

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 excursion
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 procedures

RELATED POLICIES

Administration of First Aid 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
Excursion/Incursion Policy	Work Health and Safety Policy
Governance Policy	

PURPOSE

By implementing a 'best practice' *Sun Safe Policy*, our 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 staff from severe heat 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, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service is committed to ensuring that children's safety, rights and best interests are the paramount consideration in all decisions, actions and practices. Our Service will work in compliance with the *National SunSmart Early Childhood 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 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 Service will monitor 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/index.php>
- 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 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 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.

SA August to end of April

Extra care is taken during the peak UV radiation times and outdoor activities are scheduled outside of these times where possible, or in the shade.

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 will be made to assist in planning for further shade requirements
- 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
- requirements and recommendations from relevant authorities, such as Kidsafe, are considered when planning outdoor play experiences.

HATS

Educators, staff, 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 5 cm for young children and at least 6 cm for adults and must shade the face, neck, and ears
 - a broad-brimmed hat with a brim size of at least 6 cm for children or 7.5 cm 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 required to play in an area protected from the sun. They may be provided with a spare hat by the Service if available.

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.

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

SUNSCREEN

Our 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.

SUN PROTECTION FOR INFANTS

Our Service follows recommendations for infants from the Cancer Council Australia, including:

- infants under 12 months will not be exposed to direct sunlight during daily sun protection times, when the UV index is forecast to reach 3 or above
- routines include indoor activities during the middle of the day
- physical protection, such as shade, appropriate clothing and hats are the best sun protection measures
- infant's clothing, hats and positioning in shade will be checked regularly to ensure they remain protected from UV

- for those small areas of exposed skin not protected by hats or clothing, sunscreen will be applied to infants 6 months and older
- sunscreen will be avoided for infants under six months of age (or as recommended by recognised authorities).

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT AND 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

EDUCATORS WILL:

- implement this *Sun Safe Policy* and relevant procedures
- 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
- ensure infants and children have access to water at all times throughout the day. Regularly offer additional breastmilk or formula to infants during hot weather to avoid dehydration.
- be aware of the signs and symptoms of heat-related illness in infants and young children 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 South Australian health department (SA Health) advice for hot weather risks and recommendations.

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, volunteers, students and staff at the Service will 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 50+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors during sun protection times (See Sunscreen section)
- using and promoting shade
- discussing sun protection with children and demonstrating a positive and proactive approach to the management of sun protection in the 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 Service
- severe heat weather events will be monitored through the BOM website and risk mitigation measures implemented
- 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 Service, parents/guardians will be required to give authorisation for educators to apply sunscreen to their child, either Service or family supplied sunscreen
- cultural backgrounds, beliefs and traditions will be considered when communicating sun safe measures to families

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*](#)

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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*](#)

Kidsafe NSW. (2012) [*How Hot is Too Hot To Play?*](#)

NSW Government. Department of Health. (2025). [*Babies and young children in hot weather*](#)

Safe Work Australia: (2019). [*Guide on exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation \(UVR\)*](#)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	SEPTEMBER 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	SEPTEMBER 2027
VERSION NUMBER	V20.09.26		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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		
PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS			
SEPTEMBER 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• annual policy review• reviewed and updated by Cancer Council nationally• links to resources updated• risks of summer play and severe heat moved to end of policy• Sun protection for babies section updated• sources checked for currency and updated as required		