

SUN PROTECTION

May 2023- 2026

RATIONALE

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation in childhood is a major risk factor for the development of skin cancer later in life. By implementing a best-practice Sun Protection policy, early childhood education and care services can help protect staff and children from UV radiation and teach children good sun protection habits from an early age to reduce their risk.

Sun protection times are forecast for the time of day when UV levels will reach 3 or above. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types. In NSW, UV levels are high enough (UV 3 or above) to damage unprotected skin most months of the year and are particularly high during the summer months and highest in the middle of the day. UV levels and daily sun protection times are accessed via the SunSmart App or Cancer Council Australia's home page to determine daily sun protection requirements.

GOALS

Alstonville Community Preschool will:

- follow best practice guidelines to protect children, family members, educators and staff from the damaging effects of sun exposure, and
- ensure appropriate practices are in place to retain accreditation as a Cancer Council *SunSmart* service.

Sun protection strategies implemented are:

1. Scheduling Outdoor Activities

- UV levels and daily sun protection times are used to plan daily activities and ensure a correct and safe understanding of local sun protection requirements.
- The preschool program will be planned to minimise time in the sun between 10am and 2pm (11.00am and 3.00pm daylight savings time) each day to avoid prolonged exposure to the sun during harmful times.
- All sun protection measures (including recommended outdoor times, shade, hat, clothing and sunscreen) will be considered when planning excursions.

2. Shade

- All outdoor activities will be planned to occur in the shade.
- Play-based learning activities are set up and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns.
- Shade options can include a combination of portable, natural and built shade. Cancer Council encourages regular shade assessments and the monitoring of existing shade structures, to assist in planning for additional shade.

3. Hats

- All staff and children are required to wear SunSmart hats* that protect their face, neck and ears.
- Children are provided with an approved Sun Smart hat on enrolment, that remains at preschool.

The SunSmart hat* provided for use by the Preschool is a bucket hat with a deep crown and wide brim. Spare hats are available for purchase if required.

SunSmart hats include:

- Broad-brimmed hats with a brim size of at least 6cm (adults 7.5cm).
- Bucket hats with a deep crown and brim size of at least 5cm (adults 6cm).
- Legionnaire style hats.

Baseball caps or visors do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not recommended.

- Children will be required to wear a hat year round when playing outdoors to ensure appropriate sun protection.
- Children without a SunSmart hat are encouraged to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. deck area or indoors), or in certain circumstances i.e (children with additional needs), families will be asked to sign a waiver removing responsibility from the preschool.

4. Clothing

When outdoors, staff and children will wear sun safe clothing that covers as much of the skin (especially the shoulders, back and stomach) as possible.

This includes wearing

- Loose fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves, collars or covered neckline;
- Longer style skirts, shorts and trousers

Children without SunSmart clothing are encouraged to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. deck area or indoors) or are provided with spare sun safe clothing.

5. Sunscreen

- Sunscreen is provided by the preschool and is stored in a cool, dry place with the use by date and monitored regularly.
- Children are required to apply SPF30+ (or higher) broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every 2 hours.
- It is expected that families will have applied sunscreen prior to leaving their child at preschool, and that it will be reapplied later in the day, if necessary.
- Where children have allergies or sensitivity to the sunscreen, parents may provide an alternative SPF 30+ sunscreen.
- Should parents not approve of sunscreen being applied to their child, or the alternative is not SPF 30+, then a letter stating the same, must be supplied to the preschool to be kept with the child/s enrolment records.
- Staff are encouraged to wear sunscreen whilst working at the preschool.

6. Role Modelling

Educators and staff will act as role models and demonstrate Sun Smart behaviours by:

- wearing a Sun Smart hat, protective clothing and wearing sunglasses (optional)
- applying SPF30+ (or higher) broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors.
- promoting the use of shade for play and outdoor activities;
- discussing sun protection with children and demonstrating a positive and proactive approach to the management of sun protection in the preschool.

Families and visitors to the preschool are encouraged to role model positive sun safe behaviour.

Sun safety is everyone's responsibility.

7. Education and Information

- Sun protection will be incorporated regularly into learning programs. Children will learn to understand why sun safety is important and how to take effective sun protection actions e.g. hat wearing, accessing daily UV levels;
- SunSmart App daily UV times are promoted to guide staff, parents and children behaviour.
- Sun protection information will be promoted to staff, families and visitors.

Further information is available from Cancer Council NSW's website www.sunsmartnsw.com.au

8. Information and Policy Availability

- Sun protection policy, procedures, requirements and updates are made available to staff, families and visitors.
- Sun protection information and resources are accessible and communicated regularly to families.
- All parents/families are informed of the sun protection policy including appropriate hat, clothing and sunscreen requirements on enrolling their child at the preschool.

REVIEW

Management and staff will monitor and review the effectiveness of the Sun Protection policy regularly. The preschool's Sun Protection policy will be submitted every three years to the Cancer Council for review to ensure continued best practice as a Sunsmart centre.

Refer to the Cancer Council's guidelines and website www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart for further information.

Relevant Links to the National Quality Standard (NQS):

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD		
	Concept	Descriptor
QA2		Children's health and safety
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
2.1.3	Healthy lifestyle	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

Education and Care Services National Regulations:

114	Outdoor space—shade
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available

Sources

- National Health and Medical Research Council - www.nhmrc.gov.au
- NSW Department of Health - www.health.nsw.gov.au
- Cancer Council NSW

Statutory Legislation & Considerations

- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011