



Avoca State School



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Avoca State School Sun Protection Policy

Aim

This policy aims to protect all employees, students, contracted services, parents, families and volunteers of Avoca State School from the harmful effects of UV radiation exposure.

Involvement

This policy applies to all employees, students, visitors, contracted services, families and volunteers of Avoca State School while on the premises and involved in excursions that require leaving the premises.

Rationale

Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Skin cancers account for 80 per cent of all new cancers diagnosed each year in Australia, making it by far the most common type of cancer diagnosed.

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life. Given students and employees are at school during peak UV times, schools play a major role in providing an environment where policies and procedures can positively influence long-term SunSmart behaviour.

With this in mind, schools need to take into account the need to support students, employees, parents and visitors to the school by providing and promoting a SunSmart environment.

Procedures

- Scheduling of outdoor activities - whenever practical, outdoor activities are scheduled to minimise time outdoors during periods when the UV is high to extreme (UV 6 or above)
- UV3+ - sun protection measures listed are to be used for all outdoor activities when the UV index is 3 or above. In Queensland, this is all year around.
- To assist with implementation of this policy, employees and students are encouraged to access daily local sun protection times via the SunSmart app, Sunsmart widget on the school website, or sunsmart.com.au

Healthy physical environment

1. Seek shade

- Provide a variety of shade (i.e. built, natural and portable) in all areas where students congregate including areas for lunch, outdoor teaching and sport.
- Encourage students to use available shade.
- Consider shade availability when planning all outdoor events and excursions.
- Conduct regular shade assessments to determine future needs.

Healthy social environment

2. Slip on sun protective clothing

- Make school uniforms SunSmart as per Cancer Council Queensland recommendations. This includes shirts with collars and elbow length sleeves, longer style dresses and shorts, and long pants.
- Encourage rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming.

3. Slap on a hat

- Ensure hats worn by students cover the face, neck and ears such as broad-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire style. Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.

4. Slop on sunscreen

- Make available SPF 50 or SPF 50+, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen or encourage students to supply their own.
- Encourage students to apply sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and to reapply every 2 hours when outdoors for extended periods.

5. Slide on sunglasses (optional)

- Where practical, students are encouraged to wear close-fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard AS1067.

Learning opportunities

- Teachers and staff are encouraged to complete Cancer Council's free online learning modules (Generation SunSmart)
- Include learning activities in the curriculum that promote sun protection for all children

Compliance

- Procedures for, and consequences of non-compliance - Outline a procedure for, and the consequences of non-compliance of the expectations listed in your policy (e.g. "no hat, play in the shade")

Role modelling by staff

- Ask employees to role model good sun protection behaviours when outside, including:
 - Wearing sun-safe hats, clothing and sunglasses.
 - Applying SPF30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen.
 - Seeking shade whenever possible.

Engaging the school community

- Regularly reinforce and promote SunSmart behaviour to the whole school community (students, employees, families and visitors) via newsletters, website/intranet, social media, school assemblies, parent/teacher meetings and student enrolment/staff orientation.
- Encourage families and visitors to role model sun protection behaviours when involved in school activities.

Policy Timing and Review

- This policy is effective from 26/05/2025 and will be reviewed every three years to ensure it remains current and practical.
- Policy updates and requirements will be made available to the school community.

Next policy review: 02/06/2028

Last updated: June 2025