

Sun Protection (Students) Policy

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This policy follows the authority provided in Australian National Standards for Eye and Face Protection; Playground equipment and surfacing and Sun Protective Clothing; and was written in consultation with Cancer Council Victoria's SunSmart Program.

The Hazard - Sun Exposure

Too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun causes sunburn, skin damage and increases the risk of skin cancer. Sun exposure in the first 15 years of life contributes significantly to the lifetime risk of developing skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Skin cancers account for 80% of all new cancers diagnosed in Australia each year. Melanoma is the most diagnosed cancer for 15 – 44-year olds.

Firbank Grammar's Policy

Firbank Grammar is committed to providing a safe environment for all our students, workers and visitors.

It is our policy to:

- increase student and community awareness about skin cancer and sun protection
- encourage the entire School community to use a combination of sun protection measures
- work towards a safe school environment that provides shade for students, staff and the School community
- assist students to be responsible for their own sun protection
- ensure that families and new staff are informed of this policy
- support student duty of care requirements
- support appropriate workplace safety strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harms for staff and visitors.

Sun Protection Strategies

Firbank Grammar has developed the following sun protection strategies:

General

Staff and students check the daily local sun protection times. This is added to our school homepage and daily bulletin. The sun protection times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology for the time of day that UV levels are forecast to reach three or above. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types.

All students and staff use a combination of sun protection measures throughout the day whenever UV levels are three or above to ensure they are well protected at the appropriate times. UV levels are typically 3 and above from mid-August to the end of April.

Active outdoor play is encouraged throughout the day all year, provided appropriate sun protection measures are used when UV is 3 and above.

Shade

The School ensures there is sufficient shelter and trees providing shade in the school grounds particularly in areas where students congregate (e.g. lunch areas, canteen, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas).

Sun Protection (Students) Policy

Shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.

Playgrounds should be designed with areas of effective summer shade from either trees or built elements, or both. Playgrounds which comply with Australian Standard AS 4685.0:2017, Playground equipment and surfacing - Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation, are encouraged but optional.

The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and outdoor activities. Students are actively encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside. Students who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to stay in an area protected from the sun.

Hats

Students are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears whenever they are outside. A "No Hat, No Play" rule will be enforced (Junior School). Hats are required from mid August to the end of April.

Senior School students are required to wear hats during sports classes and excursions from mid August to the end of April. Recommended sun-safe hats include legionnaire, broad-brimmed and bucket hats. Baseball caps offer limited protection.

Students who do not have an appropriate sun protective hat will be asked to stay in shaded areas only.

Sunscreen

The School supplies SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and student's use. Parents/carers are also responsible for providing students with their own SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to be used while at school or participating in school activities.

Sunscreen is applied in accordance with the manufacturer's directions, and at least 20 minutes before going outdoors. Sunscreen should be reapplied at least every two hours, and more frequently when participating in sport, swimming and after towel drying. Time will be allocated for sunscreen application prior to outdoor activities.

Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g. reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies).

Sunglasses

Close-fitting wrap-around sunglasses that comply with Australian Standards AS/NZS 1067.1 2016, Eye and face protection - Sunglasses and fashion spectacles, Part 1: Requirements (Sunglasses :lens category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible are encouraged but optional.

Role Modelling

Staff act as role models by using a combination of sun protection measures as outlined above when the UV level is 3 or above. Families and visitors are also encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, sunglasses and sunscreen) when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.

Sun Protection (Students) Policy

Curriculum

Sun protection and skin cancer awareness programs are incorporated into appropriate areas of the School curriculum. Students are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole School community.

Sun safe behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole School community through newsletters, School public website, parent meetings, staff meetings, School assemblies, student and teacher activities and on student enrolment.

Uniform

Sun protective clothing is included in the School uniform/dress code and sports uniform. This includes clothing with:

- elbow length sleeves
- shirts and tops that cover shoulders, with a collar that sits close to the neck, above the collarbone
- appropriate hats
- appropriate gloves and other accessories (where required for the activity)
- appropriate sunglasses
- other appropriate sun protective clothing.

Sun protective clothing with a UPF rating, in compliance with Australian Standard AS/NZS 4399:2017, Sun protective clothing – Evaluation and classification, is encouraged but optional.

Scheduling and Planning

Sun protection is considered when planning all outdoor events (e.g. assemblies, camps, excursions and sporting events). Before commencing an inter-state excursion, the organising staff will check the daily local sun protection times of the relevant state/territory and continue to monitor these times for the duration of the excursion.

Implementation

This policy is implemented through a combination of:

- staff and student training and awareness of issues relating to skin and safe sun exposure
- implementation of sun protection measures
- effective notification procedures
- effective communication procedures
- effective record keeping procedures
- initiation of corrective actions where necessary.

Review

Firbank Grammar is committed to the continuous review and improvement of all its operations, including this policy. It is the responsibility of the H&S Co-ordinator to regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the Sun Protection Policy to ensure it is working in practice, and revise the policy when required.

Sun Protection (Students) Policy

External Resources

SunSmart <http://www.sunsmart.com.au>

Cancer Council www.cancer.org.au

UV and Sun Protection Times <http://www.sunsmart.com.au/uv-sun-protection>

ARPANSA: Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation
<https://www.arpansa.gov.au/regulation-and-licensing/regulatory-publications/radiation-protection-series/codes-and-standards/rps12>

Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) Australian regulatory guidelines for sunscreens
<https://www.tga.gov.au/publication/australian-regulatory-guidelines-sunscreens-args>

Generation SunSmart – free online training modules for staff and senior students
<https://www.generationsunsmart.com.au/>