



Bentleigh West Primary School

SUNSMART POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Bentleigh West Primary School that reflect a healthy UV exposure balance, ensuring some sun exposure for vitamin D while minimising the risk of 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 September – April) and allow sun exposure when UV levels are below 3 (generally May – August)
- 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, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

Policy

A balance of sun exposure is important for health. Excessive exposure to the sun can cause health problems including sunburn, dehydration, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer.

Too little UV exposure from the sun can lead to low Vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy muscles and bones, and overall health.

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 year (highest in Victoria from September - April)
- peaks during school hours

A combination of sun protection measures should be put in place from September to the end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

Bentleigh West Primary School **has** the following measures in place to help reduce the risk of excessive UV sun exposure for staff and students.

Shade

The School Council will, as practicable, ensure there are sufficient and adequate shade structures and trees for students (particularly over high density play areas and areas where students congregate, such as lunch areas, sand pits and play equipment).

In consultation with the School Council, shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.

The availability of shade is considered when planning all other outdoor activities and excursions. Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.

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

- where students congregate for lunch
- the canteen
- outdoor lesson areas
- popular play areas
- assembly areas
- sporting grounds/pools.

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Bentleigh West Primary School that may impact on the level of shading available to staff and students, a review of the shaded areas available will be conducted and further shading installed as appropriate.

General

Whenever possible, outside activities on hot days should be scheduled before 11:00am.

The school newsletter and school assemblies will be used to highlight, promote and reinforce the SunSmart Policy and SunSmart behaviour generally.

SunSmart activities and sun protection will form part of the Health and Physical Education curriculum at all year levels.

Sun protective uniform/clothing

This policy is to be read as part of our Uniform Policy. Sun protective clothing is included in our school uniform / dress code and sports uniform.

Students are to wear a school approved SunSmart broad brimmed or legionnaire hats during Terms 1 & 4 whenever they are outside. Children without a school-approved hat will be required to play in designated shaded areas.

Staff will act as role models by also wearing acceptable hats when outside.

Bentleigh West Primary School's school uniform and dress code includes sun-protective clothing, including:

- loose, cool, closely-woven fabric
- shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
- tops with elbow length or long sleeves

- longer style shorts and skirts
- rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming activities.

Sunscreen

Bentleigh West Primary School encourages all staff and students to apply SPF 30+ (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily at a minimum from September to the end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors, and reapplied every two hours if necessary.

Sunscreen should be applied at home before school. Teachers will not apply sunscreen to students.

Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g. reminder notifications). Students should be able to apply their own sunscreen and should be reminded to reapply sunscreen

Staff and families should role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF 30+ (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside from September to the end of April or whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices, and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure.

Staff are encouraged to access resources, tools, and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun smart behaviour and Vitamin D education across the school community.

Engaging students, staff and families

Families and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety and Vitamin D education at school and at home. Bentleigh West Primary School may provide families and staff with information through newsletters, the school website and assemblies.

Legislation and Standards

- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*: Section 5.10.1(2) and Sch.5 Clause 1.2

Further Information and Resources

- School Policy Advisory Guide:
 - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
 - [Duty of care](#)
- <http://www.sunsmart.com.au/communities/early-childhood-primary-schools>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/sun.aspx>
- <http://www.cancer.org.au>

Review Cycle

This policy was last updated in December 2018 and is scheduled for review in November 2022.