

Mallee Track Health and Community Service

Title: Sun Protection Policy

Manual: Early Years Manual (merged Preschool and Child Care)

Scope: This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Licensee, Nominated Supervisor, Primary Nominee, Certified Supervisor, Approved Nominee, Accepted Nominee, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of MTHCS Education and Care services.

Responsible Position: Director of Community Services

1. OUTCOME
This policy will provide:
Guidelines to ensure that children, educators, volunteers and others participating in Education and Care programs **remain protected against extra UV radiation exposure.**
Information for parents/guardians, educators, volunteers and children attending Education and Care programs regarding **protection against UV radiation exposure.**

2. Background:
Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Young children and babies have sensitive skin and are therefore more vulnerable to sunburn and skin damage. Exposure to the sun's UV during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer in later life.
It is important to note that too little UV from 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. Appropriate levels of sun exposure can vary from child to child. It is a requirement under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 that employers provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the service's facilities and/or programs.
Legislation that governs the operation of approved children's services is based on the health, safety and welfare of the children and requires that children are protected from hazards and harm.
Sun protection measures are used for all outdoor activities during the daily local sun protection times (issued whenever UV levels are 3 and above), typically from August to May in North West Victoria. During this period a combination of sun protection measures are to be used for all outdoor activities. NB: Manangatang Preschool has opted to wear sunhats for the whole of the year.

3. Purpose:
This Sun Smart policy provides guidelines to:

- Ensure all children, educators and staff have some UV exposure for vitamin D.
- Ensure all children, educators and staff are well protected from too much UV exposure by using a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.
- Ensure the outdoor environment is sun safe and provides shade for children, educators and staff.
- Ensure children are encouraged and supported to understand the need for and to develop independent sun protection skills.
- Support duty of care and regulatory requirements
- Support appropriate OHS strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harm for educators, staff and visitors.

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4. DEFINITIONS

Clothing for sun protection: Clothing that is loose-fitting, made from cool, densely woven fabric and covers as much skin as possible: tops with elbow-length sleeves and, if possible, collars and knee-length or longer-style shorts and skirts. Singlet tops and shoestring tops/dresses do not provide adequate protection in the sun.

Shade: An area sheltered from direct and indirect sun, such as a large tree, canopy or artificial cover.

Sunglasses: Sunglasses are optional. If worn, it is recommended that glasses are a close fitting, wrap-around style that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

Sunscreen: SPF 30 or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen. Sunscreen should be reapplied every two hours, even when labelled 4 hours water resistant. Monitor the expiry date and store in a cool, dry place.

Sun Smart: The name of the program conducted by Cancer Council Victoria to promote an awareness of the need to provide sun protection: www.sunsmart.com.au

Sun Hat: To protect the neck, ears, temples, face and nose, Sun Smart recommends broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket-style hats. Baseball caps and visors offer little protection to the cheeks, ears and neck, and are not recommended.

5. PROCEDURE

5.1 The Approved Provider/Licensee is responsible for:

- Maintaining membership of the Sun Smart early childhood program.
- Ensuring that this policy is up to date with current Sun Smart recommendations: www.sunsmart.com.au
- Ensuring parents/guardians are informed about the Sun Protection Policy on enrolment, including the need to provide an appropriate sun hat **if applicable** and clothing for sun protection for their child when attending the service.
- Ensuring parents/guardians provide an authority for staff to apply sunscreen prior to their child commencing at the service (included in the enrolment form for the service).
- Ensuring that there is a supply of sunscreen for use by all persons to whom this policy applies.
- Ensuring there is adequate shade in the service grounds to protect children from overexposure to UV radiation (Regulation 114).
- Ensuring that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events (Regulations 100, 101).
- Ensuring that information on sun protection is incorporated into the educational program (refer to the Sun Smart website).
- Ensuring educators, staff, children and other participants at the service wear sunhats, clothing for sun protection and sunglasses (optional) when outside, apply sunscreen and seek shade during the times specified.

5.2 The Nominated Supervisor/Primary Nominee/ Responsible Person is responsible for:

- Ensuring parents/guardians are informed of the Sun Protection Policy on enrolment, including the need to provide an appropriate sun hat **if applicable** and clothing for sun protection for their child when attending the service.
- Obtaining a parent's/guardian's authority for staff to apply sunscreen prior to their child commencing at the service (this is part of the enrolment form at the service).

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- Ensuring program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during the times specified.
- Ensuring practices consider the special needs of infants and non-ambulant children. All babies less than 12 months and non-ambulant children are kept out of direct sun when UV levels are three and above.
- **Physical protection such as shade, clothing and broad-brimmed hats are the best sun protection measures. If babies are kept out of the sun or well protection from UV radiation by clothing, hats and shade, then sunscreen need only be used occasionally on very small areas of a baby's skin. The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended.**
- Ensuring practices consider children who are unable / adverse to wearing sun protection. Strategies will be individualised to the child's medical needs or developmental level but will have the long term goal for the child to be able to practice sun smart protective behaviours. Such a situation should be discussed with parent/guardian prior to the child commencing at the service.
- Ensuring that children without appropriate sun protection are guided to accept spare clothing hats and sunscreen or that they play in the shade while outside.
- To help develop independent skills, children are given opportunities and encouraged to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of parents / staff.
- Ensuring the sun protection times on the Sun Smart website are accessed to assist with the implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring information on sun protection and vitamin D is incorporated into the educational program (refer to the Sun Smart website).
- Ensuring that program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during the times specified.
- Ensuring that the service provides a supply of sunscreen for use on all persons to whom this policy applies.
- Ensuring the Sun Smart policy is reinforced through educator and children's activities and displays
- Ensuring all staff provide a role model for children and other adults by fully complying with this policy e.g. wearing sun hats, clothing for sun protection (refer to Definitions) and close-fitting wrap-around sunglasses (optional, where practical) when outside, applying sunscreen and seeking shade during the times specified.
- Checking that all sun hats brought to the service meet the Sun Smart recommendation for adequate protection, are named and stored individually
- Storing sunscreen in a cool place and monitoring the expiry date – including for sunscreen supplied by parents/guardians.
- Ensuring children wear appropriate sun hats, clothing for sun protection and sunscreen when attending the service. Note - a free suitable sun hat is provided to all **child care children and to all** kindergarten children at Sea Lake and Ouyen Kindergartens with Ouyen Pre K children and Manangatang Kindergarten families providing their own. Spare hats are available if needed. **Spare hats are available if needed.**
- Ensuring that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events (Regulations 100, 101).
- Reinforcing this policy by providing information on sun protection (available on the Sun Smart website) to service users via newsletters, noticeboards, meetings and/or websites etc.
- Encouraging children to wear sun hats when travelling to and from the service
- Consulting with children, families and other staff as to the effectiveness of this policy, and to contribute to a policy review when needed.

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- Co-operating with their employer with respect to any action taken by the employer to comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004.

5.3 Certified Supervisors/Approved and Accepted Nominees and other educators are responsible for:

- Supporting the implementation of this policy.
- Providing a role model for children and other adults by fully complying with this policy ensuring each child, and any other participant at the service, wears an appropriate sunhat, clothing for sun protection, sunscreen and, where practical and preferred, close-fitting wraparound sunglasses for all outdoor activities during the times specified.
- Checking that all sunhats brought to the service meet the Sun Smart recommendation for adequate protection, are named and stored individually.
- Ensuring practices consider the special needs of infants and non-ambulant children. All babies less than 12 months and non-ambulant children are kept out of direct sun when UV levels are three and above.
- Ensuring spare sun hats are laundered after each use.
- Applying sunscreen to children's exposed skin – except in cases where parents/guardians have not given authority. Where possible this should be done 20 minutes before going outdoors.
- Storing sunscreen in a cool place and monitoring the expiry date – including for sunscreen supplied by parents/guardians.
- Ensuring that children without appropriate sun protection are guided to accept spare clothing and/or hats and sunscreen or that they play in the shade while outside.
- Encouraging children to seek shade when playing outside and utilise shaded areas for outdoor equipment that is not fixed during the times specified in the scope of this policy.
- Encouraging children to wear sunhats when travelling to and from the service.
- Co-operating with their employer with respect to any action taken by the employer to comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004.

5.4 Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

- Reading this policy and alerting the service (and providing appropriate documentation if applicable) to their child's individual needs regarding sun protection and Sun smart behaviours, if appropriate.
- Providing a named, Sun Smart approved sun hat for their child's use at the service if required.
- Applying sunscreen to their child or encouraging children to apply their own sunscreen before the commencement of each session during the times specified and at other given opportunities. This is to help develop independent skills and healthy patterns of behaviour.
- Providing written authority for staff to apply sunscreen to their child. providing, at their own expense, an alternative sunscreen to be left at the service if their child has a particular sensitivity to the sunscreen provided by the service.
- Wearing a sun hat, clothing for sun protection and sunglasses (optional) when outside at the service, applying sunscreen and seeking shade during the times specified.

Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

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- 6. Evaluation:**
In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:
- Regularly seek feedback from educators, staff, parents/guardians, children, management and all affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness.
 - Monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy.
 - Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice.
 - Revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required.
 - Notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy or its procedures.

Forms & Records:

- [Enrolment Form](#)
- [Orientation Checklist Staff / Parent](#)
- [Parent Handbook](#)
- [Daily Needs Chart](#)
- [Excursion Risk Assessment Checklist](#)

Related MTHCS Policy / Procedure:

- [Interactions with Children Policy](#)
- [Safe Environment Policy](#)
- [Physical Activity Promotion Policy](#)
- [Excursions and Service Events Policy](#)
- [Occupational Health & Safety Policy](#) Early Years

Sources / References:

Cancer Council Australia: www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart
 Sun Smart: www.sunsmart.com.au
 Healthy Together - Achievement Program
 AS 4174:2018 Knitted and woven shade fabrics
 AS/NZS 1067.1:2016 Eye and face protection – sunglasses and fashion spectacles
 AS/NZS 4399:2017 Sun protective clothing – evaluation and classification
 AS/NZS 2604:2012 Sunscreen products – evaluation and classification
 Australian Government Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA)

Legislation:

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for Children)
 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, section 167
 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 100, 113, 114, 168(2)(a)(ii)
 Children's Services Act 1996
 Children's Service Regulations 2009
 Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Standards:

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)
 National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
 Standard 2.3: Each child is protection
 Element 2.3.2: Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury
 National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)

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Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)
ISO 9001:2015 – 8.5, 7.5.3

MTHCS Early Years Services operate over two different regulatory requirements, Education and Care National Regulations 2011 and Children’s Services Regulations 2009, differentiating Kindergarten services from Child Care Subsidy services. To reduce the list of Policies and Procedures produced, MTHCS Early Years Services have combined these documents. Delegations will only be referenced under the Education and Care National Regulations 2011, however this would be equivalent to the same delegation as the Children’s Services Regulations 2009 as needed but not stated.

Education and Care National Regulations 2011	Children’s Services Regulations 2009
The Approved Provider or Persons with Management and Control	The Licensee
The Nominated Supervisor or Persons in Day to Day Charge	Primary Nominee
Certified Supervisors	Approved Nominee or Accepted Nominee