



**MADGE SEXTON KINDERGARTEN**  
**QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY**  
**Policy 2: Sun Protection**

## **Rationale**

**What is UV?** Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is a type of energy produced by the sun and some artificial sources, such as solariums.

- The sun's UV radiation is the main cause of skin cancer. UV damage also causes sunburn, tanning, premature ageing and eye damage.
- UV radiation isn't like the sun's light or heat, which we can see and feel. Your senses cannot detect UV radiation, so you won't notice the damage until it has been done.
- **The UV Index:** The World Health's Organization's *Global Solar UV Index* measures UV levels on a scale from 0 (low) to 11+ (extreme). Sun protection is recommended when UV levels are 3 (moderate) or higher.
- The UV level is affected by a number of factors including the time of day, time of year, cloud cover, altitude, how close you are to the equator, scattering and reflection.
- A balance of UV radiation exposure is important for health. Too little UV radiation from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones and muscles, and for general health. Sensible sun protection when UV is 3 and above does not put people at risk of vitamin D deficiency.
- Too much of the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Sun exposure during childhood and adolescence is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk. Research suggests that severe sunburn is a contributor to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage such as wrinkles, sunspots, blemishes and premature ageing.
- Most skin damage and skin cancer is therefore, preventable. Early childhood services are ideally placed to help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths by encouraging all members of their community to use effective skin protection.

## **Sunburn**

- Sunburn is a UV radiation burn to the skin. In Australia's summer months, skin can burn in as little as 11 minutes and can take days or weeks to heal. Mild sunburn can be treated at home, but you should see a doctor immediately for severe and/or blistered burns.
- While the signs of sunburn fade with time, the damage can't be undone and adds to your lifetime tally of UV damage, which increases your risk of skin cancer.
- Sun prevention is best. Always check the sun protection times and use a combination of sun protection measures when required.

## **Sun Protection Times**

- You can find the sun protection times for your location on the SunSmart app or at the Bureau of Meteorology website.
- The sun protection times show when UV levels are forecast to be 3 or higher.
- During sun protection times, you must protect your skin and eyes by using covering clothing, sunscreen, a hat and shade. Don't just wait for hot and sunny weather.

## **Aims**

The aims of Madge Sexton Kindergarten Sun Protection Policy are to promote among children, staff and parents:

- encourage children and staff to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above
- work towards a safe outdoor environment that provides shade for children and staff at appropriate times
- assist children to be responsible for their own sun protection
- ensure families and new staff are informed of the centre's Sun Protection policy.

## **Implementation**

This policy is for implementation throughout the whole year. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all members of our Early Childhood Service are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful rays of the sun. All members of the Madge Sexton Kindergarten will be directed to use the following skin protection strategies:

### **DETERMINING UV RATING**

- Staff are directed to access the daily sun protection times on the SunSmart app, or at [bom.gov.au/uv/index.shtml](http://bom.gov.au/uv/index.shtml) to assist with the implementation of this policy. This strategy will be embedded as part of Madge Sexton Kindergarten's learning programme and daily routines.
- A 'no hat, no play' policy will be in force when the UV rating is 3 or above. Staff and children will check the UV rating daily and if lower than 3 **may** choose not to enforce sun protection strategies as they may deem it unnecessary.
- Extra care is taken during the peak UV radiation times and outdoor activities are scheduled outside of these times where possible.

### **CLOTHING**

- Wear appropriate clothing which protects the skin and minimises heat gain.
- When the UV rating is 3 or above, staff and parents are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad brimmed or bucket hats. Baseball or peak caps are not considered a suitable alternative.
- Children must bring a hat in their bags to Kindy EVERYDAY in case it is deemed necessary to wear one.
- Children not wearing an appropriate hat will be expected to play in the shade or inside. Hats should not have any under chin strings or cords as they are a choking hazard.
- Staff are expected to be appropriate role models in their sun protection behaviour through clothing as well as hats, and adherence to shaded areas.
- When outside, children are required to wear loose fitting clothing that cover as much skin as possible. Clothing made from cool, closely woven fabric is recommended. Tops with collars and elbow length sleeves, and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best.

If a child is wearing a singlet top or dress, please ensure that you pack a t-shirt/shirt in their bag so that they can wear this over the top when going outdoors. The Kindy has a limited supply of spare clothing and therefore your child may not be allowed to play outside if they do not have the appropriate cover up.

### **SUNSCREEN**

- Parents need to apply sunscreen to their child **before** they come to kindergarten so that their skin is protected against the sun when travelling to kindergarten and when playing outdoors. SPF 30 or higher, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen will be available for parents/caregivers to apply to their children at Kindergarten in the morning and educators will check with children who are dropped off by other childcare services that they have had sunscreen applied in the morning and if not, do so.
- Staff will check that children are wearing sunscreen in the morning as part of the daily routines.
- Sunscreen will be reapplied before the children go outside in the afternoon when the UV rating is 3 or above.
- Adequate time must be allowed for correct application of sunscreen on children before they go outdoors. (At least 15-20 minutes before they go outside to be effective.) MSK staff will ensure that appropriate processes are in place to achieve the effective application of sunscreen.
- Children are encouraged to apply their own sunscreen under the supervision of staff.
- Skin cancer prevention will be included in appropriate teaching activities. This will include checking the UV rating online with children throughout the year.
- With parental consent, children with naturally very dark skin are not required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements.

### **SHADE**

- Take particular care if in the direct sun between the hours of 10.00 am & 3.00 pm.
- Wherever possible, outdoor activity sessions will be held in shaded areas.
- The children's group times and snack times are held indoors or in shaded areas to avoid UVR exposure as part of our normal daily kindergarten programme.
- Use the shade of trees, pergolas, umbrellas and tents whenever possible outdoors.
- Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.

### **DRINKS**

- Children are to be encouraged to drink water and safe drinking water is to be accessible at all times, especially in hotter weather. Children must have a drink of water at morning fruit and vegetable time and at lunch time.

### **FOOD**

- Parents are encouraged to pack children food in insulated containers with a frozen brick or frozen water. Madge Sexton Kindergarten will provide a cool room to store food.

### **AIRCONDITIONING**

- Staff to ensure air-conditioning units are effective and in good working order at all times. Contingency plans are in place to manage events which affect normal functioning during hot weather, such as blackouts, and breakdown of cooling and ventilation systems.

***This policy applies to all centre events on and off-site.***

**Endorsed by Staff & Governing Council: August 2018 / To be reviewed: August 2020**