

SUN PROTECTION POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school on 98034590 or burwood.east.sds@education.vic.gov.au.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to support sun protection behaviours at Burwood East Special Developmental School (BESDS) to minimise the risk of health problems from sun overexposure, including 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 to the end of April in Victoria)
- 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 on and off-site, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

POLICY

Overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause health problems including sunburn, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in 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 day and the year (highest from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria, which covers most of the school year)
- 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 or above. Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via the free SunSmart Global UV app, or at sunsmart.com.au, or at the Bureau of Meteorology at bom.gov.au.

Burwood East SDS has the following measures in place for all outdoor activities during the daily sun protection times to help reduce the risk of over-exposure to UV radiation for staff and students.

Shade

Burwood East SDS provides sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- where students congregate for breaks
- popular play areas in the Primary section and the Secondary section
- assembly areas

Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outdoors during peak sun protection times, particularly if they do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing.

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at BESDS that may impact on the level of shade 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

Burwood East SDS recommends that from mid-August to end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, students come to school wearing sun-protective clothing such as:

- loose, cool, densely woven fabric
- shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
- tops with elbow length or long sleeves
- longer style shorts, dresses and skirts
- rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming activities.

Hats

From mid-August to 30th April, staff and students are encouraged to wear hat styles that protect the face, neck and ears when outdoors, for example, broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket. Students are required to wear a school hat or another hat style that protects the face, neck and ears. Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or a hat may be asked to play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun.

Sunscreen

Burwood East SDS encourages all staff and students to apply SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors, and reapplied every 2 hours (or more frequently if sweating or swimming).

Burwood East SDS has strategies in place to remind and assist students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (for example, child-friendly posters reminding students to wear sunscreen).

Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices. They are supported to understand the effects of sun exposure and are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model

sun protection measures to the whole school. Burwood East SDS will address sun protection and UV safety education as part of our School-wide positive behaviour approach. Students are delivered explicit lessons to 'be safe' in the playground and 'dress appropriately for the weather'.

Staff role-modelling and OHS

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. Staff may practice and role-model these behaviours even when the UV is below 3, particularly if they spend extended periods of time outdoors all year round.

UV radiation exposure is considered as part of our school's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities, i.e. UV radiation protection strategies are included in school camp activities, excursions, and sports events.

Families and visitors

Families and visitors participating in and attending outdoor school activities are encouraged to:

- wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
- apply SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and
- seek shade whenever possible when outdoors.

Community engagement

Sun protection behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community. Families, students and staff are encouraged to support UV safety at school and at home.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website <https://www.besds.vic.edu.au/>
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- the Department's Policy and Advisory Library:
 - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
 - [Heat Health](#)
 - [Outdoor Activities and Working Outdoors](#)
 - [Risk Management – Schools](#)
 - [Shade Sails](#)
 - [Student Dress Code](#)
- [SunSmart](#) and Cancer Council Victoria.
 - [Primary schools](#) free education resources, sample policies and information about the free [SunSmart Schools Program](#).
 - [Secondary schools](#) free education resources and sample policies.
 - [Sunscreen reactions](#).

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	November 2025
Approved by	School Council – 17/11/2025
Next scheduled review date	November 2029