



# SunSmart Sun Protection Policy



**Updated:** January 2026

## Background

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UV) from the sun. UV can not be seen or felt, penetrates from clouds, reflects off surfaces and is harmful in cooler months. The damage begins to accumulate during childhood and adolescence and is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life. As students and staff are at school during times of peak radiation, schools play a major role in providing an environment that minimises exposure and encourages long-term sun protective behaviours.

## Goal

Our Sun Protection Policy has been developed to ensure that all students, staff, parents and visits attending Mount Helena Primary School are protected from skin damage caused by harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun. This key five forms of protection outlined by SunSmart guidelines and addressed in the policy are;

- Hats
- Shade
- Sunscreen
- Protective Clothing
- Sunglasses

## SunSmart Specifics

This policy continues to consistently meet the Cancer Council WA criteria for SunSmart Schools, including:

- All students wear sun-protective hats whenever  $UV \geq 3$  (or they play in the shade)
- Sunscreen is readily available and encouraged
- Outdoor events rescheduled wherever possible to avoid peak UV
- Uniform includes sun-protective options
- Sun protection embedded into teaching and role-modelling practices

## Scheduling outdoor activities

- Where possible, Mount Helena Primary School schedules outdoor activities such as assemblies, outdoor lessons, sport and physical education to occur when the UV Index is below 3.
- When outdoor activities are scheduled at times when the UV Index is 3 or higher, maximum use is made of shade, sunscreen, hats and long clothing to protect students and staff.

## Shade

- We ensure there is adequate provision of shade within the school grounds for students and staff, particularly in areas in high use areas, for example, popular play areas, where children eat lunch and outdoor lesson areas.
- We encourage staff and students to use shaded areas when outside.
- We ensure that adequate shade is provided at sporting carnivals and outdoor events.
- Shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings, grounds and playground equipment.



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## Hats

- We require students and staff to wear a broad-brimmed, bucket or legionnaires style hat that protects the face, neck, ears and crown of the head whenever they are outside.
- Students who do not have appropriate hats or sun protective clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun, as marked with posters.
- We encourage parents and visitors to wear broad-brimmed, bucket or legionnaires style hats when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.

## Clothing

- Cool, loose-fitting sun protective clothing is included in our school uniform and dress code. This includes shirts with collars and elbow length sleeves, and shorts.
- Staff and students are required to wear a rash vest or similar top for swimming (may not be appropriate for short periods of competitive swimming).

## Sunscreen

- Sunscreen is available and accessible to staff and students in classrooms and around the school grounds, eg at the front office.
- All students and staff are encouraged to apply SPF30 or high broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors eg. Prior to school, before lunch, recess, PE lessons, sports, excursions etc...
- Students and families will be encouraged to apply sunscreen before attending school each day.
- Sunscreen will be stored in a cool place, out of the sun.
- The occupational safety and healthy representative will monitor the expiry date of sunscreen and discard when out of date.
- Students with allergies or sensitivity to sunscreen are encouraged to bring and use their own sunscreen.

## Sunglasses

- Where practical, students are encouraged to wear close-fitting, wraparound sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4).

## Role modelling and occupational health and safety

- To support health and safety legislation, staff are required to wear sun protective hats when supervising students.
- Staff, students and visitors will act as positive role models and demonstrate SunSmart behaviour when attending school by:
  - Wearing sun protective clothing
  - Applying SPF30 or higher broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen
  - Wearing a sun protective hat (broad-brimmed, bucket or legionnaires hat)
  - Using and promoting shade
  - Wearing sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067.



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## Education

- Programs on sun protection are included in the curriculum for all year levels, with specific and additional resources available from the SunSmart website.
- Educating students around protecting against the UV radiation. Even when it is cool the sun's UV can still be damaging.
- Classroom teachers to daily work with their students to:
  - Understand the UV rating and the time that the UV rating will be at the highest for the day and the importance of wearing a hat, or being in the shade
  - Offer sunscreen daily at all breaks

## Information the school community

- Have a daily interactive display board in Junior and Senior areas.
  - Student representative updating the boards in the morning with support from EA.
- Sun protection is communicated to staff, families and visitors via Compass, school website, newsletters, social media, assemblies, daily messages, whole school activities and parents meetings.
- Families and visitors are encouraged to role model sun protection measures when attending outdoor activities.

## Policy monitoring and review

- The sun protection policy will be made available to staff and parents. Parents are informed of this sun protection policy when they enrol their child/ren. All new employees are briefed on the sun protection policy.
- The policy is monitored regularly and reviewed every three years, in consultation with staff, students and families.

## Available resources

### Websites

- <https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety/besunsmart/sunsmart-in-schools/primary-school-resources>
- <https://www.twinkl.com.au/resources/australian-resources/partnerships-australia/cancer-council-sunsmart-program-partnerships-australia>
- <https://www.sunsmart.com.au/>

### School resources

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- Includes downloaded resources and posters for teacher support.

