



St Michael's Collegiate

Set for life

Subject: ELC SUN PROTECTION POLICY	Policy No: ELC 07 – Version 1
Covers: COLLEGIATE ELC	Effective: June 2016
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Sun Protection

Policy

Overexposure to ultraviolet radiation (UV) during childhood is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk. A healthy balance of UV exposure is important for overall health and the implementation of appropriate sun safe practices is a simple and effective way to reduce the risk of developing skin and other cancers.

Collegiate Early Learning Centre (ELC) and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) will support children, educators and others associated with the service to implement a combination of sun safe practices whenever the UV Index is 3 or above. In Tasmania, this is predominately between September – April.

Where the UV Index reaches 3 or above, a combination of sun protection measures will be implemented to maintain a healthy UV exposure balance and support children to be responsible and aware of their own sun protection.

Procedure

Collegiate ELC and OSHC will use the UV Alert Index as a tool to support a safe environment for children, educators and others associated with the service. The UV Alert is issued via the Bureau of Meteorology (via the newspaper, the Bureau of Meteorology website www.bom.gov.au or Cancer Council Sun Smart App) when the UV Index is forecast to reach 3 or above. At this level, UV radiation can damage the skin and lead to skin cancer and the following sun safe practices will be implemented.

Sunscreen

Sunscreen will be a broad spectrum, water resistant SPF30+ sunscreen. Where parents choose to provide their child's sunscreen, it must be in the original container, clearly named and a product that is nut free.

To encourage sun safe practices children will be encouraged and supported to apply their own sunscreen. Sunscreen will be applied 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours afterwards, as required (i.e. during excursions) to any areas of the body that cannot be protected by clothing (e.g. face, ears, back of hands). Where an educator applies sunscreen to a child, the educator will ensure the sunscreen is hygienically applied (e.g. washing hands before and after applying sunscreen or using a pre-moistened disposable wipe). Where a child is not permitted to wear sunscreen, a written statement from a registered medical practitioner, outlining the reasons why, is required.

It is recommended to use at least one teaspoon of sunscreen for each limb, front and back of the body and half a teaspoon for the face, neck and ears. The incorrect application of sunscreen (i.e. not enough) may result in only 50 – 80% of the protection stated on the product. Sunscreen should never be used to extend the time spent in the sun.

Shade

The availability of shade will be considered in the planning of outdoor activities and experiences. Children will be encouraged to use shaded areas during peak UV times.

When excursions are planned, potential changes in weather and temperature will be taken into account. Educators are to ensure the availability of adequate undercover or enclosed areas to protect children from the sun or inclement weather.

A shade audit will be conducted annually (normally at the commencement of each year) to determine the ongoing suitability of the available shade.

Where the UV Index reaches 8 or above, all outdoor activities will be rescheduled or moved indoors.

Clothing

When engaged in the outdoor environment, children and educators are encouraged to cover as much skin as possible, with garments that hold an ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) rating where possible. Loose fitting, tightly woven garments, such as cotton or linen; knee length or longer style shorts, elbow length sleeves (or longer) and collars to protect the nape of the neck are encouraged.

Hats

All children and educators are required to wear a broad-brim, bucket or legionnaire style hat to protect the face, head, neck and ears. Parents are requested to ensure their child has an appropriate hat while attending the service.

Where a child does not have an appropriate hat (broad-brim, bucket or legionnaire style) for their personal use attending the service, the child will be supported to engage in activities that are located in appropriately shaded areas.

Sunglasses

Children are particularly sensitive to UV radiation and eye damage, and as such it is important to protect children's eyes. Where practical, children and educators are encouraged to wear sunglasses to protect their eyes. Close-fitting wraparound sunglasses that meet the Australian/New Zealand Standard for sunglasses (categories 2, 3 and 4 AS/NZS 1067:2003) are recommended.

Role Modelling

Appropriate role modelling may include (but is not limited to):

- application of a SPF30+ broad spectrum sunscreen;
- wearing a protective hat, appropriate clothing and sunglasses; and
- seeking shade whenever possible.

Supporting Practices

The Sun Protection Policy and Procedure will be reinforced through implementation, discussions, relevant displays and the inclusion of sun safe practices (including vitamin D requirements) within the program.

The UV Index will be checked on a daily basis; and where the UV alert is 3 or above (i.e. predominately September - April); sun safe procedures will be implemented.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D forms in the skin when it is exposed to UV from the sun. Vitamin D is required to maintain good health and maintain strong and healthy bones and muscles. The best source of vitamin D is UV-B radiation from the sun. For most people, adequate amounts of vitamin D are reached via a few minutes of sunlight per day during summer months and up to 2-3 hours exposure (30 minutes per day) spread over a week (Note: If outside for extended periods of time, sun safe practices are recommended to be implemented).

Naturally dark skinned children may require additional UV exposure to produce adequate levels of vitamin D as the pigment in their skin reduces UV penetration. Permission for dark skinned children not to wear sunscreen is still required.

Relevant Policies and Procedures

- Excursion Policy and Procedure
- Safe Environment Policy and Procedure

Sources

- Cancer Council – Australia www.cancer.org.au
- *Education and Care Services National Law*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations*

Review due June 2017