
SunSmart and Extreme Heat Policy

Date: June 2022

Next Review: June 2025

1. Preamble

- 1.1. It is Swan Hill Christian School's purpose "to be an inspired and caring school community that serves and enriches the Swan Hill community as we equip and empower our students to flourish in their journeys of growth. Guided by our Christian faith, we strive to provide values-based education in a vibrant, engaging and inclusive learning environment, respecting and nurturing each student's unique qualities and potential". As a caring Christian community, Son Centre has a responsibility and desire to provide for the care, safety and welfare of members of the school community within the reasonable limits of its capacity to do so.
- 1.2. Exposure to too much of the sun's UV (ultra-violet) radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage, and skin cancer. Students up to four years of age are particularly vulnerable to UV damage due to low 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.
- 1.3. This policy has been developed to encourage protection from skin damage caused by UV radiation. It is implemented throughout the year but with particular emphasis from **mid-August to the end of April** and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.
- 1.4. Policies addressing the general care of students include *Health and Wellbeing (Students) Policy*.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. This SunSmart and Extreme Heat policy provides guidelines to:
 - 2.1.1. ensure all students and staff are protected from over-exposure to UV radiation;
 - 2.1.2. ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for students and staff;
 - 2.1.3. ensure students are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills to help them be responsible for their own sun protection;
 - 2.1.4. support our school's strategies to meet its duty of care and occupational health and safety obligations to minimise harmful UV exposure for students, staff and visitors.
- 2.2. UV radiation exposure is considered as part of the school's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities on and off-site, e.g. UV radiation protection strategies (hats, clothing, shade, sunscreen) are included in school camp activities, excursions, sports days and interschool sports events.

3. Legislation and Standards

- 3.1. The following government legislation and standards are relevant to sun protection:
 - 3.1.1. *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
 - 3.1.2. *Students' Services Act 1996*
 - 3.1.3. *Students' Services Regulations 2009*

3.1.4. *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for students)*

3.1.5. *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*

- Section 167: Protection from harm and hazards

3.1.6. *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*

- Regulation 100: Risk assessment for excursions
- Regulation 113: Outdoor space – natural environment
- Regulation 114: Outdoor space – shade
- Regulation 169(2)(a)(ii): Policies and procedures – sun protection

4. **Details**

4.1. Staff and students are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times at sunsmart.com.au or on the free SunSmart app to assist with the implementation of this policy.

4.2. A combination of sun protection measures is used for all outdoor activities from mid-August to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

4.3. Seek shade

4.3.1. A shade assessment is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.

4.3.2. The Principal makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the school grounds particularly in areas where students congregate e.g. lunch, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas.

4.3.3. The availability of shade is considered when planning all other outdoor activities and excursions.

4.3.4. Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.

4.3.5. In consultation with the School Board, shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.

4.3.6. 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.

4.4. Slip on sun protective clothing

4.4.1. Sun protective clothing is included in our School uniform / dress code and sports uniform. School clothing is cool, loose fitting and made of densely woven fabric. It includes shirts with collars and elbow length sleeves, longer style dresses and shorts and rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming

4.5. Slap on a hat

4.5.1. All students and staff are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. broad brimmed or bucket hats, whenever they are outside.

4.5.2. Baseball or peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.

4.5.3. Students without a sun protective hat are provided with a spare hat where possible

4.6. Slop on sunscreen

- 4.6.1. The School supplies SPF 50 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for staff and students' use. Students are also encouraged to bring their own.
- 4.6.2. Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes (where possible) before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours if outdoors.
- 4.6.3. Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g. reminder notices, sunscreen station).
- 4.6.4. If parents specifically request, students with naturally very dark skin will not be required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements.

4.7. Slide on sunglasses

- 4.7.1. Where practical students and staff are encouraged to wear close fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

4.8. Learning

- 4.8.1. Programs on skin cancer prevention and vitamin D are included in the curriculum for all year levels.
- 4.8.2. SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through various means, including newsletters, parent meetings, staff meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and on student enrolment.
- 4.8.3. Staff and families are provided with information on sun protection and vitamin D through various means, including newsletters, noticeboards and the service's website.

4.9. As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, when the UV is 3 and above staff, families and visitors:

- 4.9.1. wear a sun protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses when outside
- 4.9.2. apply sunscreen
- 4.9.3. seek shade whenever possible

5. **Extreme Heat**

5.1. In all weather conditions students will be encouraged and supported to:

- 5.1.1. Play in shaded areas
- 5.1.2. Remain hydrated by accessing the drinking taps throughout the school day and by allowing students to have their personal water bottles with them in their classrooms

5.2. In the event of the Principal determining that the temperature at school has exceeded 37°C the following additional measures will be taken:

- 5.2.1. Students will be supervised in assembly hall or library during recess and lunch breaks
- 5.2.2. Teachers will proactively seek to provide regular additional breaks for students to access their water bottles and drinking taps during the school day

- 5.2.3. Physical Education, Sport and Gardening Classes may be inside or in an appropriately shaded area
- 5.3. School Camps, Excursions & School Sports
 - 5.3.1. UV radiation exposure is considered as part of a school's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities on and off-site e.g. UV radiation protection strategies (hats, clothing, shade, sunscreen) are included in school camp activities, excursions, sports days and interschool sports events
- 5.4. Timetabling
 - 5.4.1. In order to avoid extreme heat, timetabling will attempt to reflect more PE/Sport sessions in the morning. When extreme heat is expected all staff are committed to acting flexibly to revise the timetable as necessary.
- 5.5. Monitoring and review
 - 5.5.1. The Principal and staff regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy (at least once every three years) and revise the policy when required by completing a policy review and membership renewal with SunSmart at sunsmart.com.au.
- 5.6. SunSmart policy updates and requirements will be made available to staff, families and visitors.