



Education &
Communities

Public Schools NSW

Sun Safety for Students

Guidelines

Sun Safety for Students Guidelines support the Student Health in NSW Public Schools policy and are designed to be read in conjunction with the student health section of the Department's public schools website.

Standard

Families, schools and communities share responsibility for the health, safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people in their care. The school community, including families, work together to take all reasonable actions to protect students from risks of harm that can be reasonably predicted due to ultraviolet radiation from the sun.

Drivers

Planning and implementing effective action on sun safety in NSW public schools and preschools:

- assists to provide a safe environment for students and staff by reducing exposure to ultraviolet radiation and increasing adoption of evidence-based sun safe strategies
- assists schools and preschools to make a significant contribution to reducing the incidence and burden of later skin cancer and related skin damage in children and young people.

Assessment criteria

Schools are strongly encouraged to consider all of the following when assessing their sun safety practices:

- The school community implements a comprehensive range of sun safe strategies.
- Sun safety is promoted as a health and safety issue rather than as a matter of discipline.
- The school curriculum and preschool curriculum framework include intentional teaching about the need for sun safety across year levels.
- Families, staff and other school community members support each other in developing and implementing the school's sun safe strategies and these are promoted to students and the wider school community.
- Where appropriate, the School Plan, school policies, procedures and resources include sun safe strategies and opportunities for collaborative action with students, families and other community members.

- Strategies are in place to increase the understanding of staff and other school community members about evidence-based sun safe strategies.
- Staff, families and visitors model sun safe behaviours.
- Shade (natural and/or built) is available in the places where students congregate at recess and lunch and where outdoor teaching takes place.
- Sun safe strategies are implemented in peak ultraviolet radiation times¹ for outdoor activities, including physical activity, physical education, carnivals, excursions and sport. This includes scheduling outdoor activities in the shade or outside of peak ultraviolet radiation times where possible.
- Age and developmentally appropriate sun safe strategies such as 'No hat, stay in the shade' are implemented.
- Students and preschool children understand why sun safety is important and take effective action to protect themselves such as wearing sun safe clothing including hats² and sunglasses³, seeking shade during peak ultraviolet times during the school day, and wearing SPF 30+ (or above) broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen.
- The school and sports uniforms are effective in minimising exposure to ultraviolet radiation and include a sun safe hat² that students are encouraged to wear.

Approaches to support the planning and implementation of comprehensive sun safety

- Regularly review the provision of sun safe strategies at the school. The [Sun Safety for Students Checklist](#) and [Action Plan](#) can assist schools.
- Implement the Cancer Council's [SunSmart Primary School Program](#) and [SunSmart Childcare Program](#). These programs can support schools to implement comprehensive sun safety in line with best practice.
- Include sun safe hats² in the school and sports uniform and phase out hat styles that are not sun safe (such as baseball caps) if currently a school or sports uniform option.
- Select sun safe clothing styles for the school and sports uniform such as shirts with collars.
- Support the use of at least a SPF 30+ broad-spectrum and water resistant sunscreen to students and preschool children for outdoor activities including recess and lunch breaks.
- Review timetables to minimise outdoor activity during peak ultraviolet radiation times¹ or use indoor venues where possible.
- Communicate with the school community about sun safety, for example, through school website, newsletters, annual report, enrolment package.
- Provide information to families and staff on modelling sun safe behaviours.
- Provide professional learning for staff to raise awareness of, and to support the inclusion of, sun safe principles in teaching programs across the Key Learning Areas and the Early Learning Framework (preschools).
- Conduct a shade assessment to assist in the prioritisation of shade requirements and aid in the selection of the most suitable solution for the school.
- Encourage the wearing of sunglasses that provide protection to the eyes³.

¹ Health authorities recommend that sun protection is required when the ultraviolet index is 3 or above. The times when the ultraviolet index in NSW is usually below 3 is before 10am Eastern Standard Time or 11am daylight saving time and after 2pm Eastern Standard Time or 3pm daylight saving time and all day during June and July. During these two months the ultraviolet index is likely to be low with the exception of environments at high altitudes or near reflective surfaces like water or snow.

² [Sun safe hats](#) are hats that protect the head, neck and ears. Baseball caps are not recommended for sun protection.

³ Sunglasses that meet [Australian Standard 1067:2003 Sunglasses and fashion spectacles](#) will provide the most eye protection.

Optional support tools and a range of information sheets are available to assist schools. These include:

- [Sun Safety for Students Checklist](#) and [Sun Safety for Students Action Plan](#)
- [Sun Safety for Students information sheets](#):
 - Clothing and uniforms
 - Information for schools with preschool classes
 - Outdoor activities
 - Shade
 - Sun safety and the curriculum
 - Sunscreen
 - Whole school strategies and community engagement.

Policy links

[Excursion Policy](#)

[Guidelines for the Safe Conduct of Sport and Physical Activity in Schools](#)

[School Uniform Policy](#)

[Student Health in NSW Public Schools: A summary and consolidation of policy](#)

[Sun shade in schools](#) (DEC intranet only)

Related links

[Cancer Council NSW](#)

[Early Years Learning Framework](#)

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)

[NSW Skin Cancer Prevention Strategic Plan 2012-15](#)