Billanook Primary School
SUN PROTECTION POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to support sun protection behaviours at Billanook Primary School to minimise risk of health problems from sun overexposure, including 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 to the 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.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities on and off-site, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

POLICY

Overexposure 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 day and the year (highest from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria)
- 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 or above. Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via the free SunSmart app, or at sunsmart.com.au or bom.gov.au.

Billanook Primary School has the following measures in place for all outdoor activities during the daily sun protection times to help reduce the risk of over-exposure to UV radiation for staff and students.

Shade

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

- where students congregate for lunch
- when moving between areas of the school
- popular play areas
- assembly areas

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 Billanook 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/clothing

Billanook Primary School's uniform includes sun-protective clothing, including:

- loose, cool, densely woven fabric
- shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
- tops with elbow length or long sleeves
- longer style shorts, dresses and skirts
- rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming activities.

Billanook Primary School's 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), Billanook Primary School will ensure steps are taken to encourage students to wear sun-protective clothing.

Hats

For all of Term 1 and Term 4 all students **must** wear a sun protective hat that protects the face, head, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hat, 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.

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 spend break times under the shade cloth in the courtyard area.

Sunscreen

Billanook 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).

Billanook Primary School students and staff are reminded and encouraged to bring their own SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to school. At major school events extra

sunscreen is provided in a public space for use by all staff and students. Sunscreen that is supplied by the school is stored below 30 degrees and the expiry date monitored.

Billanook Primary School has strategies in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors e.g. verbal reminders, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies, sunscreen stations near entry and exit points of events.

At Billanook Primary School, if students do not have their own sunscreen, they are welcome to attend the first aid room to access sunscreen.

Sunglasses

Where practical, Billanook 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

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices. They are supported to understand the effects of sun exposure and are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school. Billanook Primary School will address sun protection and UV safety education as part of our Health and PE curriculum.

Staff role-modelling and OHS

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. Billanook Primary School may provide information through newsletters, our school website and assemblies.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in electronic copies of the staff handbook
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions as appropriate
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- 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.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February 2025
Approved by	School Council
Next scheduled review date	February 2029