



# Billanook Primary School

## SUNSMART POLICY



### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Billanook Primary School that minimise risk of 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 – April) and allow sun exposure when UV levels are below 3 (generally May – mid-August)
- 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 can cause health problems including sunburn, dehydration, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer.

Too little UV exposure from the sun can lead to low Vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy muscles and bones, and overall health.

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 - April)
- peaks during school hours

A combination of sun protection measures should be put in place from mid-August to the end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

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

To assist with the implementation of this policy, staff and students are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times via the [SunSmart widget](#) on the school'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. In Victoria, UV levels regularly reach 3 or higher from mid-August to the end of April.*

### **Shade**

Billanook Primary School will provide for 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 Billanook 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**

Billanook Primary School uniform and dress code includes sun-protective clothing, including:

- loose, cool, closely-woven fabric
- shirts with a collar
- tops with elbow length sleeves
- longer style shorts

At recess and lunch times from mid-August to April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, all students **must** wear a hat when playing outside.

Staff and students are encouraged to wear a hat that protects the face, neck and ears. Students are required to wear a school approved bucket style hat with the school logo. These are available through the school uniform shop. These hats will protect their face, neck and ears, whenever they are outside. Caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.

Students who may not be wearing appropriate protective clothing or a hat may be asked to play in the shade or in an undercover area.

### **Sunscreen**

- Billanook Primary School encourages all staff and students to apply SPF 30+ (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily at a minimum from mid-August to the end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors, and reapplied every two hours if necessary. The school supplies SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and students' to use when participating on excursion and sport activities
- Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g. reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies).

### **Engaging children, educators, 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 on student enrolment / new staff orientation.
- Typically from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria, as part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, staff, families and visitors are requested to:
  - wear a sun protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses
  - apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen
  - seek shade whenever possible.

UV radiation exposure is considered as part of a school's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities on and off-site e.g. UV radiation protection strategies (hats, clothing, shade, sunscreen) are included in school camp activities, excursions, sports days and interschool sports events.

### **Curriculum**

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices, and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure. Billanook Primary School will address sun, UV safety and Vitamin D education as part of Health and PE class.

Staff are encouraged to access resources, tools, and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun smart behaviour and Vitamin D education across the school community.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

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

## **REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION**

**This policy was last updated:** July 2021

**Evaluation and Review:** July 2024

**Approved by School Council:** July 2021