

Title	Sun Protection Policy
Description of policy	This policy provides guidance to assist Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn schools, Early Learning Centres (ELCs), and School Aged Care Centres (SACs) to protect students and workers from the dangers associated with over-exposure to the sun and UV rays.
Required because	UV policy is required for school and ELC registration.
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1. Summary

- 1.1 This policy provides guidance to assist Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn schools, early learning centres (ELCs), and school aged care centres (SACs) to protect students and workers from the dangers associated with over-exposure to the sun and UV rays.
- 1.2 This policy is adapted from the Sun Smart sample UV protection policies for schools and early childhood.

2. Sun Protection Policy

- 2.1 Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, with two in three Australians developing some form of skin cancer before the age of 70. Most skin cancers can be prevented by limiting exposure, achieved by using appropriate sun protection measures. The sun's UV radiation is the major cause of skin cancer.
- 2.2 Given school, ELC and SAC hours span the period of the day during which UV levels are at their peak, this policy intends to assist our schools, ELCs and SACs to adopt healthy UV practices.
- 2.3 Physical protection such as shade, clothing and broad-brimmed hats are the best sun protection measures and should be implemented in the first instance. Sunscreen is a secondary measure and should only be used in combination with physical protection strategies which limit actual exposure. Time spent exposed to the sun should be limited wherever possible, and particularly during Spring and Summer where UV emissions are generally at their highest.

Infants

- 2.4 CECG's SunSmart practices consider the special needs of infants. All babies under 12 months should be kept out of direct sun when UV levels are 3 or higher. 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 protected 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.

3. Implementation

- 3.1 The Procedures below are the minimum standard applied and sun protection measures should be applied from August through May (all year except June-July). Schools, ELCs and SACs may apply additional measures (e.g. monitoring indicated daily UV levels and only applying sun protection measures when the UV index is 3 or higher).

4. Procedures

Hats

- 4.1 Students are required to wear broad-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire hats that protect their face, neck and ears, whenever they are outside.
- 4.2 While the sun protection policy is in force, schools, ELCs and SACs will apply a 'no hat-shade play' policy so children without hats avoid direct sun exposure.

School Uniforms

- 4.3 The summer and winter school uniform/dress codes should include:

- a shirt with at least elbow-length sleeves and a collar that sits close to the neck, above the collarbone
- longer-style skirts, shorts and pants at least to the knee.

4.4 The sport uniform/dress code should include:

- a shirt that covers the shoulders well and a collar that sits close to the neck, above the collarbone
- longer-style skirts, shorts and pants (at least to the mid-thigh).

4.5 Rash vests or t-shirts are required during water sport activities, and while students are waiting to compete in outdoor swimming competitions.

Shade

4.6 The school, ELC or SAC council/board should ensure ample shade is available in the grounds, particularly in areas where students and children congregate (e.g. lunch areas, canteen, and outdoor lesson areas).

4.7 CECG together with the relevant school, ELC and SAC council/board must ensure shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.

4.8 The availability of shade shall be considered when planning all outdoor activities and excursions. Planning for activities such as athletics and swimming carnivals should include the provision of adequate portable shade structures where other shade options are not available, or the availability of shaded areas at the relevant location is unknown¹.

Sunscreen

4.9 Students are reminded and encouraged to bring their own SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to school. Schools, ELCs and SACs may also supply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and students to use.

4.10 Staff encourage students to use sunscreen and provide time for students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors.

4.11 The school, ELC and SAC community is educated about the correct use of sunscreen and the level of protection it provides (apply 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every 2 hours, or immediately after physical activity and swimming).

Sunglasses (if practical)

4.12 Where practical, students are encouraged to wear close-fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

Staff Role-modelling and WHS

4.13 In role-modelling UV risk controls, staff should:

- wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses
- apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen
- seek shade whenever possible.

4.14 SunSmart information should be included in staff handbook/orientation materials.

¹ [safety notice guiding the erection of portable shade structures](#)

- 4.15 Staff should access to resources (see links below in Related Documents and Legislation), to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun protection education across the curriculum.

Families and Visitors

- 4.16 Families and visitors should be asked to do the following when outdoors:
- wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses
 - apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen
 - seek shade whenever possible.
- 4.17 The Sun Protection policy should be easily accessible to staff, students and parents.
- 4.18 SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school, ELC and SAC community through a variety of channels such as newsletters, staff meetings and assemblies.

Outdoor Activities

- 4.19 Outdoor time should be managed to suit the situation on a given day. Days of higher levels of sunlight are more likely to be associated with higher UV levels and exposure should be more limited. However, sun protection may still be required during days where UV levels are lower e.g. carnivals and outdoor excursions held on overcast/cooler days.
- 4.20 Teachers should educate students around the importance of a balanced approach to sun protection and to know when sun protection is necessary and why.

Curriculum

- 4.21 Students should be encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school, ELC and SAC community. Programs on sun protection should be incorporated into appropriate areas of the curriculum.

5. Definitions

- 5.1 **Sun Protection Factor (SPF):** a relative measure of the amount of time for which a particular sunscreen will provide protection from UV and the level of its effectiveness.
- 5.2 **Student:** in this policy refers to school students and children in ELCs and SACs.
- 5.3 **Ultraviolet light (UV):** that part of the spectrum of light emitted by the sun which is the major contributor to skin cancers.

6. Related Documents and Legislation

- 6.1 Related legislation or Standards
- [Cancer Council Sun Smart program](#)
 - [Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#): (Section 167: Protection from harm and hazards)
 - [Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011](#)

7. Contact

- 7.1 For support or further questions relating to this policy, contact the CECG People and Culture Service Area.