

SUN PROTECTION POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy will provide:

- guidelines to ensure children, educators, volunteers and others participating in Melbourne Montessori School programs and activities maintain a healthy balance of ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure
- information for parents/guardians, educators, volunteers and children attending Melbourne Montessori School regarding a healthy balance of UV radiation exposure.

Melbourne Montessori School ('MMS') is committed to:

- promoting sun protection strategies for children, families, staff and visitors to minimise the harmful effects of over exposure to UV radiation,
- ensuring that curriculum planning will minimise exposure to the sun and also promote an awareness of sun protection and sun safe strategies, and
- providing information to children, educators, staff, volunteers, parents/guardians and others at the School about the harmful and beneficial effects of exposure to the sun's UV radiation.

BACKGROUND

Balanced exposure to UV radiation is important for health. However, Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Research suggests that young children and babies have sensitive skin and are therefore more vulnerable to sunburn and skin damage. Exposure to the sun in the first 15 years plays a major role in the risk of developing skin cancer in later life.

It is also important to have a healthy balance of UV radiation exposure. Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones and muscles, and for general health. Appropriate levels of sun exposure can vary from child to child. According to the SunSmart website, children with naturally very dark skin may not be required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements. This can be discussed with parents/guardians prior to the child commencing at the School.

It is a requirement under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* that employers provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the School's facilities and/or programs.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the whole school body: Nominated Supervisors, Certified Supervisors, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of MMS.

This policy will apply during Term 1 and Term 4 each year. During this period a combination of sun protection measures are to be used for all outdoor activities.

Sun protection **may also be required at other times of the year** when the UV Index level is at 3 or above. Information about the UV Index level is available on weather apps, the Staff Daily Bulletin and on the SunSmart website at www.sunsmart.com.au

1. Principal and Business Manager
2. Teachers
3. Parents/Guardians

DEFINITIONS

Clothing for sun protection: Clothing that is loose-fitting, made from cool, densely woven fabric and covers as much skin as possible: tops with elbow-length sleeves and, if possible, collars and knee-length or longer-style shorts and skirts. Singlet tops and shoestring tops/dresses do not provide adequate protection in the sun.

Shade: An area sheltered from direct and indirect sun, such as a large tree, canopy or artificial cover. As recommended by Cancer Council Victoria, where possible, shade will provide a minimum of 94% protection against UV radiation.

Sunglasses: Sunglasses are optional. If worn, it is recommended that glasses are a close fitting, wrap-around style that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

Sunscreen: SPF 30+, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen. It is suggested that sunscreen be reapplied every two hours, even when labelled 4 hours water resistance. Monitor the expiry date and store in a cool, dry place.

SunSmart: The name of the program conducted by Cancer Council Victoria to promote an awareness of the need to provide sun protection: www.sunsmart.com.au

Sunhat: To protect the neck, ears, temples, face and nose, SunSmart recommends broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket-style hats. Baseball caps and visors offer little protection to the cheeks, ears and neck, and are not recommended: <http://www.cancervic.org.au/preventing-cancer/be-sunsmart>

Service policies

- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

PROCEDURES

1. THE PRINCIPAL AND BUSINESS MANAGER are responsible for:

- 1.1 maintaining membership of the SunSmart early childhood program;
- 1.2 ensuring that this policy is up to date with current SunSmart recommendations: www.sunsmart.com.au;
- 1.3 ensuring parents/guardians are informed about the *Sun Protection Policy* on enrolment, including the need to provide an appropriate sunhat and clothing for sun protection for their child when attending the School;
- 1.4 providing a supply of sunscreen for use on all persons to whom this policy applies;
- 1.5 ensuring children wear appropriate sunhats, clothing for sun protection and sunscreen when attending the School;
- 1.6 providing appropriate spare sunhats for children and adults;
- 1.7 ensuring there is adequate shade in the School grounds to protect children from overexposure to UV radiation;
- 1.8 ensuring that information on sun protection is incorporated into the educational program (refer to the SunSmart website);
- 1.9 ensuring educators, staff, children and other participants at the School wear sunhats, clothing for sun protection and sunglasses (optional) when outside, apply sunscreen and seek shade during Terms 1 and 4; and
- 1.10 reinforcing this policy by providing information on sun protection (available on the SunSmart website) to School users via newsletters, noticeboards, meetings and websites etc.

2. THE TEACHERS are responsible for:

- 2.1 ensuring parents/guardians are informed of the *Sun Protection Policy* on enrolment, including the need to provide an appropriate sunhat and clothing for sun protection for their child when attending the School;
- 2.2 ensuring program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during Terms 1 and 4;
- 2.3 ensuring the SunSmart UV Alert on the SunSmart website or similar is accessed to check the daily local sun protection times to assist with the implementation of this policy;
- 2.4 ensuring information on sun protection is incorporated into the educational program;
- 2.5 ensuring that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events;
- 2.6 ensuring each child, and any other participant at the School, wears an appropriate sunhat, clothing for sun protection and the opportunity to apply school-supplied sunscreen for all outdoor activities during Terms 1 and 4;
- 2.7 checking that all sunhats brought to the School meet the SunSmart recommendation for adequate protection;
- 2.8 reminding children to reapply sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors. Children, where appropriate, will be encouraged to apply sunscreen with the assistance of an educator (sunscreen is to be reapplied every two hours);
- 2.9 storing sunscreen in a cool place and monitoring the expiry date – including for sunscreen supplied by parents/guardians;
- 2.10 ensuring that children without appropriate sunhats or clothing for sun protection play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun;
- 2.11 encouraging children to wear sunhats when travelling to and from the School; and
- 2.12 ensuring that sun protection strategies are a priority when planning excursions.

3. PARENTS/GUARDIANS are responsible for:

- 3.1 providing a named, SunSmart approved sunhat for their child's use at the School;
- 3.2 applying sunscreen to Cycle 1 children before the commencement of each session during Terms 1 and 4; and
- 3.3 providing, at their own expense, an alternative sunscreen to be left at the School if they do not wish to use the sunscreen provided by the School.

Volunteers and students, while at the School, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

Sources

SunSmart: www.sunsmart.com.au and <http://www.cancervic.org.au/preventing-cancer/be-sunsmart>

REVIEWED: 2017

LINKED WITH:

Administration of First Aid Policy
Enrolment Policy
Excursion and Camp Policy
Health and Wellbeing Policy