

## POLICY AIM

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- ensure all children, educators and staff are protected from over-exposure to UV radiation;
- ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for children, educators and staff;
- ensure children are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills;
- support duty of care and regulatory requirements; and
- support appropriate WHS strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harms for educators, staff and visitors.

## RATIONALE

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The sun's UV can't be seen or felt. Whatever the weather, it's important for people of all skin types to use sun protection whenever UV levels are three or higher.

Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. More than two in three Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime. 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.

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.

## SCOPE - WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY?

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- Educators / Staff
- Children
- Parents / Families
- Students / Visitors / Volunteers
- Management

## NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD

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- Quality Area 1 (Educational program and practice)
- Quality Area 2 (Children's health and safety)
- Quality Area 3 (Physical environment)
- Quality Area 6 (Collaborative partnerships with families and communities)

## RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

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### RELATED SWEETPEAS POLICIES:

- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Clothing Policy
- Excursion Policy
- Governance and Management Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy

### RELATED EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS

- Law Section 167 - Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
- Regulation 168 - Education and care service must have policies and procedures

## TERMINOLOGY

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- **Ultraviolet (UV) radiation** - Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is a type of energy produced by the sun and some artificial sources, such as solariums. UV can't be seen or felt. The sun's UV can reach you directly and also indirectly (reflected off different surfaces and scattered by particles in the air). At least 95% of skin cancers are caused by UV exposure.

- **UV Index** - The World Health Organization's Global Solar UV Index measures UV levels on a scale from 0 (Low) to 11+ (Extreme). Sun protection is recommended when UV levels are 3 (Moderate) or higher. The UV level is affected by a number of factors including the time of day, time of year, cloud cover, altitude, location and surrounding surfaces.
- **Sun protection times** - The sun protection times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology for the time-of-day UV levels are predicted to reach 3 or higher (when sun protection is recommended for all skin types). In NSW, UV levels typically reach 3 or higher daily from August to the end of April. Sun protection times are available for various locations across NSW, nationally and globally on the free SunSmart Global UV widget and app or at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au) or at [myuv.com.au](http://myuv.com.au).
- **Sun protection** - A combination of strategies (clothing, hats, sunscreen, sunglasses and shade) to protect from UV.
- **Shade** - Well-designed and positioned shade can significantly reduce direct and indirect UV exposure and create cool, comfortable spaces for outdoor learning and play. Shade can be natural (trees, shrubs or shadow cast from nearby buildings), built (pergola, shade sails, etc.), portable (shade umbrellas, marquees, etc.) or a combination of these. Ensure shade is easily accessible, aesthetically pleasing, in good condition and regularly maintained. Use surfaces that reflect less UV, e.g., natural, dark or rough surfaces such as grass, soil and tanbark. When combined with appropriate clothing, hats and sunscreen, children can be well protected from UV when outdoors. Research shows that preschool environments with trees, shrubbery, and broken ground not only provides better sun protection in outdoor play but also triggers more physical activity.
- **Sun protective hat** - A hat should shade the face, neck and ears such as a wide-brimmed or bucket hat (at least 5cm brim for young children) or legionnaire hat (make sure the front peak and back flap overlap at the sides). Caps and visors do not provide enough protection and should be swapped for a UV protective hat. Hats should be accessible and stored where children can easily locate and identify their own hat.
- **Sun protective clothing** - Clothing should cover as much skin as possible. Choose cool, loose-fitting clothing made from densely woven or UPF rated fabric. Encourage the wearing of tops that cover the chest, shoulders and arms and longer style shorts or skirts. If a child is wearing a singlet top or dress with thin straps, add a t-shirt or shirt before outdoor play.
- **Sunscreen** - Sunscreen should be SPF50+ broad-spectrum and water-resistant. For all children over 6 months, apply sunscreen to any skin not covered by clothing 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours or after water activities. Make sure it has an Australian Licence (Aust L) number and monitor the expiry date. Store sunscreen below 30 degrees and out of direct sun. Cancer Council recommends a usage test before applying a new sunscreen. The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended.
- **Sunglasses** - If practical for your setting, 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. Wearing a hat with a brim that shades the eyes can also reduce UV radiation to the eyes by 50%.

## IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIES

- To assist with the implementation of this policy, educators and children are encouraged to access the local sun protection times via the SunSmart widget on the service's website, the free SunSmart app or at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au).
- The sun protection measures listed are used for all outdoor activities **during the daily local sun protection times**. (The sun protection times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology for the time-of-day UV levels are forecast to reach 3 or higher. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types.
- Sun protection measures will be considered when planning excursions.
- Outdoor activities will be set up in shaded areas.
- Sun protection times are a forecast for the time-of-day UV levels will reach 3 or above. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types and the policy areas should be implemented. In NSW, UV levels are high enough (UV 3 or above) to damage unprotected skin most months of the year.
- UV levels and daily sun protection times are used to plan daily activities and ensure a correct understanding of local sun protection requirements
- UV radiation exposure is considered as part of a service's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities on and off-site.

- When children are on excursions all sun protection practices are planned, organised, understood and available.
- Appoint service champion(s) to drive sun protection policy implementation and engagement.
- Management and the service champion(s) regularly monitor and review how effectively they implement their sun protection policy.

## SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING INFANTS (SWEETPEAS ST MARYS)

- Our SunSmart practices consider [the special needs of infants](#). All babies under 12 months are kept out of direct sun when UV levels are 3 or higher.
- Our service acknowledges that the best sun protection can be achieved when a combination of physical sun protection measures such as shade, clothing and hats are used. For those small areas of exposed skin not protected by clothing or hats, we apply approved sunscreen to infants six months and older.

## PROTECTION FROM UV

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### 1. SEEK SHADE

- Management makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the outdoor area particularly in high-use areas.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning all outdoor activities.
- Children are encouraged to choose and use available areas of shade when outside.
- Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to choose a shady play space or a suitable area protected from the sun.
- Shade provision is considered in future plans and upgrades.
- A shade assessment is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.

### 2. SLIP ON SUN-PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

- Children and staff are required to wear SunSmart clothing that covers as much skin as possible (especially the shoulders, back and stomach) as possible.
- Clothing made from cool, densely woven fabric is recommended. Families are asked to choose tops with elbow-length sleeves, higher necklines (or collars) and knee-length or longer style shorts and skirts for their child. If a child is wearing a singlet top or shoestring dress, they will be asked to choose a t-shirt/shirt to wear over this before going outdoors.

### 3. SLAP ON A HAT

- All staff and children are required to wear SunSmart hats\* (legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket style).
- that protect their face, neck, and ears.
- Children and staff without a SunSmart hat are encouraged to play in an area protected from the sun (under shade, veranda or indoors), or are provided with a spare SunSmart hat.
- Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.

### 4. SLOP ON SUNSCREEN

- SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is supplied by the service and/or families.
- Permission to apply sunscreen is included in the service enrolment package.
- Where children have allergies or sensitivity to the sunscreen, parents are asked to provide an alternative sunscreen, or the child encouraged to play in the shade.
- Cancer Council recommends usage tests before applying a new sunscreen.
- Sunscreen is applied in accordance with the manufacturer's directions (which state to apply at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours, or more frequently if sweating or swimming).
- To help develop independent skills, all children are given opportunities to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of staff, and are encouraged to do so.
- Sunscreen is stored in a cool place, out of the sun and the expiry date is monitored.

- Sunscreen application is currently recorded via the 'Eating Habits' menu of HubHello. This method was chosen after educators reflected how they could better communicate sunscreen application for families.

## 5. SLIDE ON SUNGLASSES [IF PRACTICAL]

- Where practical, children 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.

## FURTHER EDUCATION

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### LEARNING AND SKILLS

- Sun protection is incorporated into the learning and development program.
- The Sun Protection policy is reinforced by educators and through children's activities and displays.
- Educators are encouraged to complete Cancer Council's free [Generation SunSmart](#) online learning modules.
- Children understand why sun safety is important and learn how to take effective sun protection, including taking leadership roles in managing sun protection e.g., accessing daily UV levels and sun protection times, hat reminders and management of sunscreen.

### ENGAGING CHILDREN, EDUCATORS, STAFF AND FAMILIES

- Educators, staff and families are provided with information about sun protection through family newsletters, service handbook, noticeboards and the service's website.
- Staff regularly check the SunSmart app with the children and discuss with them the day's UV rating.
- When enrolling their child, families are:
  - informed of the service's Sun Protection policy;
  - asked to provide a suitable sun protective hat, covering clothing and sunscreen for their child (if they do not wish their child to use the service sunscreen);
  - required to give permission for educators to apply sunscreen to their child; and
  - encouraged to use SunSmart measures themselves when at the service.
- Limited number of spare hats will be provided for use to children who have forgotten their hats. Families may be charged \$2.00 when spare hat is given to cover laundry costs.
- As part of WHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, educators, staff and visitors:
  - wear a SunSmart sun-protective hat, SunSmart clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
  - apply sunscreen; and
  - seek shade whenever possible.
  - download SunSmart app to iPads

### RESOURCES

- [Suggested learning experiences](#) for sun protection
- [Sun protection advice for parents and carers](#)
- [Sun protection information for babies and toddlers](#)
- [Sun protection information in different languages](#)
- [Sun protection resources and information for early childhood services](#)
- SunSmart website Accessibility tool - for accessible information and to translate all content into audio/text for over 100 languages

### MONITORING AND REVIEW

- All staff, including management and educators, monitor and review the effectiveness of the Sun Protection policy and revise the policy when required (at least once every three years) by completing a policy review and membership renewal with SunSmart at [sunsmart.com.au](https://www.sunsmart.com.au)
- Sun protection policies must be updated and submitted to Cancer Council NSW every three years to maintain SunSmart status.
- Sun Protection policy updates and requirements will be made available to educators, staff, families and visitors.

## REFERENCES

- ACECQA [Providing appropriate outdoor space](#) (July 2023)
- ACECQA [Sun protection policy and procedure guidelines](#) (August 2021)
- ARPANSA [Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation](#) (2006)
- AS 4174:2018 (Amd 2019) Knitted and woven shade fabrics
- AS 4399:2020, Sun protective clothing - Evaluation and classification
- AS/NZS 1067.1:2016 (Amd 2021), Eye and face protection - Sunglasses and fashion spectacles
- AS/NZS 2604:2012 Sunscreen products - Evaluation and classification
- 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*
- [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) (AITSL) - Standard 4.4 and 7.2
- [Be SunSmart, Play SunSmart](#)
- Belonging, Being and Becoming - The Early Years Learning Framework (V2.0, 2022)
- [Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 \(Vic\) \(Part 2: Principles for children\)](#)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 167: Protection from harm and hazards
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- [Get Up & Grow: Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood](#) (Section 2) 2009
- [Healthy Early Childhood Services Achievement Program](#) - Sun protection
- NSW Cancer Council: <https://www.cancercouncil.com.au/>
- Safe Work Australia: [Guide on exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation \(UVR\)](#) (2019)
- SunSmart: <http://www.sunsmartnsw.com.au/>
- United Nations. 1989. Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011

## REVIEW AND AMENDMENT HISTORY

This policy will be updated to ensure compliance with all relevant legal requirements. Appropriate consultation of all stakeholders (including staff and families) will be conducted on a timely basis. In accordance with Regulation 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulation*, families of children enrolled will be notified at least 14 days and their input considered prior to any amendment of policies and procedures that have any impact on their children or family.

Version	Amendment(s)	Review Date	Updated By
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy implemented from previous Sweetpeas policy</li> </ul>	July 2017	Cassandra Way (Admin + Educator) Janine Evans (Nominated Supervisor)
1.1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated NQS references</li> </ul>	July 2018	Cassandra Way (Admin + ECT)
1.2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated recommendations on sun protection times as per latest SunSmart recommendations</li> </ul>	July 2019	Janine Evans (Nominated Supervisor)
1.3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy resubmitted to SunSmart</li> <li>• Downloaded the app to iPad</li> <li>• Added the A4 flyer to rooms and front door to inform families</li> </ul>	July 2020	Janine Evans (Nominated Supervisor)

Version	Amendment(s)	Review Date	Updated By
1.4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated recommendations on sun protection times as per latest SunSmart recommendations</li> </ul>	July 2021	Cassandra Irvine (ECT)
1.5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated recommendations on sun protection times as per latest SunSmart recommendations</li> <li>Resubmitted policy to SunSmart</li> </ul>	July 2022	Cassandra Irvine (ECT/Assistant Director-Cranebrook)
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cosmetic update with changes for new template/colours</li> <li>Added Terminology section</li> <li>Added Infants recommendations for St Marys</li> </ul>	August 2022	Cassandra Way (Assistant Manager) Janine Evans (Managing Director)
2.1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Checked hyperlinks and updated</li> <li>Added Generation SunSmart training</li> </ul>	August 2023	Cassandra Way (Assistant Manager)
2.2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added new method of recording sunscreen application</li> <li>Fixed version numbering (Aug23 previously version 2.3)</li> </ul>	February 2024	Cassandra Way (Assistant Manager)
2.3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removed reference to scheduling of outdoor activities in certain months, as per the recommendations of SunSmart NSW</li> <li>Checked all hotlinks</li> <li>Moved some of the resource links from the <i>References</i> section to <i>Resources</i> under <i>Further Education</i> section</li> </ul>	June 2024	Cassandra Way (Assistant Manager) Janine Evans (Managing Director)