



## Sun Protection Policy

### Policy Statement

Staff at Mark Oliphant College Children's Centre aim to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of each child at all times in relation to sun protection and staying safe in inclement weather. We are committed to providing children with a safe environment that provides shade and other sun protection to support their learning and opportunities for play. This policy applies to all centre activities and events (on and off site).

### Background

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require policies and procedures to be in place in relation to sun protection. The vast majority of skin cancers, including melanoma, are caused by over-exposure to UV radiation from the sun. The World Health Organisation has cautioned that 'children's UV exposure should be carefully limited because they are in a dynamic state of growth and therefore more susceptible to environmental threats than adults. Many vital functions such as the immune system are not fully developed at birth, and unsafe environments may interfere with their normal development' ([Ultraviolet radiation \(who.int\)](#))

### Principles

- The safety, health and wellbeing of children is our number one priority. Our educators and staff implement policies and procedures to protect children from UV radiation from the sun, as well as burns from exposure to surfaces heated by the sun.
- Outdoor play experiences are an important part of our children's healthy growth, learning, wellbeing and development. We ensure that the outdoor environment offers the required shade and other sun protection measures are implemented by the educators.
- We create opportunities for children to learn and develop, and this includes incorporating sun protection awareness into the program.
- Our educators and staff role model quality educational practices, including sun safe practices.
- We encourage involvement by families in our educational program and see them as valuable partners in promoting the importance of sun protection.

### Legislative requirements

Section 167 – Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards

- [Education and Care Services National Regulation](#)
  - Regulation 100 – Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
  - Regulation 113 – Outdoor space – natural environment
  - Regulation 114 - Outdoor space - shade
  - Regulation 168 – Education and care service must have policies and procedures
  - Regulation 170 – Policies and procedures must be followed
  - Regulation 171 – Policies and procedures to be kept available
  - Regulation 172 – Notification of change to policies or procedures





## **Inclement Weather Procedure**

### **Inclement weather conditions**

Inclement weather includes:

- extreme temperatures
- heavy rain, hail and snow
- strong winds
- severe dust storm
- lightning or thunderstorm.

### **Implementation**

- Daily monitoring of weather forecasts using the [Bureau of Meteorology South Australian forecasts](#)
- Monitor for severe weather danger warnings in the lead up to planned activities/excursions using the [Bureau of Meteorology national warning summary](#)
- During periods of hot weather, check the heatwave forecast using the [SES heatwave forecast](#)
- During and following a period of inclement weather. Look out for:
  - signs of an approaching storm such as dark sky, high winds, thunder and lightning
  - hot weather followed by heavy rain or wind that can affect the stability of trees
  - tree debris that might pose a slip or trip hazard, such as leaves, nuts and branches
  - damaged tree limbs and branches that may fall
  - wet floors and stairs
  - employees or students having trouble breathing triggered by dust, thunderstorms or panic.

### **Hot Weather**

We are aware that children are at greater risk of suffering from heat illness than adults. Staff will ensure that children are protected from harm caused by exposure to heat both from air temperature and relative humidity levels.

- Children will have the opportunity for indoor and outdoor play in shaded areas.
- Drinking water is easily accessible for children indoors and outdoors. Staff will frequently encourage children to drink water as appropriate to keep hydrated
- Families are encouraged to pack food in insulated containers with a freezer brick or frozen water. Lunches are stored inside where it is cool. The fridge is available for storage as necessary.
- Staff will monitor for signs and symptoms of heat-related illness using the SA Health guidance on [heat-related illness signs, symptoms and treatment](#)
- Avoid sitting or standing under trees during prolonged hot weather as heat stress can cause branches and limbs to break. Eucalypts are especially dangerous during hot weather as they will shed healthy branches or limbs to preserve water in the rest of the tree.





- Monitor the temperature of outdoor surfaces and play equipment before allowing children and young people access to anything left in direct sunlight can become hot enough to cause burn injuries – check before each use and where possible, move equipment under cover or into the shade when not in use.

These include artificial grass/turf, plastic and metal play equipment, rubber (e.g. tyres and impact-attenuating surfaces) and soft fall mats. To identify potential hazards and minimise risk to children of serious injuries, such as burns, staff will:

- Conduct risk assessments (both dynamic and written)
- Provide access to shade in play spaces
- Use effective supervision strategies
- Be aware of daily weather conditions
- Conduct regular checks of outdoor surfaces and environments, especially on hot days. A simple test is for an educator to hold their hand on the surface. If they can do so comfortably for five seconds, it is fine.

### **Windy Weather**

- Arrange for loose objects in outdoor areas to be secured or put away.
- Look out for tree debris such as bark, nuts, leaves and sticks that could present a trip or slip hazard
- Look out for loose objects that could become airborne and cause injuries.
- Look out for approaching dust storms.
- Avoid sitting or standing under trees in strong winds that may cause branches to fall without warning
- Avoid exercise and outdoor activities during dust storms and when the wind is carrying bushfire smoke in your direction
- Avoid using evaporative air conditioners during dust storms or when the wind is carrying bushfire smoke in your direction because these draw in outside air.





## **Sun Protection Procedure**

### **Sun Protection and monitoring**

Staff are required to access the daily sun protection times on the SunSmart app or the Bureau of Meteorology website to assist with implementing this procedure.

We use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities on and off site during terms 1, 3 and 4 and whenever UV radiation levels reach 3 and above at other times. Extra care is taken during the peak UV radiation times and outdoor activities are scheduled outside of these times where possible. A combination of sun protection measures are considered when planning outdoor activities such as excursions and water based activities outlined in the risk assessments.

### **Clothing**

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

When outside, children are required to wear loose fitting clothing that cover as much skin as possible. Clothing made from cool, closely woven fabric is recommended. Tops with collars and elbow length sleeves, and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best. If a child is wearing a singlet top or dress they wear a t-shirt/shirt over the top before going outdoors.

### **Sunscreen**

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

SPF 30 or higher, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is available for staff and children's use.

If children have sensitive skin or allergies to Sunscreen, families must provide a suitable alternative.

Parents are encouraged to apply sunscreen to their children prior to attending the centre or to support their children upon arrival at the centre. Sunscreen is applied at least twenty minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours if remaining outdoors.

Children, once old enough, are encouraged to apply their own sunscreen under the supervision of staff.

Families with children who have naturally very dark skin are encouraged to discuss their vitamin D requirements with their GP or paediatrician.

### **Hats**

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

All children are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad brimmed or bucket hats. Baseball or peak caps are not considered a suitable alternative.

All Preschool children will be provided with a bucket hat upon enrolment.

Occasional Care families will be required to supply a suitable sun safe hat for their child.

### **Sunglasses (optional)**

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

Children and staff are encouraged to wear close fitting, wraparound sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard AS/NZS 1067:1.2016 (Sunglasses: lens category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

### **Children under 12 months of age**

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

Our Sun Protection procedures consider the special needs of infants. All babies under twelve months are not exposed to the direct sun when UV radiation levels are 3 and above.

Infants should be protected by using shade, clothing and hats.





Sunscreen should be applied to small areas of exposed skin not protected by clothing or hats, for infants six months and older.

### **Shade Requirements**

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

Quality area 3: Physical environment

Quality Area 7: Governance and leadership

- A shade audit is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
- Management ensures there is enough shelters and trees providing shade in the outdoor area.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities.
- Children are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.

### **Enrolment and information for families**

Quality area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

When enrolling their child, families are:

- informed of the centre's Sun Protection policy
- asked to provide a suitable hat for their child for Occasional Care (Preschool children are provided a Bucket Hat upon enrolment).
- asked to provide their child with suitable outdoor clothing that is cool and covers as much skin as possible (i.e. covering the shoulders, chest, upper arms and legs)
- asked to provide SPF 30 or higher, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for their child if they cannot use the sunscreen provided by the Children's Centre
- required to give permission for staff to apply sunscreen to their child
- families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, shade, sunglasses and sunscreen) when participating in or attending outdoor activities with the centre.

### **Staff WHS and role modelling**

Quality area 5: Relationships with children

As part of WHS UV risk controls and role modelling, when the UV radiation is 3 and above, staff:

- wear sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside
- apply SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
- seek shade whenever possible.

### **Sun protection awareness, integration into programming and planning**

Quality area 1: Educational program and practice

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety

Quality area 5: Relationships with children

Quality area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

- Sun protection awareness is incorporated into educational programming and planning.
- The Sun Protection policy is reinforced through staff and children's activities and displays.
- Staff and families are provided with information on sun protection through induction processes, family newsletters and noticeboards.
- Children's agency is supported through developing independence and choice within sun safe practices.





### Surface Temperature Checks

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and safety

Quality Area 3: Physical environment

Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership

Contact, or thermal burns, are a result of the skin coming into contact with hot or extremely cold materials or environments. Even in mild weather, these burns can occur due to inadequately shaded play spaces, when children make contact with heated playground surfaces and/or playground equipment, particularly slides and swings. Contact burns and the degree of burn sustained depends on 3 factors: The contact time, materiality of the product and the temperature of the surface at the time of burn. At surface temperatures greater than 50°C, tender young skin can be burned severely within seconds. Playground surfacing and equipment can exceed this temperature on dry, bright sunny days with temperatures in the high twenties. Surfaces such as - artificial grass/turf plastic and metal play equipment rubber (e.g. tyres and impact-attenuating surfaces) soft fall mats, metal slides, poles, guardrails, barriers and other playground equipment may pose burn/scald risks if the equipment is exposed to direct sunlight. Regular testing is required by;

- use of an infrared thermometer to measure and record the temperature at regular scheduled times of the day. If the surface temperature is 50° C or more children should not:

- Play on the playground
- educators remove the play equipment from the play environment
- educators ensure children wear shoes at all times
- educators schedule and restrict play to shaded areas only
- educators ensure children have adequate clothing to prevent sunburn as well as any contact scalds from sitting or kneeling
- educators can wet the area with water to assist in cooling the surface temperature however this may only serve as a temporary solution and regular monitoring is required
- educators need to assess the environment regularly to determine whether the playground is suitable for use and rechecking as the temperatures and day progresses

### Policy review

Quality area 7: Governance and leadership

Management and staff monitor and review the effectiveness of the Sun Protection policy and revise the policy when required (at least once every three years).







## Sources

- Sun protection times

The sun protection times show when the UV is forecast to be 3 and above. They can be accessed via the free [SunSmart app](#) or the [Bureau of Meteorology website](#)

- [Creating effective shade](#)
- [Generation SunSmart](#)
- [Be SunSmart Play SunSmart](#)
- [SunSmart Hat-Wearing Toolkit](#)
- [Babies and Outdoor Play](#)
- [SunSmart in schools and early childhood](#)
- [ACECQA Sun Protection policy and procedure guidelines](#)
- [Surface Temperature Kidsafe Information Sheet](#)
- [Playground Surfacing Kidsafe Information Sheet](#)
- [Hot outdoor surfaces can be dangerous Education Standards Board](#)

## Revision Register

Version Number	Details of Changes Made	Date Issued
1	Policy Creation	April 2013
	No changes	April 2015
2	Centre provides bucket hats on enrolment to preschoolers	April 2016
3	Provision of sunglasses	May 2017
4	Sunglasses to be provided by families o/c provides own hat from home, volunteers included. Combined Hot Weather with Skin Protection to form one policy	March 2019
5	Equipment and Hot Weather – added Legislation and sources – updated	November 2021
6	Sun Smart Policy Completely rewritten – to reflect the Sun Smart Centre requirements using the Sun Smart Centres template	April 2021
7	Policy updated to include inclement weather and update sources	May 2024
8	Sun Protection Procedure updated and additional resources added	December 2024

