

SUN PROTECTION POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school on 5334 1302

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to support sun protection behaviours at Ballarat Specialist 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 outdoor 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 SunSmart app/website or at bom.gov.au.

While this policy refers to terms 1 and 4, staff and students are encouraged to be vigilant year-round.

Ballarat Specialist 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

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

- outdoor lesson areas
- popular play areas
- sporting grounds

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 Ballarat Specialist 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.

Hats

In terms 1 and 4, all students **must** wear a sun protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears for all outdoor activities. They are encouraged to wear hats between August and April. Hats may also be worn for all outdoor activities outside of the August to April time period by parent or student choice.

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

Ballarat Specialist School encourages all staff and students to apply SPF50 (or higher) 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).

Ballarat Specialist School supplies SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and students to use. Students who would like to use alternative sunscreen (due to allergies, sensory issues or other circumstances) supply their own. Sunscreen that is supplied by the school is stored below 30 degrees and the expiry date monitored. Teachers implement strategies to ensure that students wear sunscreen where they can and ask students to use available areas of shade if they are unwilling to put sunscreen on.

Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy and safe 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. Ballarat Specialist School will address sun protection and UV safety education as part of the curriculum where possible.

Staff role-modelling and OHS

Staff are expected to model hat and sunscreen usage whenever outdoors for longer than five minutes during terms 1 and 4.

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
- apply SPF50 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and
- seek shade whenever possible when outdoors.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school’s website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Reminders in our school newsletter

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](#).

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	08/23
Consultation	OHS committee and school council 08/23
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	08/25