

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Westgarth Primary School to minimise the risk of skin and eye damage and 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 – end of April)
- 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, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

## **Policy**

Excessive exposure 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 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 year (highest in Victoria from mid-August – end of April)
- 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 [sunsmart.com.au](https://www.sunsmart.com.au).

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Westgarth Primary School has the following measures in place to help reduce the risk of excessive UV sun exposure for staff and students.

## **Shade**

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

- where students congregate for lunch
- outdoor lesson areas
- popular play areas
- assembly areas
- sporting grounds.

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Westgarth 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**

Westgarth Primary School recommends that from mid-August to end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, students come to school wearing sun-protective clothing such as:

- 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.

Westgarth Primary School's 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.

From mid-August 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.

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Staff and students are encouraged to wear hat styles that protect the face, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket.

Students are required to wear a school hat or another hat style that protects the face, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket. 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**

Westgarth 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 according to [manufacturer's instructions](#).

Westgarth Primary School has strategies in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors. Each classroom has their own sunscreen and students are reminded by their teacher to apply sunscreen before recess and lunch.

Staff and students who may suffer from allergic reactions from certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to bring and use their own personalised sunscreen for school use.

Staff and families should role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside.

## **Sunglasses**

Where practical Westgarth 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**

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.

## **Engaging students, staff and families**

SunSmart 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 and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety at school and at home. Westgarth Primary School may provide families and staff

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with information through communication strategies i.e. newsletters, noticeboards, school website, school assemblies.

### **Further Information and Resources**

- School Policy Advisory Guide:
  - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
  - [Duty of care](#)
- [SunSmart](#)
- [Achievement Program](#)'s SunSmart policy

### **Review Cycle**

This policy was last updated in February 2022 and is scheduled for review in 3 years.

SunSmart membership and policy renewal due February 2025

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