SUN PROTECTION POLICY

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the Colac South West Primary School office.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at **Colac South West Primary School** to minimise the risk of health problems from sun overexposure, including 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 to the end of April in Victoria)
- 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 on and off-site, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

POLICY

Overexposure 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 damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

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 day and the year (highest from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria, which covers most of the school year)
- 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 Global UV app, or at sunsmart.com.au, or at the Bureau of Meteorology at bom.gov.au.

Colac South West Primary School has the following measures in place for all outdoor activities during the daily sun protection times to help reduce the risk of over-exposure to UV radiation for staff and students.

Shade

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

- Junior and Senior eating areas
- playgrounds
- outdoor learning areas – MPR deck, Senior eating area, bus shelters and under the oak trees
- popular play areas

Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outdoors during peak sun protection times, particularly if they do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing.

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at **Colac South West 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

Colac South West 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.

Colac South West Primary School's uniform or dress code applies on and off-site unless otherwise advised. When students are not required to wear school uniform (such as school camps, free dress day), Example School will ensure steps are taken to encourage students to wear sun-protective clothing whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

HATS

From August 31st to 30 April, 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 the August to April time period, by parent or student choice.

Students are required to wear a school provided hat.

Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or a hat may be asked to play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun.

Sunscreen

Colac South West 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 (or more frequently if sweating or swimming).

Colac South West Primary School supplies SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and students to use and the location is communicated to all staff and students, so it is readily accessible in each classroom.

Colac South West Primary School has strategies in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors this includes verbal reminders and notices.

At **Colac South West Primary School** students are welcome to attend the office to access sunscreen. Staff and students who may suffer from allergic reactions from certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to contact the Business Manager to implement a plan to reduce the risk of a sunscreen reaction at school, such as families sending their child to school with a suitable alternative sunscreen.

Sunglasses

Where practical **Colac South West Primary School** encourages students and staff engaged in outdoor activities 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.

Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices. They are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure and are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school. **Colac South West Primary School** will address sun protection and UV safety education as part of the Health and Physical Education curriculum and lessons.

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.

Staff role-modelling and OHS

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. Staff may practice and role-model these behaviours even when the UV is below, particularly if they spend extended periods of time outdoors all year round.
UV radiation exposure is considered as part of our school's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities, i.e. UV radiation protection strategies are included in school camp activities, excursions, sports days and interschool sports events.

Families and visitors

Families and visitors participating in and attending outdoor school activities are encouraged to:

- wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
- apply SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and
- seek shade whenever possible when outdoors.

Community engagement

Sun protection behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school website/intranet, staff and parent meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/new staff orientation.
Families, students and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety at school and at home.

COMMUNICATION

- SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school homepage, parent meetings, staff meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and on student enrolment.
- SunSmart communication with parents will be via the school newsletter and the Skoolbag app leading into, and during the period September 1-April 30.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- the Department's Policy and Advisory Library:
  - Sun and UV Protection Policy
  - Heat Health
  - Outdoor Activities and Working Outdoors
  - Risk Management – Schools
  - Shade Sails
  - Student Dress Code

- SunSmart and Cancer Council Victoria.
  - Primary schools free education resources, sample policies and information about the free SunSmart Schools Program.
  - Secondary schools free education resources and sample policies.
  - Sunscreen reactions.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	August 2026
Approved by	School Council - August 2026
Next scheduled review date	August 2030