

SunSmart Policy

Policy No. 23

Approved by School Board
July 2022



Purpose

The safety of staff, students and visitors is of primary importance to the School Board of Kerang Christian College. This policy has been developed to ensure that all students and staff attending the College are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful ultra violet rays of the sun. Sun safe practices should be implemented throughout the year but with particular emphasis in Term 4 and Term 1.

This Sun Smart policy provides guidelines to:

- Ensure all students and staff have some UV exposure for vitamin D.
- Ensure all students and staff are well protected from too much UV exposure by using a combination of sun protection measures during the daily local sun protection times (issued whenever UV levels are 3 and above).
- Ensure the outdoor environment is sun safe and provides shade for students and staff.
- Ensure that the school community has strategies for extreme heat days.
- Ensure students are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills to help them be responsible for their own sun protection.
- Support duty of care requirements.
- Support appropriate OHS strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harms for staff and visitors.

Background

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, with two in three Australians developing some form of skin cancer before age 70. Melanoma is the most common cancer in young Australians aged 15-29 years. Yet skin cancer is largely preventable and the use of sun protection measures at appropriate times of the year can help to reduce staff and students' future skin cancer risk.

The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the major cause of skin cancer and the best natural source of vitamin D, which is needed for strong bones and overall health. In Victoria, it is important to take a balanced UV approach to reduce the risk of skin cancer, UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

While caution must be practiced, some sun exposure is recommended to absorb Vitamin D. Vitamin D is a hormone that controls calcium levels in the blood. It is needed for healthy bones, muscles and general health. Vitamin D forms when skin is exposed to UV from the sun. From May to August in Victoria, average UV levels are below 3, so sun protection is not recommended during these months unless in alpine regions, near highly reflective surfaces such as snow or outdoors for extended periods.

Given school hours fall within peak UV periods of the day, a comprehensive policy will assist schools to adopt healthy UV practices.

Guidelines

- Students should be educated about safe practices in regards to sun protection, vitamin D and extreme heat.
- Increase student and whole-school awareness of skin cancer and other damage caused by exposure to UV radiation.
- Students and staff are required to wear broad brimmed hats whenever they are outside (e.g. recess, lunch, sports, excursions) in Term 4 and Term 1. Furthermore, the school community should be aware the sun protection is required to be used during the daily sun protection times whenever UV levels are three or above.
- The College will ensure hats are available to purchase at the College Uniform Shop.
- The College will encourage parents to provide 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for their children.
- The College will encourage the daily application of sunscreen before school and prior to the lunch break.
- Appropriate information must be provided to families regarding sun safe requirements for excursion, school sports days etc.
- The College will encourage students to use available areas of shade for outdoor activities.
- Staff, parents and visitors should act as role models by practising Sun Smart behaviours.

Implementation

Sun Smart Procedures

1. Staff will incorporate programs on sun protection and vitamin D in the curriculum for all year levels.
2. The Principal or delegate will regularly reinforce Sun Smart behaviour in a positive way through newsletters, parent meetings, the College website and student and staff activities.
3. Teaching staff will ensure that the Sun Smart policy is reflected in the planning of all outdoor events (e.g. Camps, excursions, sporting events).
4. The wearing of broad brim hats in Term 1 and Term 4 is compulsory at Kerang Christian College.
5. The school will take particular care when scheduling outside activities between the 10am - 2pm (11am and 3pm daylight savings time) when UV Index levels reach their peak during the day. Activities to be held in areas with plenty of shade or under basketball court shade shelter whenever possible.

Extreme Heat Procedures

1. On hot days, if the temperature is 35 - 40°C the students may only play outside either under the basketball shelter or under the veranda areas. Children may have the choice to stay indoors supervised by staff. An announcement will be made when the temperature reaches 35°C during the recess or lunch break.
2. On days when the temperature is 40°C or above, it is recommended for the students to be inside. Either a "wet weather program" will run or an indoor session will be

organised. Classroom and specialist teachers will plan activities, particularly after the lunch session, which are suitable to hot weather conditions.

3. Physical Education lessons are altered to suit the conditions depending on the time of day and the temperatures. Alternative arrangements may include Health sessions, quiet activities involving P.E. skills, shortened lessons with frequent drink breaks.

Healthy physical environment

1. Seek shade

- The College makes sure there are sufficient shelters and trees providing shade in outdoor areas particularly in high-use areas e.g. where students have lunch, canteen, assemblies, sports, outdoor lessons and popular play spaces.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning all other outdoor activities.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- Students who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.
- In consultation with the school Board, shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- A shade audit is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.

Healthy social environment

2. Slip on sun protective clothing

- Sun protective clothing is included in our school uniform / dress code and sports uniform. The College encourages students and staff to wear shorts and rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming.

3. Slap on a hat

All students are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears whenever they are outside. The College Uniform Policy specifies the College hat as a compulsory uniform item.

4. Slop on sunscreen

- Students must provide their own SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen.
- It is recommended that sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes (where possible) before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours.
- Home Group teachers will implement strategies to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g. reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies).

5. Slide on sunglasses

- Students are permitted to wear close-fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4), which cover as much of the eye area as possible.

Staff OHS and Role modelling

Consideration is given to sun protection for all teachers/staff involved in outdoor activities, including yard duty. Physical Education and sport education teachers are strongly

encouraged to take appropriate sun protection measures as they are particularly at risk from UV radiation.

As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, when the UV is 3 and above staff will:

- Wear sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside
- Apply SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen and seek shade whenever possible
- Use opportunities to discuss with children sun protection and demonstrate a positive and proactive approach to the management of sun protection at the College.

Families and Visitors

Families and visitors to the school are asked to do the following when outdoors:

- Wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
- Apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and
- Seek shade whenever possible.
- The school's Sun Smart Policy is easily accessible to staff, students and parents.
- SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through a variety of channels such as newsletters, staff meetings and school assemblies.

Communication

- The Sun Smart policy will be placed on the College's website for the school community.
- A Sun Smart promotion will be included in the student diary each year.
- Sun protection will be promoted throughout the year via the school newsletter, assemblies, student and staff correspondence and announcements, parent and staff meetings and whole school activities.

Responsibilities

Parents should support the College in the implementation and enforcement of the Sun Smart Policy; and ensure that their children comply with the policy.

Students are expected to:

- Be aware of the School's Sun Smart policy;
- Use shaded or covered areas, where possible, for outdoor activities;
- Take responsibility for their own health and safety by being Sun Smart;
- Comply with Sun Smart rules and guidelines by wearing the College hat and sunscreen while at School and outdoors; and
- Act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of Sun Smart behaviour.

Home Group Teachers have a responsibility to ensure students are aware of and understand the College's Sun Smart Policy.

Yard Duty teachers are responsible for the monitoring and compliance of the College's Sun Smart Policy during Recess and Lunch breaks.

The Principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

The College Board will consider shade provision in plans for future buildings and grounds. Furthermore, the Board will review this policy as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

Legislation and Standards

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Education and Training Reform Act 2006: Sch.5 Reg. 1 (1.2)

Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) Compliance Framework: Sun Protection. Retrieved from: <https://www.is.vic.edu.au/managing-a-school/compliance-framework/ohs/sun-protection/>

AS 4685.1: 2014 Playground equipment and surfacing – General safety requirements and test methods

Related Policy

Uniform Policy (Policy No. 21)

Supervision Policy (Policy No. 19)

Staff Dress Code Policy (Policy No. 38)

Occupational Health and Safety Policy (Policy No. 10)

Resources

SunSmart UV Alert (issued whenever the UV Index reaches 3 and above) (www.sunsmart.com.au or www.bom.gov.au/weather/uv/)

To assist with the implementation of this policy, staff and students are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times via the

- free SunSmart app— <https://www.sunsmart.com.au/tools/interactive-tools/free-sunsmart-app-campaign>
- sunsmart.com.au
- bom.gov.au

Further information can be accessed at www.sunsmart.com.au

Evaluation

The OH&S Committee, in collaboration with the Student Representative Council, will review the Sun Smart policy every three years. They will:

1. Provide feedback to the Principal or delegate about the Sun Smart behaviour of students, staff, parents and visiting guests.
2. Assess shade provision and usage and make recommendations to the School Board.
3. Consult with Heads of School and Health and PE staff regarding the sun protection skin cancer prevention component of the curriculum.

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

Document History

Approved: March 2007
Amended: January 2009
Amended: July 2016
Amended: August 2019
Reviewed: July 2022

References

SunSmart Victoria. (2019). *SunSmart sample policies*. Retrieved from <https://www.sunsmart.com.au/communities/early-childhood-primary-schools/sample-policies>

Please Note

All Victorian childcare centres, family day care services, pre-schools, primary schools and special education schools are eligible to apply for SunSmart membership. SunSmart Victoria advise that P–12 schools with both primary and secondary students on one campus are not eligible to join the SunSmart Program, but are welcome to join the Secondary School UV Program.