

Sun Protection Policy

Southern Montessori Education Centre Inc.

Version	Approved By	Date	Maintained By	Next Review
4	Board of Governors	September 2024	Management	September 2027

Statement

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all members of the school community are protected from skin damage caused by harmful ultraviolet rays from the sun.

Australia has one of the highest incidences of skin cancer in the world, with two out of three Australians being diagnosed with skin cancer before aged 70. Melanoma is the most common cancer in Australians aged 12-24, and sun exposure during childhood and adolescence is a critical factor in determining future skin cancer risk.

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of overexposure to UV radiation from the sun. UV radiation cannot be seen or felt, and differs from infrared radiation that we feel as heat. UV levels are determined by the angle of the earth to the sun, and are therefore unrelated to temperature. Damage from UV radiation from the sun is cumulative and irreversible.

"This policy applies to all school activities and events, on and off site."

Aims

Southern Montessori School, through its Sun Protection Policy, aims to promote among students, staff and parents:

- Positive attitudes towards sun protection
- Encourage the entire school community to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever the UV is 3 and above
- Work towards a safe school environment that provides shade for students, staff and the school community at appropriate times
- Assist students to be responsible for their own sun protection
- Ensure families and staff are informed of the school's Sun Protection Policy

Implementation

This policy will be implemented every day from 1 August to 30 April, and throughout the year when the UV index is forecast to reach 3 and above. Hats will be worn under these circumstances at all times while outside, but should be brought to school each day in case needed.

Staff are encouraged to access the daily sun protection times on the SunSmart app, myuv.com.au or bom.gov.au/uv/index.shtml to assist with implementing this policy.

Sun protection is not required when the UV is below 3, to assist with the production of vitamin D, essential for healthy bones and muscles, and general health. Sensible sun protection when the UV is 3 and above does not put people at risk of vitamin D deficiency.

All members of the school community are required to use the following skin protection strategies:

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Clothing and Hats

- The wearing of appropriate clothing which protects the skin is required at all times and reflected in the school's uniform/dress code (loose fitting, collared shirts with longer sleeves that cover the shoulders, and longer style shorts and skirts). Rash tops or t-shirts over bathers will be worn for outdoor swimming.
- Students, staff and volunteers at school will be expected to wear a broad-brimmed, legionnaire, or bucket style hat with a deep crown and a 6cm brim, whenever involved in outside activities. Note: hats with cords should not be worn at the Centre. Cords present a potentially serious safety issue as they may become entangled in play equipment or other objects in the environment.
- Where practical students 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.
- If not wearing appropriate clothing and hats, students' access to outdoor activities will be restricted and the NO HAT – PLAY IN THE SHADE (and any sun-protected area) rule will be applied.

Shade

- Minimise exposure to UV radiation when it is 3 and above
- Students will eat lunch in the classroom or in a shaded area
- The use of shade trees, pergolas, umbrellas and verandas will be encouraged for outdoor activities, and due consideration will be given in school development plans for the further provision of shade
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities

Sunscreen

- Each classroom will provide SPF30 or above broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen preparations for student and teacher use and taken with students on excursions/camps, where the policy will apply.
- Students are encouraged to bring named, SPF30 or above broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen preparations from home.
- Students will apply sunscreen 20 minutes prior to outside activities and reapply every 2 hours if staying outside for extended period (labelled sunscreen stations with reminders in classrooms).
- Families with children who have naturally very dark skin are encouraged to discuss their vitamin D requirements with their GP or paediatrician.

Staff

- As part of WHS UV risk controls and role modelling, staff will wear sun protective clothing, hats and SPF 30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, and where possible, seek shade when outdoors.

General

- Whenever possible, outdoor activities will be scheduled for times when UV is below 3 and care will be taken during the peak UV radiation times

During major school events such as School Sports Day all reasonable precautions will be taken to protect students from unhealthy levels of sun exposure. Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures (e.g. sun protective clothing and hats, sunglasses, sunscreen and shade) when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.

Education

The message of this Sun Protection Policy will be reinforced in classroom activities and in general school procedures:

- Staff and volunteers will be encouraged to model appropriate sun safe behaviours when involved in any school activity – on or off campus.

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- Skin cancer prevention and sun protection information will be included in the Health curriculum of the school every year. It will be regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community via newsletters, assemblies, bulletin boards, parents and staff meetings and all families and staff members will be informed of the policy.
- Staff will be kept up to date with information and resources, through Cancer Council SA.

Document History and Version Control Table			
Version	Date Approved	Approved By	Brief Description
1	July 2015	Board of Governors	Creation of original document
2	Oct 2018	Board of Governors	Review ratified at Board
3	Oct 2021	Board of Governors	Review ratified at Board
4	Nov 2024	Board of Governors	Review ratified at Board

Prior to 2015 this Policy was called the Sunsmart Policy

The school reviews its sun protection policy at least every three years to ensure that information remains current and national minimum requirement.

Relevant resources

- cancer.org.au/ 2024
- DET Policy & Advisory Library [Sun protection guidelines](#) 2020
- Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) [Building Quality Standards Handbook \(BQSH\)](#): Section 5.1.3, 5.1.4 Shade Areas (May 2021)
- DET Policy & Advisory Library [Outdoor activities and working outdoors](#) (2020)
- [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) (AITSL) – Standard 4.4 and 7.2
- Education and Training Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into [Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools – Final Report](#) (2007)
- ARPANSA [Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation](#) (2006)
- *Safe Work Australia: [Guide on exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation \(UVR\)](#) (2019)*
AS 4174:2018 Knitted and woven shade fabrics
AS/NZS 1067.1:2016, Eye and face protection - Sunglasses and fashion spectacles
AS 4399:2020, Sun protective clothing - Evaluation and classification
AS/NZS 2604:2012 Sunscreen products - Evaluation and classification
- *Australian Government Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA) – Australian regulatory guidelines for sunscreens: [4. Labelling and advertising – directions for use of the product](#)*
- *AS/NZS 4685.0:2017, Playground equipment and surfacing - Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation.6.2.1: General considerations, 6.3.9: Shade and sun protection, Appendix A: Shade and sun protection*

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