



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Office staff at Watsonia Heights Primary School.

SunSmart Policy - 2025

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Watsonia Heights 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 in Victoria)
- 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.
- Ensure that families and new staff are informed of the school's SunSmart policy.

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 damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

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 in Victoria)
- peaks during school hours

At Watsonia Heights Primary School sun safety is a shared responsibility and staff, parents and students are encouraged to implement a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities from **September to the end of April** and/or when UV levels reach 3 and above. Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via the [SunSmart widget](#) on the school's website, the free [SunSmart app](#), or at sunsmart.com.au or bom.gov.au.

SHADE

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

- A shade audit is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
- The School Council makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the school grounds particularly in areas where students congregate e.g. lunch, canteen, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities.
- In consultation with the School Council, shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- Students who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.

Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outdoors during peak sun protection times, particularly if they do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing.

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Watsonia Heights Primary School that may impact on the level of shade available to staff and students, a review of the shaded areas available will be conducted and further shading installed as appropriate.

SUN PROTECTIVE UNIFORM

Watsonia Heights Primary School's school uniform and 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.

Watsonia Heights Primary Schools uniform applies on and off-site unless otherwise advised. When students are not required to wear school uniform (such as school camps, free dress day), Watsonia Heights Primary School will ensure steps are taken to encourage students to wear sun-protective clothing whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

HATS

From mid-August (exact date to be set by the school annually) 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.

Students wear a school hat or a hat that protects the face, head, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hat.

Baseball or peaked caps and sun visors are not considered a suitable alternative, as they do not protect the ears, cheeks or neck.

Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or hats will be asked to use available areas of shade when outdoors or a suitable area protected from the sun.

SUNSCREEN

Watsonia Heights Primary School encourages all staff and students to apply SPF50 or SPF50+ 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 (or more frequently if sweating or swimming). Students must provide their own sunscreen. This is included on the school's booklist each year.

Watsonia Heights Primary School has strategies in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors which includes reminders from teachers before leaving the classroom.

Sunscreen is also available in classrooms for students should they not have their own. Sunscreen that is supplied by the school is stored below 30 degrees and the expiry date monitored.

Staff and students who may suffer from skin reactions from certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to contact the Office on 03 9435 4617 to implement a plan to reduce the risk of a sunscreen reaction at school, such as families sending their child to school with a suitable alternative sunscreen.

SUNGLASSES

Where practical Watsonia Heights 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

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices. They are supported to understand effects of sun exposure and are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school. Watsonia Heights Primary School will address sun protection and UV safety education via:

- Programs on skin cancer prevention and vitamin D are included in the curriculum for all year levels.
- SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school homepage, parent meetings, staff meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and on student enrolment.

STAFF ROLE-MODELLING AND OHS

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

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

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.

UV radiation exposure is considered as part of our school's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities, i.e. UV radiation protection strategies are included in school camp activities, excursions, sports days and interschool sports events.

FAMILIES AND VISITORS

Families and visitors participating in and attending outdoor school activities are encouraged to:

- wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
- apply SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and
- seek shade whenever possible when outdoors.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Sun protection 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, students and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety at school and at home. Watsonia Heights Primary School may provide information through school assemblies, newsletters, Compass or our school website.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school’s website (or insert other online parent/carer/student communication method)
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Discussed in student forums
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library:
 - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
 - [Heat Health](#)
 - [Outdoor Activities and Working Outdoors](#)
 - [Risk Management – Schools](#)
 - [Shade Sails](#)
 - [Student Dress Code](#)
- [SunSmart and Cancer Council Victoria.](#)
 - [Primary schools free education resources, sample policies and information about the free SunSmart Schools Program.](#)
 - [Secondary schools free education resources and sample policies.](#)
 - [Sunscreen reactions.](#)
- The [Healthy Schools Achievement Program](#)’s Sun Protection health priority area [schools will need to register for the free program to gain access to these resources](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The School Council and staff regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy (at least once every three years) and revise the policy when required.

Policy last reviewed	February 2025
Approved by	School Council
Next scheduled review date	February 2028