SUN SAFE POLICY

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, with more than two in three Australians developing some form of skin cancer in their lifetime. Too much of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Infants and toddlers up to four years of age are particularly vulnerable to UV damage due to lower levels of melanin and a thinner stratum corneum (the outermost layer of skin). UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life (Cancer Council Australia). By teaching sensible sun protection habits from an early age and implementing sun protection measures, early childhood services can play a significant role in reducing skin cancer risk.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's needs for sleep, rest and relaxation.
2.1.3	Healthy lifestyle	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
QUALITY AREA 3: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT		
3.1.1	Fit for purpose	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
3.2.1	Inclusive environment	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S. 2A	Paramount consideration—safety, rights and best interests of children
S. 3A	Paramount consideration [NSW]
S. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazard
100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursions
101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion

103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
113	Outdoor space natural environment
114	Outdoor space shade
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedure

RELATED POLICIES

Administration of First Aid Policy	Governance Policy
Bushfire Policy	Health and Safety Policy
Child Safe Environment Policy	Interactions with Children, Families and Staff Policy
Clothing Policy	Physical Environment Policy
Emergency and Evacuation Policy	Supervision Policy
Enrolment Policy	Water Safety Policy
Excursions / Incursions / Extra Curricular Activities Policy	Work Health and Safety Policy

PURPOSE

By implementing a 'best practice' Sun Safe Policy, our OSHC Service can help protect all children and staff from the harmful effects of UV radiation from the sun and teach children good sun protection habits from an early age to reduce their risk of skin cancer. To ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for children, educators and staff to minimise UV exposure. Additionally, this policy provides guidance on how to protect children and young people, and staff from severe heat weather events which are becoming more prevalent in Australia resulting from climate change.

Please note, UV radiation is an invisible source of radiation from the sun and unlike infrared radiation (heat) we cannot feel UV on our skin. UV levels are not dependent on weather conditions. Sun damage can occur on windy, cloudy and cool days. Sun damage is caused by UV radiation, not temperature or sunshine.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the OSHC Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our OSHC Service is committed to ensuring that children's safety, rights and best interests are the paramount consideration in all decisions, actions and practices. Our OSHC Service will work in compliance with the *National SunSmart Program* to ensure children's health and safety is maintained at all times whilst at the Service. This policy has been reviewed and approved by the Schools and Early Childhood team at SunSmart.

Our OSHC Service will monitor the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) for notification of severe heat events and implement risk mitigation strategies to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of children. This policy applies to all activities on and off site, including excursions.

MONITORING SUN PROTECTION TIMES

The sun protection times are a forecast from the BOM website for the time-of-day that UV levels are predicted to reach 3 or above. At these levels, a combination of sun protection is recommended for all skin types. Our OSHC Service will monitor the sun protection times daily through one or more of the following methods:

- using the smartphone *SunSmart global UV app* available at iTunes App Store and Google Play store
- using the SunSmart widget on the Service's website available at UV widget - SunSmart
- viewing the BOM app or website http://www.bom.gov.au/
- visiting www.myuv.com.au

UV levels vary across Australia and throughout the year. This listing highlights when the UV index is typically 3 and above in each state/territory. There may be times UV levels are 3 and above outside these periods. Our OSHC Service will ensure sun protection measures are implemented at all times when the UV index is 3 or above. Some children and staff may have health conditions or take medications that increase their sensitivity to UV radiation, requiring sun protection at all times, regardless of the UV level. Our OSHC Service will identify and accommodate these individual needs as part of our sun protection practices. Please check the daily local sun protection times to be sure you are using sun protection when it is required for your location.

VIC Mid-August to the end of April

Active outdoor play is encouraged throughout the day all year provided appropriate sun protection measures are used when necessary.

UV radiation exposure is considered as part of a Service's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities on and off-site. The sun protection measures listed are used for all outdoor activities during the daily local sun protection times.

SHADE

THE APPROVED PROVIDER WILL ENSURE:

- sufficient natural (e.g.; large trees), portable, or man-made shade (e.g.; heavy shade cloths or solid roofs) is provided for both active and passive outdoor play, particularly in high use areas
- shaded areas are used for play experiences and children are actively encouraged to play in the shade
- play experiences are monitored throughout the day and moved as required to remain in the shade
- regular audits, risk assessments and reviews of the outdoor area are completed every 3 months during different seasons to assist in planning for further shade requirements
- an independent shade audit is considered where required
- where additional shade requirements are identified during an audit or review, short-term provisions are implemented while long-term provisions are actioned
- shade and sun protection are considered as part of the risk assessment for all excursions
- children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are required to choose a shady play space or a suitable area protected from the sun and not move into unshaded areas of the playground
- children are required to wear hats, protective clothing, and sunscreen when playing under natural or portable shade
- requirements and recommendations from relevant authorities, such as Kidsafe, are considered when planning outdoor play experiences.

HATS

Educators, children, and visitors are required to wear sun safe hats at all times when they are outdoors. Cancer Council Australia describes sun safe hats as:

- Hats that protect a person's face, neck, and ears, which include:

- a legionnaire-style hat – the front peak and flap should overlap at the sides and the flap should cover the neck
- a bucket hat with a deep crown and angled brim that is at least 5cm for young children and at least 6cm for adults and must shade the face, neck, and ears
- a broad brimmed hat with a brim size of at least 6cm for children or 7.5cm for adults. The brim should provide shade for the whole face

Please note: Baseball caps or visors do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not a suitable alternative.

Children without a sun safe hat will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun *or* they may be provided with a spare hat if available at the OSHC Service.

CLOTHING

When outdoors, staff and children will wear sun safe clothing that covers as much of the skin as possible. Cancer Council Australia recommends clothing that:

- covers the shoulders, back and stomach
- is loose fitting such as loose-fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered neckline, or longer style skirts, shorts and trousers

Children who are not wearing sun safe clothing can be provided with spare clothing or will be required to play under shade or in an area protected from the sun or provided with spare clothing.

Please note: Midriff, crop or singlet tops do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not recommended.

SUNSCREEN

Our OSHC Service follows Cancer Council Australia recommendations:

- staff and children will apply SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors during sun protection times and reapply every 2 hours or more frequently if washed or wiped off
- permission to apply sunscreen is included in the Service enrolment form (see *Enrolment Policy*)
- where children have allergies or sensitivity to the sunscreen, families are asked to provide an alternative sunscreen, or the child will be required to play in the shade or an area protected from the sun. A record of any allergy must be provided in writing from the parent/guardian and recorded on the child's enrolment record. Cancer Council Australia recommends usage tests before applying a new sunscreen.
- sunscreen is stored below 30° C, in a supervised, cool, dry place and the use-by-date monitored.

RISKS OF SUMMER PLAY

Australia has a hot climate and inevitably playground equipment and surfacing can heat up rapidly and retain heat. Many playground surfaces and equipment can exceed 50°C and if young children come into contact with these surfaces, they can be burned severely within seconds. Surfaces can retain heat for long periods of time and cause burns to children. Play surfaces must be monitored before children have access to the outdoor environment.

SEVERE HEAT

Severe heat or heatwaves are periods of unusually hot weather. Climate change is resulting in more intense heatwaves in Australia and presents an extreme risk to the health and safety of children. Children, especially young children, can dehydrate quickly which can cause heat-related illness including heat stroke and heat exhaustion.

Active heatwave warnings are indicated within the Australian Warning System (AWS) and range from Advice to Emergency Warning. Risk management measures must be implemented and managed to ensure children remain safe and healthy during a severe heat event.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT, NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- ensure obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations are met
- ensure educators, staff, students and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and related procedures
- provide new employees, students and volunteers with a copy of the *Sun Safe Policy* and relevant procedure as part of their induction and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed
- ensure sun safe protection measures are discussed and reviewed regularly at staff meetings
- provide ongoing sun protection training and information to educators and staff at least annually, or whenever this policy is reviewed or updated
- ensure risk assessments are conducted to identify any potential hazards to children during periods of hot weather that could cause harm or injury to children. Risk minimisation control measures will be put in place to protect children. Potential hazards could include:
    - hot equipment - slides, poles, guardrails, any metal surfaces
    - hot surfaces - rubber and synthetic grass, walkways, concrete surfaces
    - sunburn and burns from hot surfaces or equipment

  - dehydration
  - access to bodies of water (filled water troughs/containers/trays/pools)
  - severe heat
  - bushfires and air pollution
- establish purchasing and stock management systems to ensure an adequate supply of sunscreen is readily available at the Service, ensuring it remains in date and complies with Australian Standard AS/NZS 2604:2012.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- implement this *Sun Safe Policy* and relevant procedures
- complete a *Daily Playground Surface Temperature Check* during periods of hot weather or elevated UV or extreme hot weather [adjust to suit your Service]
- use a thermometer or their hand to test surface temperatures, such as soft fall mats, artificial grass/surfaces, slides etc, and make an informed decision about permitting children to play on equipment or in the outdoor space. If the surface temperature is determined to be too hot or is recorded as at or above 50° C, Kidsafe Australia recommends that children do NOT play on the surface.
- monitor the daily UV index and plan outdoor experiences accordingly, particularly during periods of high to extreme UV
- ensure sun protection measures are implemented when the UV levels are 3 and above
- modify the duration and location of outdoor play in response to daily UV levels and conditions
- provide alternative indoor or shaded experiences when UV or heat conditions make full outdoor play unsafe, while still supporting children's access to outdoor learning wherever possible
- ensure children wear suitable footwear when playing in the outdoor area to protect their feet from hot surfaces, sunburn and other hazards (children may remove shoes when playing in sand or mud pit)
- monitor the BOM website for severe weather warnings and implement procedures to ensure the health and safety of all children and staff
- monitor bushfire activity and be aware of air quality and hazardous levels of air pollution caused by bushfires *(see Bushfire Policy)*
- ensure children have access to water at all times throughout the day.
- be aware of the signs and symptoms of heat-related illness and implement first aid as required
- ensure fans/air conditioning are used to help keep children cool
- close blinds/curtains where required to prevent sun shining into rooms

- adhere to health department advice for hot weather risks and recommendations.

FAMILIES WILL:

- adhere to the Service's policies and relevant procedures regarding sun safety
- ensure children are appropriately protected from the sun, see above for further directives on clothing and sun safe hats (bucket, broad-brimmed or legionnaire-style hat)
- ensure children have suitable footwear for outdoor play that protects their feet from hot surfaces, sunburn and other hazards
- inform the OSHC Service of any allergies, sensitivities or medical conditions that may affect their child's sun protection or participation in outdoor activities and provide alternative sunscreen where their child has an allergy or sensitivity to the Service's sunscreen, in line with the relevant policies and procedures.

ROLE MODELLING AND WORK, HEALTH AND SAFETY

Cancer Council Australia acknowledges that children are more likely to develop sun-safe habits if they are role-modelled and demonstrated by adults around them. Occupational UV exposure is also a work, health and safety issue. All educators, staff, volunteers and students at the OSHC Service will therefore be required to role model appropriate sun protection behaviours by:

- wearing a sun safe hat (see Hats)
- wearing sun safe clothing (see Clothing)
- applying SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors during sun protection times (See Sunscreen section)
- using and promoting shade
- wearing sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard AS/NZS 1067.1:2016 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) [optional]
- discussing sun protection with children and demonstrating a positive and proactive approach to the management of sun protection in the OSHC Service
- encouraging families and visitors to role model positive sun safe behaviour
- monitoring the UV index and daily sun protection times throughout the day
- regularly monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the *Sun Safe Policy*
- regularly drinking water and encouraging children to drink extra water in hot weather
- adapting the learning environment when severe weather events occur.

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

The approved provider and management will ensure:

- sun protection is incorporated regularly into learning programs. Children are supported to understand why sun safety is important and learn how to take effective sun protection measures, including taking leadership roles in managing sun protection, e.g., accessing daily UV levels and sun protection times, hat reminders and management of sunscreen.
- sun protection information is promoted to staff, families and visitors, for example via newsletters and information displays depicting images or photos to support a healthy lifestyle and reinforce sun safe practices
- daily sun protection times from the SunSmart App are used to guide sun protection practices at the OSHC Service
- severe heat weather events will be monitored through the BOM website and risk mitigation measures implemented
- educators and staff are encouraged to complete the free SunSmart online learning course (VIC only) or Cancer Council Generation SunSmart online professional learning modules (all other States and territories)
- further information and resources are available from the Cancer Council website and each state and territory SunSmart web page.
    - Sun safety
    - SunSmart in schools and early childhood
- the *Sun Safe Policy* is available to all educators, staff, students, families, volunteers and visitors of the Service to ensure a comprehensive understanding about keeping sun safe, including appropriate hat, clothing and sunscreen requirements
- when enrolling their child/ren to our OSHC Service, parents/guardians will be required to give authorisation for educators to apply sunscreen to their child, either Service or family supplied sunscreen
- should parents not provide authorisation for educators to apply sunscreen to their child for medical, sensory or other reasons, the child will be required to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under shade, verandah or indoors) with an appropriate hat and clothing. Management can request medical advice outlining relevant recommendations or work in consultation with the parent or guardian to develop and sign an individualised plan to minimise overexposure to UV in other ways.
- information about sun safety will be included in our *Family Handbook* and sun protection information and resources will be accessible and communicated regularly to families
- cultural backgrounds, beliefs and traditions will be considered when communicating sun safe measures to families

- children will be supported to exercise agency and independence in relation to sun protection measures such as selecting a hat or shaded area to play in.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Sun Safe Policy* will be updated and reviewed annually, or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management. All families will be notified 14 days before any policy change that may have a significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the Service or the family's ability to utilise the OSHC Service.

RELATED RESOURCES

Daily Playground Surface Temperature Check Enrolment Form Extreme Weather Procedure	Refusal of Sunscreen Record Sunscreen Application Record Sun Safe Procedure

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. *Approved learning frameworks*
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). *Sun Protection - Policy Guidelines*
Australian Government. (2026). Bureau of Meteorology
Cancer Council. Be SunSmart
Cancer Council. Home page
Cancer Council. Preventing cancer: Sun protections
Cancer Council. SunSmart programs
Early Childhood Australia. (2016). *Code of Ethics.*
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
Safe Work Australia: (2019). Guide on exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation (UVR)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Marty Gray	Principal	8/9/2026
POLICY REVIEWED	SEPTEMBER 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	SEPTEMBER 2027
VERSION NUMBER	V15.09.26		
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy review • paramount consideration added to policy • educator and family responsibility sections added • additional guidance added re: risk assessments and audits, adapting outdoor experiences in response to UV levels and weather conditions, staff training, communication with families		

	• sources checked for currency and updated as required