

# Heathcote Primary School

## SUNSMART POLICY



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Heathcote Primary School.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Heathcote Primary School to minimise the risk of skin and eye damage and skin cancer.

This policy provides guidelines to:

- support staff and students to use a combination of sun protection measures when UV index levels are 3 or above (generally mid-August – end of April)
- ensure that there are outdoor environments that provide adequate shade for students and staff
- ensure students are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills to help them to be responsible for their own protection
- support our school's strategies to meet its duty of care and occupational health and safety obligations to minimise harmful UV exposure and associated harm for students and staff.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

### POLICY

Excessive exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause health problems including sunburn, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer.

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 year (highest in Victoria from mid-August – end of April)
- peaks during school hours.

Sun safety is a shared responsibility and staff, parents and students are encouraged to implement a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 and above (typically from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria). Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via the free SunSmart app, or at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au) or [bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au).

Heathcote Primary School has the following measures in place to help reduce the risk of excessive UV sun exposure for staff and students.

## Shade

Heathcote Primary School will provide sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- where students congregate for lunch
- outdoor lesson areas
- popular play areas

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Heathcote Primary School that may impact on the level of shading available to staff and students, a review of the shaded areas available will be conducted and further shading installed as appropriate.

## Sun protective uniform/clothing

Heathcote Primary school's school uniform and dress code includes sun-protective clothing, including:

- loose, cool, closely woven fabric
- shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
- tops with elbow length or long sleeves
- longer style shorts and skirts
- rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming activities.

During Terms 1 and 4 all students **must** wear a sun protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears for all outdoor activities. Hats may also be worn for all outdoor activities outside of Terms 1 and 4 time period, by parent or student choice.

## Sunscreen

Heathcote Primary School encourages all staff and students to apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours according to [manufacturer's instructions](#).

At Heathcote Primary School students are welcome to attend to access sunscreen from their classrooms or the Office. Staff and students who may suffer from allergic reactions from certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to supply their own sunscreen to ensure appropriate access.

Staff and families should role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside.

## Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure. Heathcote Primary School will address sun and UV safety education as part of as part of Health and PE.

Staff are encouraged to access resources, tools, and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun smart behaviour across the school community.

### Engaging students, staff and families [

SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, staff meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/new staff orientation.

Families and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety at school and at home. Heathcote Primary School may provide families and staff with information through newsletters, noticeboards and school assemblies.

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Discussed at parent information sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- the Department's Policy and Advisory Library:
  - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
  - [Duty of care](#)
- [SunSmart](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June 2023
Approved by	School Council
Next scheduled review date	June 2025