do choose to wear sunglasses. A close fitting wrap around pair will offer best protection.
- Request all staff and workers (inc volunteers) and encourage parents and visitors to the schools to act as role models by practising effective Sun Protection behaviour, including the wearing of sun protective hats and protective clothing, using a SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen and seeking shade when appropriate

Shade Provision

- Direct students to use available areas of shade for outdoor activities, especially during the daylight saving/summer period.
- Our school is committed toward developing new shade as it is required and maintains current shade.

Wearing of Sunscreen

- Actively support and encourage the daily application of sunscreen i.e. prior to the lunch break and PE classes etc.
- Where practicable students are given daily opportunities and reminders to apply sunscreen 15-20 minutes prior to lunch break and outdoor PE etc.
- Make sunscreen accessible to all students and workers throughout the day via most, if not all classrooms.
- Encourage that students, staff and workers provide individual supplies of SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen.
- Parents are reminded to assist/encourage/remind their child/ren to apply sunscreen at home before leaving to school.
- Students are encouraged to apply sunscreen themselves .
- Parents/carers should be requested to inform the school if they do not wish staff to apply sunscreen to their children.
- If a child is allergic to sunscreen, parents/carers must notify the school about this on the medical form completed at the beginning of each school year. Parents/carers have the option of providing a hypoallergenic sunscreen for their children.

Scheduling Outdoor Activities

- Provide sun protective clothing as part of our school and sport uniform, including the wearing of a rash vest (or t-shirt) when participating in all day outdoor swimming carnivals.

Minimise the time spent outdoors between 11am and 3pm (Daylight Savings/Summer Time) by:

- Scheduling unshaded outdoor activities in term 1 and term 4 before 11.00am .
- organising outdoor activities to be held in areas with plenty of shade whenever possible
- directing students not wearing hats to play in the designated shaded area of the playground –or remain on the silver seats outside the administration block
- holding assemblies indoors, under shade or at lower UV times
- keeping students indoors during extreme heat.

National SunSmart Schools program

Florey Primary School was awarded with a nationally recognised SunSmart status from Cancer Council ACT in March 2014. On being awarded SunSmart status, our school has agreed to submit a copy of this policy every 3 years to Cancer Council ACT to be reviewed. This policy will be updated to maintain high national SunSmart standards. View our school's SunSmart certificate here: <http://ow.ly/H7DF3003WUs>

SunSmart Tools and Professional Learning Opportunities

Our school will endeavour to display and maintain the SunSmart Widget on our website to better assist our school community re daily sun protection times for Canberra

Teachers are actively encouraged to choose Generation SunSmart online Teacher PL modules as one of their TQI Teacher Identified Activities.

Occupational UV Exposure

All workers will be required to adopt a combination of sun protection measures when working outdoors when UV levels are 3 and above to reduce their personal risk of skin and eye damage and skin cancer. This includes wide brimmed hat and clothing that covers as much skin possible.

The guidelines were developed by Florey Primary School through consultation with the Cancer Council ACT. Last date reviewed: March 2017. Date next review: Mar 2020