

Guidelines for developing a school sun safety policy



Introduction

This guideline provides strategies and considerations to inform consultation with the school community and develop the school's sun safety policy.

An [exemplar school sun safety policy](#) is available for the school to adopt or adapt in order to document their sun safety strategies.

The exemplar also highlights those strategies that the department requires schools to implement.

Strategies and considerations

As outlined in the [Sun safety in state schools](#) procedure, schools are required to develop a comprehensive sun safety policy which addresses a broad range of strategies to minimise the risks associated with ultraviolet radiation (UVR) exposure.

Elements of the school's sun safety policy include:

- i. Clothing requirements
- ii. Shade provision and use
- iii. Education
- iv. Sunscreen provision
- v. Modelling sun safe behaviours
- vi. Cost considerations.

The following considerations provide the basis for consultation with the school community.

(i) Clothing requirements

For consideration:

- Does the current school uniform meet the [Australian Standard AS4399:2020 for sun protective clothing](#) (Australian Standard)?
- If the uniform does not meet the Australian Standard, what strategies are being put in place by the school to ensure sun safety?
- When undertaking a uniform review, schools are encouraged to consider uniform suppliers using the School uniform [Standing Offer Arrangement](#) (available to DoE employees only).
- If the wearing of hats during certain sports poses a risk to students' safety, describe alternative solutions to keep students sun safe.
- Are there any reasons a student may not be able to wear sun safe clothing or use sunscreen? Consider the student's medical, environmental, cultural, religious or other identified needs.
 - If yes, discuss with parents/carers the sun safety measures to be implemented to meet their needs, and document these alternatives in general terms in the policy (without identifying individual students).

- How will the school promote the wearing of swim shirts as a life-long habit?
- What strategies will be used if a student forgets their swim shirt?
- What sun safe strategies will staff follow when on playground duty and/or when they are in the sun?
- Will the school request that parents/carers and school volunteers model sun safe practices while participating in school activities?
- Will students have the option of wearing [sunglasses](#)?
 - If so, describe in the policy how the considerations below will be addressed.

Students wearing sunglasses at school

Individual schools may consider the wearing of sunglasses as part of their sun safety policy. A trial may help to determine if this is a feasible strategy for the school community.

In the policy, the school community may wish to consider:

- Sunglasses should be wrap-around and meet the Australian/New Zealand Standard *AS/NZS 1067.1:2016 Eye and face protection - sunglasses and fashion spectacles requirements*.

Wearing sunglasses that meet the Standard's requirements for effective sunglasses ensures the eyes have adequate protection against UVR damage. Refer to <https://www.sunsmart.com.au/downloads/resources/info-sheets/sunglasses-info-sheet.pdf>.

- The age of students and their capacity to be responsible for their sunglasses.
- Student safety during play and damage to glasses during play.
- Affordability.
- Lost property and theft.

(ii) Shade provision and use

For consideration:

- Do students have access to adequate shade in the school, for example, permanent and temporary shade structures?
- How does the school flexibly plan activities with the aim of reducing time spent exposed to UVR as far as practicable?
- Are there opportunities for a planned shade development project? What [shade design](#) elements could be associated with that?
- Are temporary shade structures available for student use at outdoor events?
- What sun safe measures will be put in place when students are timetabled to be in the sun?

- Will permanent shade design be included in major school infrastructure project planning (where applicable)?
 - For more information regarding the department's design standards for shade structure in schools, contact your school [Regional Infrastructure Manager](#).
- Will the P&C consider shade provision for P&C events?

(iii) Education

For consideration:

- How will the school promote sun safety to students?
- Which teaching/learning resources will be used for sun safe educational programs?
- How will sun safe practices be taught incidentally?
- How will the school regularly promote student sun safety to parents/carers?
- How will the school promote sun safety to staff?
- How will staff professional development occur about sun safety?

Selecting, developing or reviewing educational programs

Programs should:

- be developmentally appropriate and sequential across all year levels
- develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to make informed choices around sun safety (connected to the range of health issues where possible)
- be aligned to the Australian Curriculum.

Appropriate resources to complement education programs should:

- be developmentally appropriate and selected to complement comprehensive curriculum programs
- be relevant to students' lives
- not exaggerate or misrepresent dangers, that is, not use 'scare tactics'.

(iv) Sunscreen provision

For consideration:

- How can the school help to normalise sunscreen application, that is, make it a routine behaviour?
- Where will the school's sunscreen be located for student access?
- At outdoor events, could sunscreen stations be set up with sun safe monitors? Refer to <https://www.qld.gov.au/health/staying-healthy/environmental/sun/how#sunscreen>.
- At all-day outdoor events, could a 'sunscreen time' be timetabled every two hours, where everyone reapplies their own sunscreen?
- How will the school encourage parents/carers to notify them if their child is allergic to a particular type of sunscreen?
- What options are available for parents/carers if they don't wish their child to use the school's sunscreen? Could parents/carers provide personal sunscreen for their children? **Note:** This would not replace the school's requirement to make sunscreen available to all students.

(v) Modelling sun safe behaviours

For consideration:

- Are there barriers to staff and/or other adults modelling sun safe behaviours? How will these be addressed?
- Will sun safe education for adults be provided?

(vi) Cost considerations

For consideration:

- How will the school fund the provision of sunscreen to students year-round?
- Will there be a need to recover costs in line with the [Requests for Voluntary Financial Contributions procedure](#)?