Sun Protection Policy

Rationale

A balance of ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure is important for health. Too much UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and increase the risk of skin cancer. Sun exposure during childhood and adolescence is a significant factor in determining future skin cancer risk.

Too little UV radiation can contribute to low vitamin D levels. Sensible sun protection when the UV Index is 3 and above does not place people at risk of vitamin D deficiency.

This policy applies to all school activities and events, on and off site.

Objectives

This policy aims to:

- encourage the whole school community to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever the UV Index is 3 and above
- provide a safe school environment with access to appropriate shade
- support students to develop increasing independence and responsibility for their own sun protection, according to their individual capacity
- ensure families, staff, volunteers and visitors understand Mid North Education Centre's sun protection expectations

Policy Implementation Times

Mid North Education Centre uses a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities during Terms 1, 3 and 4, and whenever the UV Index reaches 3 and above at other times of the year.

Staff monitor daily sun protection times using an appropriate source such as the SunSmart Global UV app or the Bureau of Meteorology.

Sun Protection Measures

1. Hats

When sun protection is required, students and staff must wear a SunSmart hat that protects the face, ears and neck.

Acceptable SunSmart hats include:

- broad-brimmed hats
- bucket hats
- legionnaire-style hats

Baseball caps are not considered SunSmart and do not meet the requirements of this policy.

Where a student does not have an appropriate SunSmart hat, they will be supported to access an appropriate shaded or sun-protected area.

Sun Protection Measures

2. Clothing

Appropriate sun-protective clothing is encouraged as part of the school's uniform and dress expectations.

Where practicable, clothing should:

- be made from closely woven material
- cover the shoulders
- include collars or higher necklines
- have elbow-length or longer sleeves
- include longer-style shorts, skirts or dresses

For outdoor swimming and water-based activities, rash tops or t-shirts worn over bathers are recommended.

3. Sunscreen

Mid North Education Centre supplies **SPF 50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen** for student and staff use.

Families may provide an alternative sunscreen where their child has sensitive skin or requires a particular product. Personal sunscreen must be clearly labelled with the student's name.

Sunscreen will:

- be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors
- be reapplied at least every 2 hours when remaining or returning outdoors
- be reapplied following swimming, significant sweating, towel drying or where sunscreen has otherwise been removed

Students are supported to develop independence in applying sunscreen according to their individual capacity. Staff will provide prompting or assistance where required.

Time and appropriate support will be provided to ensure sunscreen can be applied before outdoor activities.

4. Shade

Staff will use available areas of shade for outdoor activities wherever practicable and actively encourage students to use shaded areas.

Students who are not wearing an appropriate SunSmart hat or protective clothing, or who are unable or unwilling to use sunscreen, will be supported to access appropriate shade or another sun-protected area.

Staff will consider each student's individual needs while ensuring appropriate sun protection is maintained. The availability and quality of shade will be considered as part of Mid North Education Centre's site WHS, facilities and grounds planning. Where deficiencies are identified, appropriate action will be considered through site planning and hazard-management processes.

Sun Protection Measures

5. Sunglasses

Students and staff are encouraged to wear close-fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that provide protection against UV eye damage.

Sunglasses should:

- meet Australian Standard AS/NZS 1067
- be lens category 2, 3 or 4
- cover as much of the eye area as possible

Students' sunglasses are to be supplied from home.

Scheduling and Outdoor Activities

A combination of sun protection measures will be considered when planning all outdoor activities, including:

- physical education and sport
- excursions
- camps
- community-based activities
- swimming and water-based activities
- outdoor learning
- special events

Care will be taken during peak UV radiation times. Where practicable, outdoor activities will be scheduled outside peak UV periods or undertaken in shaded areas.

When the UV Index is 3 and above:

- students will be supported to eat and undertake activities indoors or in shaded areas where appropriate
- organised sport and physical education may be scheduled earlier in the day or in shaded areas where practicable
- students will be encouraged to use available shade
- indoor alternatives will be available where appropriate

Extreme Weather and Heat

UV radiation and temperature are separate risks. A high temperature does not necessarily indicate the level of UV exposure.

Where heat, hot winds or other environmental conditions create an additional risk to students or workers, outdoor activities may be modified, relocated, postponed or cancelled in accordance with Mid North Education Centre and department WHS arrangements.

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Staff WHS and Role Modelling

For work health and safety and positive role modelling, when the UV Index is 3 and above, staff are required to practise SunSmart behaviours when outdoors, including:

- wearing an appropriate SunSmart hat
- wearing sun-protective clothing
- applying SPF 50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen
- wearing appropriate sunglasses where practicable
- seeking and using shade wherever possible

Families, Volunteers and Visitors

Families, volunteers and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures when participating in or attending outdoor school activities and events.

Families are encouraged to support students to bring appropriate SunSmart clothing, hats and sunglasses to school.

Learning and Development

Sun protection education is incorporated into teaching and learning across year levels as appropriate.

Students are supported to develop their understanding of:

- UV radiation
- appropriate sun protection
- healthy and safe choices
- increasing independence in managing their own sun protection

Responsibilities

Principal or Delegate

The Principal or delegate is responsible for:

- supporting implementation of this policy
- ensuring sun protection expectations are communicated to staff and families
- supporting appropriate shade, scheduling and WHS planning
- considering sun protection requirements when planning school activities and events

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- implementing this policy in daily practice
- modelling SunSmart behaviours
- supporting students to use sun protection measures
- considering individual student needs when applying sun protection requirements
- monitoring daily UV conditions and adjusting activities where required

Families

Families are encouraged to:

- support students to bring a SunSmart hat and appropriate clothing
- provide labelled personal sunscreen where needed
- reinforce sun-safe behaviours

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Related Documents

- Mid North Education Centre Weather and Environmental Conditions Procedure
- Mid North Education Centre Uniform Information / Uniform Policy
- Department for Education sun protection guidance
- relevant WHS arrangements and site planning processes

Legislation

- Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)

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