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## UV (Sun) Protection Policy

School Procedures:	SunSmart Policy
Development:	2012
Last Reviewed:	2018
Renewal Date:	2021
Related Policies:	Weetangera School Dress Standards and Uniform Educational Directorate's Sun (UV) Protection For Students (2015).



### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1. Weetangera School has a duty of care and responsibility to ensure that adequate sun protection is provided for all students and workers, including pre-service teachers and volunteers. This applies while they are on school premises during school hours or undertaking outdoor school activities when Ultra Violet (UV) levels are 3 and above.
- 1.2. In Canberra sun protection is required for part or most of each day between August and May. The end of May is 'Hats Off Day' whilst the beginning of August is 'Hats On Again' for all of us.
- 1.3. Due to low (under 3) daily UV levels experienced in Canberra from June to July, Weetangera School will not enforce sun UV protection in this period. However sensible sun UV protection may still be warranted if spending extended period outdoors during these months i.e. at all day outdoor sporting events and excursions.
- 1.4. This policy refers specifically to students. However, for their own protection and under the current [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) all Directorate workers are required to follow this policy and guidelines developed by the school to reduce occupational UV exposure.

- 1.5. All workers, in providing for their own workplace protection, are also providing a role model for students.
- 1.6. Through the school's curriculum, students will be made aware of the healthy balance required between UV exposure, sun UV protection and vitamin D exposure across the year.
- 1.7. Students with no hat will be required to play in a well shaded area. This is informally known as 'No Hat Play in the Shade'.
- 1.8. Information about the Cancer Council's [National Schools Program](#) can be obtained from [Cancer Council ACT's website](#). Weetangera School community members can also view their school's current SunSmart status from the [Cancer Council ACT's website](#).

## **2. RATIONALE**

- 2.1. This policy aims to protect students, workers and community members at Weetangera School, as far as reasonably practicable, from the dangers associated with over-exposure to the sun's UV.
- 2.2. Australia has amongst the highest rate of skin cancer in the world – at least 2 in 3 Australians will develop skin cancer before the age of 70. Exposure to UV is a major contributory factor in the development of skin cancer.
- 2.3. UV comes both from direct and indirect sunlight, it is also scattered in the atmosphere. UV is also reflected from surrounding surfaces such as water, sand, concrete and snow. High levels of radiation are received in wide open areas where there is no shade, such as school ovals, even on a cloudy day.
- 2.4. UV levels reach 3 and above in Canberra for part or most of each day between August and May which warrants sensible sun protection during this part of the year.
- 2.5. In Canberra annual UV levels peak during the daylight saving/summer period between 11am and 3pm. Weetangera School will therefore aim to reduce time outdoors during this period, or otherwise take particular care if outdoors during this peak UV period i.e. seek shade at all times.
- 2.6. Sun UV protection is recommended at all ages, as the risk of developing skin cancer risk is reduced at whichever age sun protection is used.

- 2.7. Childhood and adolescence are critical periods during which exposure to UV radiation is more likely to contribute to skin cancer in later life, including melanoma. UV exposure during the first 18 years of a person's life is the most critical risk factor for skin cancer, and also causes skin damage and premature ageing. This is important to remember in the secondary school setting.
- 2.8. Most Australians receive the bulk of their Vitamin D supply from exposing their skin to small amounts of UV in sunlight most days of the week. Due to low levels (under 3) of UV in Canberra during the winter months, Cancer Council ACT does not generally recommend sun UV protection in June and July. This is to reduce the risk of Vitamin D deficiency in the ACT region.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. **Duty of Care:** legal duty of care requires that teachers and workers should take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety of a school student under their care. This duty of care will arise whenever a student/teacher-worker relationship exists.
- 3.2. **Parents/Carers:** people with parental responsibility and guardians.
- 3.3. **Workers:** teachers and staff employed by the Directorate.
- 3.4. **Sensible:** covering as much skin as possible from UV levels.
- 3.5. **Sunburn:** a radiation burn to the skin.
- 3.6. **UV or UVR:** Ultraviolet Radiation

### 4. LEGISLATION [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) and [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011](#)

- 4.1. The main objective of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) and [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011](#) is to protect workers, students and visitors against harm to their health, safety and welfare through the elimination or minimisation of risks as reasonably practicable.

### 5. PROCEDURES

- 5.1. **Local School Guideline Development**
- 5.2. Weetangera must develop and adhere to sun UV protection guidelines that comply with this policy, UVR Protection Checklist for Schools - Cancer Council

ACT as a guide. The information contained in this attachment is consistent with Cancer Council ACT's [National Schools Program](#) recommendations:

- sun UV protection guidelines in schools must be developed in consultation with the school community and the School Board
- parents must be informed of the school's sun UV protection guidelines. This may be achieved by publishing the guidelines in the school handbook and school newsletters. Parents should also be informed that a full copy of the Directorates [Sun UV Protection Policy](#) is available for inspection at the school
- schools actively promote positive sun UV protection behaviour and attitudes via school newsletters, website, school events and assemblies
- schools will be required to review their sun UV protection guidelines at least once every 3 years. Schools with national SunSmart status will be required to submit a copy of their current guidelines to Cancer Council ACT. The school guidelines will be updated, if required, to maintain national SunSmart standards and best practice.

### 5.3. **Protective Clothing and Hats**

- Between August and May students and workers are required to wear SunSmart hats (e.g.: broad-brimmed, bucket with deep crown or legionnaire hats) that cover the face, ears and neck.
- Broad-brimmed hats should be at least 6cm for children (7.5cm for teens and adults). Bucket style hats should have an angled rim that is suitable for the size of the child's head (a minimum of 5cm as a guide) a minimum of 6cm for older children and adults.
- Sunhat cords can become caught and become a strangulation risk to children playing on fixed playground equipment. Weetangera School must request that parents either purchase sun hats with safety cords designed to break under minimal strain or remove cords from sunhats altogether.
- When students are required to wear sun hats, Weetangera School will not permit them to access fixed play equipment

unless one of the above hazard controls is met.

- Weetangera School supports the wearing of sun protective clothing. Loose fitting, closely woven cotton fabrics and shirts with a collar and longer sleeves and longer skirts and shorts are recommended.
- Sun protection clothing is incorporated into the Weetangera School's uniform/dress code. Sensible uniform design requires covering as much skin as possible.
- All students will be required to wear at least a t-shirt or a rash vest ('rashie') when attending all day outdoor swimming carnivals.
- Weetangera School will support the wearing of sunglasses all year round. For best sun UV protection, a close-fitting wrap-around pair should be worn that meets AS 1067.

#### 5.4. **Shade Provision**

- All students will be reminded, directed and encouraged to use Weetangera School's designated shade areas when playing, eating etc. This is particularly important during the daylight saving/summer months when UV levels peak.
- Weetangera School will maintain and/or increase shade provision in school grounds for future generations. This includes the planting of shade trees and shade structures.

#### 5.5. **Wearing of Sunscreen**

5.6. Whilst sunscreen is considered the final line of defence against UV related skin damage, Weetangera School will consider effective strategies that will allow for the daily application of sunscreen by both students and workers who choose to wear it. Because current school uniforms tend to leave significant areas of skin (arms and legs) exposed, sunscreen will play an important role in Weetangera School's sun UV protection guidelines. These guidelines require that:

- Weetangera School actively supports and promotes the daily use of broad spectrum, water resistant SPF 30 or higher sunscreen on exposed skin that cannot be protected by clothing/uniform
- parents are reminded and encouraged to supply SPF

30 or higher, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen as part of their child's school equipment

- parents are reminded that sunscreen should be applied at home before leaving to school
- Weetangera School makes sunscreen accessible to all students and workers via all classrooms and encourage daily applications throughout the day. Weetangera School encourages parents to pack sunscreen in student's bags to reapplied throughout the day due to allergies.
- where practicable students are given daily opportunities and reminders to apply sunscreen 15-20 minutes prior to the lunch break (the peak UV period of the day) and before participating in outdoor activities i.e. PE etc
- students are encouraged to apply sunscreen themselves
- staff will exercise judgment as to whether some students, for example, younger children, should be supervised or assisted when applying sunscreen
- Weetangera School will inform parents/carers at the beginning of the school year that there may be occasions when workers will need to apply sunscreen to children. Parents/carers should be requested to inform the school if they do not wish workers to apply sunscreen to their children
- if a child is allergic to sunscreen, parents/carers must notify the school about this on the medical form completed at the beginning of each school year. Parents/carers have the option of providing a hypoallergenic sunscreen for their children.

#### 5.7. **Rescheduling Outdoor Activities**

5.8. Minimise the time spent outdoors between 11am and 3pm (Daylight Saving/Summer Time). Some strategies might include:

- **planning all day outdoor events i.e. athletic/swimming carnivals not to occur during the peak UV period of the year when the risk of sunburn is significantly increased**
- timetabling outdoor physical activities, excursions and outdoor classes earlier in the day

- holding assemblies indoors, under shade or at lower UV times
- making lunch times shorter and morning breaks longer
- keeping students indoors or under shade at lunch times, until they have eaten their lunch.

#### 5.9. SunSmart Tools and Professional Learning Opportunities

- Weetangera School will display the SunSmart Web Widget on their school's website to assist their school community toward better understanding when sensible sun UV protection is and is not required each day in Canberra.
- Weetangera School teachers and workers are encouraged to complete [Cancer Council Generation SunSmart Professional Learning online modules](#). Upon completion teachers and workers will receive a Certificate of Completion and their school acknowledged by Cancer Council.

## 6. Complaints

- 6.1. Any concerns about the application of this policy or the policy itself, should be raised with:
- the school principal in the first instance;
  - the Directorate's Liaison Unit on (02) 6205 5429;
  - online at [http://www.det.act.gov.au/contact\\_us](http://www.det.act.gov.au/contact_us);
  - see also the *Complaints Policy* on the Directorate's website.

## 7. PROCEDURE OWNER

- 7.1. Weetangera School  
 Policy Issued: 28/09/18  
 Policy Renewal: 28/09/2021

### National SunSmart Schools Program.

Weetangera Primary School was awarded national SunSmart status in 1999. As an active and supportive member of Cancer Council's National SunSmart Schools Program this policy will be submitted to Cancer Council ACT every 3 years to be reviewed. This policy will be updated, if required, to maintain national SunSmart standards for ACT schools settings.

Our school's online SunSmart Certificate can be viewed here:

<http://www.actcancer.org/prevention/sunsmart/act-schools-and-early-childhood-services/national-schools-program/view-your-sunsmart-certificate/>

Our school's next SunSmart review will be in September 2021.