

Southern Cross Early Childhood School



Southern Cross Early Childhood School is committed to the provision of a safe environment for all children, staff and community members.

Our UV (Sun) Protection policy has been developed to ensure that all children and staff attending the school, are protected as much as reasonably practicable from skin damage caused by over-exposure to harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun.

This policy is to be implemented when spending time outdoors from the beginning of August to the end of May when UV levels reach 3 and above.

UV (Sun) Protection Policy

Southern Cross Early Childhood School has been a member of the National SunSmart Schools Program since August 2009. As a member of the program this policy will be submitted & reviewed by Cancer Council ACT every three years, and updated if necessary.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure that Southern Cross Early Childhood School effectively implements behavioural, environmental and organisational strategies that protect children and staff from the harmful effects associated with over-exposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation (UVR).

The policy aims to promote among children, staff and families:

- Awareness of the need for sun protection and appropriate personal, environmental and organisational sun protection practices.
- Positive attitudes towards skin protection.
- Responsible decision making about skin protection.

Implementation

This policy was reviewed by Cancer Council ACT in November 2019. A combination of the five sun protection measures will be considered when planning all outdoor activities and events. Sun protection will be enforced when UV levels reach 3 and above, so for part or most of each day except in June and July.

Due to low (under 3) UV levels around the June and July period in the ACT, sun protection behaviour is generally not required unless spending longer periods outdoors for example working outdoors, excursions and carnivals etc.

Scheduling of activities

- Minimise outdoor activities and events as much as reasonably practicable between 11am and 3pm during the daylight-saving time of the year (that is, terms 1 and 4).
- When outdoors between 11am and 3pm during daylight saving time, children and staff will be required to seek shaded areas whenever possible. When planning outdoor activities including carnivals, camps and excursions, the combination of the following five sun protection measures will be considered and adopted when UV levels reach 3 and above:

Slip on sun protective clothing	Slop on SPF50 or SPF50+ broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen	Slap on a hat	Seek shade	Slide on some sunnies.
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Shade

All staff members and children will be encouraged to use available shade whenever in outdoor learning environments. Our school has sufficient shade and continues to work towards increasing the number of trees and shade structures to provide adequate shade areas for students.

Clothing, hats and sunglasses

- Children and staff will wear clothing that protects as much skin as possible.
- Children and staff will be expected to wear a broad-brimmed hat, legionnaire style hat, or bucket hat with a deep crown that provides sun protection for the face, neck and ears, whenever they are involved in outdoor learning activities. Southern Cross Early Childhood School has a *No Hat, Play in the Shade* policy. Children not wearing an appropriate hat or adequate clothing will be expected to play in the shade provided in their outdoor learning environments.
- Children are encouraged to wear the Southern Cross Early Childhood School clothes which consist of collar shirts with at least elbow length sleeves and longer style shorts/skirts.
- Children and staff are encouraged to wear sunglasses in outdoor learning environments. Sunglasses should meet Australian Standard 1067 and display an EPF 10, which provides 100% protection. Close fitting, wrap around style sunglasses are recommended as they offer the best protection.
- Children will be required to wear a rash vest (or at least a t-shirt) if attending outdoor swimming events or carnivals.

Sunscreen

Children are encouraged (and assisted if necessary) by their educators to apply water-resistant, broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least an SPF of 30+ to clean, dry skin, 20 minutes before going outdoors.

- Sunscreen and full-length mirrors for application, are available to children and their educators in all classrooms in the school. Adequate time will be allowed for application of sunscreen on children before they go outdoors.
- Sunscreen will be reapplied every two hours or more frequently if the children are involved with water play or are perspiring due to physical activity.
- Sunscreen will not be used to extend time outdoors.
- Parents are reminded that children should arrive to school with sunscreen already applied, as part of their morning routine.
- Families will be encouraged to supply sunscreen for their children, although the school will also provide a supply of sunscreen in each classroom.
- Southern Cross Early Childhood School will inform and educate all families about the use of sunscreen at the school on enrolment and annually. Families will be required to notify the school in writing if their child is allergic to sunscreen or if they do not wish sunscreen to be applied to their child.

Rationale

Australia has amongst the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world. Over-exposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation (UVR) during childhood and adolescence is known to be a major contributor to skin cancer later in life, including melanoma.

"Most Australians receive the bulk of their vitamin D supply from exposing their skin to small amounts of ultraviolet radiation found in sunlight. Due to 'low' levels of ultraviolet radiation in Canberra during the winter months, Cancer Council ACT does not generally require sun protection around the June and July period."

(Cancer Council ACT)

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Sun protection in Canberra

Vitamin D is needed for strong and healthy bones. People mostly produce vitamin D through exposure to the sun's UVB radiation, though some groups of people who have limited sun exposure don't have enough vitamin D.

Most people should receive enough vitamin D in their day-to-day lives and shouldn't need to make a special effort to go outside to increase their 'dose' of vitamin D. However, some people are at a higher risk of vitamin D deficiency than others. Individuals who are concerned about their Vitamin D levels should discuss this with a medical professional

How much sun to get in Canberra

- Protect yourself against skin cancer from August to May when UV levels reach 3 and above, and when outdoors for extended periods of time.
- When UV levels are low (under 3) in June and July, sun protection behaviour may not be required.

Education

Reinforcing the SunSmart message is an important strategy in the adoption of skin protection behaviours, including teacher Professional Learning.

- Staff will be required to role model appropriate SunSmart strategies in line with their Workplace Health & Safety responsibilities.
- Staff will be encouraged to keep up to date with new information and resources through contact with the education service at [Cancer Council ACT](#), for example, Kidskin, Generation SunSmart Teacher Professional Learning.
- Skin cancer prevention will be included in appropriate teaching activities across all year levels.
- Southern Cross Early Childhood School will promote the SunSmart message to families upon enrolment, through regular inserts in the school newsletter, whole school gatherings and on social media including the SunSmart Widget on the school website.
- Parents, carers, grandparents and visitors to the school will be encouraged to act as positive SunSmart role models if participating in outdoor activities and events.
- All staff are actively encouraged to complete Generation SunSmart online Professional Learning.

Occupational UVR Exposure

The school has a duty of care to protect its staff as much as reasonably practicable from any foreseeable harm including occupational UVR exposure. Staff members are aware of their shared responsibilities when it comes to sun protection and will adopt a combination of the five sun protection measures when working outdoors when UV levels reach 3 and above.

Policy

This policy will be evaluated on an ongoing basis and formally reviewed at least once every three years by Cancer Council ACT. The policy will be updated if necessary, to meet high national SunSmart standards for school settings. Southern Cross Early Childhood School will ensure that the policy is approved by the school board on each review.

- Policy issues will be discussed at staff, P&C and school board meetings.
- This policy will be next reviewed by Cancer Council ACT in October 2022.
- For more information on the National SunSmart Schools Program visit: <http://www.actcancer.org/sun-smart/primary.aspx>