



ACT
Government

Education

CHAPMAN PRIMARY SCHOOL P-6 SUNSMART – UV PROTECTION POLICY

Chapman Primary School P-6 SunSmart-UV Protection Policy

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Legislation: [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)

[Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011](#)

Related Policies: ACT EDU Sun (UV) Protection for Students (2015)

ACT Cancer Council UVR Protection Checklist for ACT Schools



1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. The ACT Education and Training Directorate (the Directorate) and Chapman Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility to ensure that adequate sun protection is provided for all students and workers, including pre-service teachers and volunteers. This applies while they are on school premises during school hours or undertaking outdoor school activities when Ultraviolet (UV) levels are 3 and above.
- 1.2. In Canberra sun protection is required for part or most of each day between August and May. The end of May is 'Hats Off Day' whilst the beginning of August is 'Hats on Again' for all of us.
- 1.3. Due to low (under 3) daily UV levels experienced in Canberra from June to July, ACT schools will not be required to enforce sun UV protection in this period. However sensible sun UV protection may still be warranted if spending extended period outdoors during these months i.e., at all day outdoor sporting events and excursions.
- 1.4. This policy refers specifically to students. However, for their own protection and under the current [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) all Directorate workers are required to follow this policy and guidelines developed by the school to reduce occupational UV exposure.
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- 1.6. Through the school's curriculum, students will be made aware of the healthy balance required between UV exposure, sun UV protection and vitamin D exposure across the year.
- 1.7. Students with no hat will be required to play in a well shaded area. This is informally known as 'No Hat Play in the Shade'.
- 1.8. In meeting their sun protection duty of care objectives, ACT primary schools are encouraged to join the Cancer Council's National Schools Program for policy support, resources, professional learning and training opportunities and to be acknowledged for their school's efforts in skin cancer control.
- 1.9. Information about the Cancer Council's [National Schools Program](#) can be obtained from [Cancer Council ACT's website](#). ACT primary schools can also view their current SunSmart status from the [Cancer Council ACT's website](#).

2. Rationale

- 2.1. It is important to have a healthy balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure. Over exposure of the sun can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. However, too little exposure to the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.
- 2.2. Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world. Over exposure to the sun during childhood and adolescence is known to be a major cause of skin cancer.
- 2.3. Chapman Primary School's SunSmart - UV Protection Policy has been developed to ensure that all students and staff attending the school are protected as far as reasonably practicable from skin damage caused by the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun.
- 2.4. This policy is implemented from the beginning of August to the end of May. This is when daily UV levels reach 3 and above in Canberra.
- 2.5. This policy aims to protect students and workers, as far as reasonably practicable, from the dangers associated with over-exposure to the sun's UV.
- 2.6. Australia has amongst the highest rate of skin cancer in the world – at least 2 in 3 Australians will develop skin cancer before the age of 70. Exposure to UV is a major contributory factor in the development of skin cancer.
- 2.7. UV comes both from direct and indirect sunlight, it is also scattered in the atmosphere. UV is also reflected from surrounding surfaces such as water, sand, concrete and snow. High levels of radiation are received in wide open areas where there is no shade, such as school ovals, even on a cloudy day.
- 2.8. UV levels reach 3 and above in Canberra for part or most of each day between August and May which warrant sensible sun protection during this part of the year.
- 2.9. In Canberra annual UV levels peak during the daylight saving/summer period between 11am and 3pm. Chapman Primary School will therefore aim to reduce time outdoors during this period, or otherwise take particular care if outdoors during this peak UV period i.e., seek shade at all times.
- 2.10. Sun UV protection is recommended at all ages, as the risk of developing skin cancer risk is reduced at whichever age sun protection is used.
- 2.11. Childhood and adolescence are critical periods during which exposure to UV radiation is more likely to contribute to skin cancer in later life, including melanoma. UV exposure during the first 18 years of a person's life is the most critical risk factor for skin cancer, and also causes skin damage and premature ageing. This is important to remember in the secondary school setting.
- 2.12. Most Australians receive the bulk of their Vitamin D supply from exposing their skin to small amounts of UV in sunlight most days of the week. Due to low levels (under 3) of UV in Canberra during the winter months, Cancer Council ACT does not generally recommend sun UV protection in June and July. This is to reduce the risk of Vitamin D deficiency in the ACT region.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. **Duty of Care:** legal duty of care requires that teachers and workers should take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety of a school student under their care. This duty of care will arise whenever a student/teacher-worker relationship exists.
- 3.2. **Parents/Carers:** people with parental responsibility and guardians.

3.3. **Workers:** teachers and staff employed by the Directorate.

3.4. **Sensible:** covering as much skin as possible from UV levels.

3.5. **Sunburn:** a radiation burn to the skin.

3.6. **UV or UVR:** Ultraviolet Radiation

4. Legislation

4.1. The main objective of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) and [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011](#) is to protect workers, students and visitors against harm to their health, safety and welfare through the elimination or minimisation of risks as reasonably practicable.

5. Procedures

5.1. Chapman Primary School Guideline Development

- Chapman Primary School must develop and adhere to sun UV protection guidelines that comply with this policy using Attachment A, UVR Protection Checklist for Schools - Cancer Council ACT as a guide. The information contained in this attachment is consistent with Cancer Council ACT's National Schools Program recommendations:
- Sun UV protection guidelines at Chapman Primary School must be developed in consultation with the school community and the School Board
- Parents must be informed of the school's sun UV protection guidelines. This may be achieved by publishing the guidelines in the school handbook and school newsletters. Parents should also be informed that a full copy of the Directorates Sun UV Protection Policy is available for inspection at the school.
- Chapman Primary School actively promotes positive sun UV protection behaviour and attitudes via school newsletters, website, school events and assemblies.
- Chapman Primary School will be required to review their sun UV protection guidelines at least once every 3 years.
- Schools with national SunSmart status will be required to submit a copy of their current guidelines to Cancer Council ACT. The school guidelines will be updated, if required, to maintain national SunSmart standards and best practice.

5.2. Protective Clothing and Hats

- Children and staff are required to wear a SunSmart hat - broad-brimmed, Legionnaire or bucket with deep crown style - that provides sun protection for the face, neck and ears, when they are involved in outdoor activities between August and May. Children not wearing an appropriate SunSmart hat will be required to play in the shade.
- Sunhat cords can become caught and prove a strangulation risk to children playing on fixed playground equipment. Chapman Primary School advised parents either to purchase hats with safety cords designed to break under minimal strain or remove cords from sunhats altogether.
- Chapman Primary school supports the wearing of sun protective clothing. Children and staff are encouraged to wear loose fitting, closely woven cotton fabric collared shirts with a minimum elbow length sleeves and longer style shorts/skirts under WH&S requirements.
- Children must wear a UV Protection standard rash vest ('rashie') or t-shirt when attending outdoor swimming events.

- Parents will be advised on enrolment of the Chapman Primary School sun protective standard of clothing requirement.

5.3. Sunscreen

- Chapman Primary School actively supports and promotes the daily use of broad-spectrum, water-resistant SPF 30+ or higher sunscreen on exposed skin that cannot be protected by clothing and uniform.
- Chapman Primary School will consider effective strategies that will allow for both students and workers to wear broad-spectrum, water-resistant SPF 30+ sunscreen throughout the day.
- Parents are encouraged to supply SPF 30 or higher, broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen as part of their child's school equipment.
- Chapman Primary School encourages parents/carers to support students in applying sunscreen at home before leaving for school and to pack a supply of sunscreen appropriate for their child's needs, in their school bag to reapply throughout the day due to allergies.
- Where practicable, children will be given opportunities and reminders to apply sunscreen themselves prior to outdoor breaks and activities. Staff will exercise judgement as to whether some students, for example, younger children, should be supervised or assisted when applying sunscreen.
- Chapman Primary School will notify parents/carers about the use of sunscreen at the school on enrolment and annually.
- Chapman Primary School will make a supply of 30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen accessible to all students and workers via all classrooms and made available for use at outdoor activities.
- Chapman Primary School will inform parents/carers at the beginning of the school year that there may be occasions when workers will need to apply sunscreen to children. Parents/carers will be requested to notify the school in writing if they do not wish sunscreen to be applied to their child; if their child has a sensitivity to or is allergic to sunscreen. Parents/carers have the option of providing hypoallergenic sunscreen for their children.

5.4. Role Modelling

- Staff will act as role models by:
 - Wearing sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses (if possible) outside.
 - Applying SPF 30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen.
 - Seeking shade whenever possible.

5.5. Environment at Chapman Primary School

- **Shade**
 - Staff and children will be encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside. Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing will be asked to play in the shade.
 - The school will work to ensure there are appropriate shelters and trees providing adequate shade in the grounds.
 - Scheduling of Activities

- Where possible, minimise time spent outdoors between 11.00am and 3.00pm (during daylight saving time i.e., Terms 1 and 4) when annual UV levels peak in Canberra.
- Consideration will be given when planning of all day outdoor events such as athletic and swimming carnivals or excursions so events will not occur during peak UV period of the year (August to May) when the risk of sunburn is significantly increased.
- Where possible, outdoor activities and excursions will be scheduled before 11.00am daylight saving time.
- Assemblies will be held indoor, under shade of at the lower UV times of the day.
- Children’s lunch and recess eating times and indoor activities will be scheduled between 11.00am and 3.00pm daylight saving time to avoid peak UV exposure levels.
- Where possible, all outdoor activities held between 11.00am and 3.00pm daylight time will be held in shaded areas.
- **SunSmart Widget**
 - Chapman Primary School displays the SunSmart Widget on its website homepage to assist our school community with daily sun protection times in Canberra.

5.6. Curriculum

- Reinforcing the SunSmart message in school activities and procedures is an important strategy in the adoption of normalising skin protection behaviours.
 - Staff will be required to role model appropriate SunSmart strategies.
 - Staff will complete Teacher SunSmart PL online modules and keep up-to-date with new information and resources, available at Cancer Council ACT website. Upon completion, staff will receive a Certificate of Completion to be acknowledged by the School and by the Cancer Council.
 - Skin cancer prevention will be included in appropriate teaching activities across all year levels.
 - Parents will be encouraged to role model appropriate SunSmart strategies when attending the school.
 - The school will promote the SunSmart message to parents/carers via the school newsletter and website.

6. Evaluation Review

- 6.1. The policy will be evaluated on an ongoing basis and formally reviewed every two years.
- 6.2. As a member of the National SunSmart Schools Program this policy will also be submitted to Cancer Council ACT to be reviewed every 3 years. This policy will be updated, if necessary, to maintain high SunSmart standards for ACT primary school settings. Chapman Primary Schools next SunSmart Review will be in March 2024.

7. Work Health & Safety

- 7.1. Our teachers and school staff are aware of their shared responsibilities and duty of care to protect their skin and eyes as much as reasonably practicable from potentially dangerous occupational UV exposure.

8. Procedure Owner

8.1. Director, People and Performance

8.2. For support in relation to this procedure contact People and Performance on 02 6025 9202

9. Related Documents

9.1. The following documents must be read in reference to the information provided in this procedure document.

- [Cancer Council Generation SunSmart Professional Learning online modules](#)
- [National Schools Program](#)
- [Personal Protection Equipment Procedure](#)

10. Feedback

10.1. Any concerns about the application of this policy or the policy itself, should be raised with:

- The school principal in the first instance.
- The Directorate's Liaison Unit on (02) 6205 5429.
- Online at http://www.det.act.gov.au/contact_us;
- See also the Complaints Policy on the Directorate's website