

## SunSmart Policy

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Rockbank Primary School to minimise the risk of skin and eye damage and 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 mid-August – end of April)
- 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

Excessive exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause health problems including sunburn, damage to skin and eyes, and skin cancer. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer in later life.

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 mid-August – end of April)
- peaks during school hours

Sun safety is a shared responsibility and staff, parents and students are encouraged to implement a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 and above (typically from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria). Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via the free SunSmart app, or at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au) or [bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au). The sun protection times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology for the time of day UV levels are forecast to reach 3 or higher. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types.

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

Shade

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

- where students congregate to eat

- outdoor lesson areas
- playground
- assembly areas

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

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Rockbank 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.

Sun protective uniform/clothing

Rockbank 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

From mid-August to the end of April all staff and students **must** wear a school sun protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears for all outdoor activities. Hats may also be worn for all outdoor activities outside of mid-August to end of April parent or student choice. Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or a hat will be asked to move to the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun.

Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.

Sunscreen

Rockbank Primary School encourages all staff and students to apply their own SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily from mid-August 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, or more frequently if sweating or swimming, according to [manufacturer's instructions](#).

There are strategies in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g. newsletter reminder notices,).

Staff and families should role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside.

Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices, and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure. Rockbank Primary School will address sun and UV safety education as part of our Health and Physical Education inquiry unit for all year levels.

Staff are encouraged to access resources, tools, and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun smart behaviour across the school community. Resources can be sourced at <https://www.sunsmart.com.au/communities/early-childhood-schools/resources-schools-early-childhood/primary-school-resources>

## Further Information and Resources

- School Policy Advisory Guide:
  - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
  - [Duty of care](#)
- [SunSmart](#)