**SUN PROTECTION POLICY**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to support sun protection behaviours at Maroona Primary School to minimise risk of health problems from sun overexposure, including skin cancer.

This policy provides guidelines to:

* support staff and students to use a combination of sun protection measures during Terms 1 and 4
* ensure that there are outdoor environments that provide adequate shade for students and staff
* ensure students are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills to help them to be responsible for their own protection
* support our school’s strategies to meet its duty of care and occupational health and safety obligations to minimise harmful UV exposure and associated harm for students and staff.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all school activities on and off-site, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

**Policy**

Overexposure to the sun’s ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause health problems including sunburn, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

UV radiation:

* cannot be seen or felt
* can be reflected off surfaces such as buildings, asphalt, concrete, water, sand and snow
* can pass through light clouds
* varies in intensity across the day and the year
* peaks during school hours.

Sun safety is a shared responsibility and staff, parents and students are encouraged to implement a combination of sun protection measures during Terms 1 and 4. Information about the daily UV levels is available via the free [SunSmart app](http://www.sunsmart.com.au/tools/interactive-tools/free-sunsmart-app), or at [sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au) or bom.gov.au.

Maroona Primary Schoolhasthe following measures in place for all outdoor activities during the daily sun protection times to help reduce the risk of over-exposure to UV radiation for staff and students.

**Shade**

Maroona Primary Schoolprovides sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

* basketball court
* where students congregate for lunch
* popular play areas
* assembly areas

Students will be encouraged to use available areas of shade when outdoors during Terms 1 and 4, and a “no hat no play” rule means that children’s play will be restricted to shaded areas if they are not wearing a hat which complies with this policy.

**Sun protective uniform/clothing**

Maroona Primary School’s uniform includes sun-protective clothing, including:

* loose, cool, densely woven fabric
* shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
* rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming activities
* longer style shorts, dresses and skirts are recommended for Terms 1 and 4

Maroona Primary School's uniform or dress code applies on and off-site unless otherwise advised. When students are not required to wear school uniform (such as school camps, free dress day), Maroona Primary School will ensure steps are taken to encourage students to wear sun-protective clothing during Terms 1 and 4.

**Hats**

During Terms 1 and 4, all students **must** wear a sun protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears for all outdoor activities. Suitable examples are broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hats. Hats may also be worn for all outdoor activities outside of Terms 1 and 4, by parent or student choice. Baseball or peaked caps and sun visors are not considered a suitable alternative, as they do not protect the ears, cheeks or neck.

Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or hats will be asked to use available areas of shade when outdoors or a suitable area protected from the sun.

**Sunscreen**

Maroona Primary School supplies SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, and encourages all staff and students to apply daily during Terms 1 and 4. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors, and reapplied every two hours (or more frequently if sweating or swimming). Staff and students who may suffer from skin reactions from the school-supplied sunscreen are encouraged to send their child to school with a suitable alternative sunscreen.

Maroona Primary School has strategies in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors including verbal reminders, reminder notices, and sunscreen stations near entry and exit points where the children’s named sunscreen will be stored.

**Sunglasses**

Students may wear sunglasses while outside, and when possible, Maroona Primary School encourages students and staff engaged in outdoor activities to wear close-fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

**Curriculum**

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices. They are supported to understand effects of sun exposure and are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school. Maroona Primary School will address sun protection and UV safety education as part of Health and PE.

**Staff role-modelling and OHS**

Staff are encouraged to access resources, tools, and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun smart behaviour across the school community.

UV radiation exposure is considered as part of our school’s risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities, i.e. UV radiation protection strategies are included in school camp activities, excursions, sports days and interschool sports events.

**Families and visitors**

Families and visitors participating in and attending outdoor school activities are encouraged to:

* wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
* apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and
* seek shade whenever possible when outdoors.

**Community engagement**

Sun protection behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school website/intranet, school assemblies, student and teacher activities, at student enrolment and new staff orientation.

Families, students and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety at school and at home. Maroona Primary School may provide information through its newsletters and school assemblies.

**COMMUNICATION**

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

* Available publicly on our school’s website
* Included in staff induction processes
* Included in transition and enrolment packs
* Reminders in our school newsletter.

**Further Information and Resources**

* the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library:
  + [Sun and UV Protection Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/sun-protection/policy)
  + [Heat Health](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/heat-health/policy)
  + [Outdoor Activities and Working Outdoors](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/outdoor-activities-and-working-outdoors/policy)
  + [Risk Management – Schools](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/risk-management-schools/policy)
  + [Shade Sails](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/shade-sails/policy)
  + [Student Dress Code](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-dress-code/policy)
* [SunSmart](http://www.sunsmart.com.au/) and Cancer Council Victoria.
  + [Primary schools](https://www.sunsmart.com.au/advice-for/schools-early-childhood) free education resources, sample policies and information about the free [SunSmart Schools Program](https://www.sunsmart.com.au/advice-for/schools-early-childhood/join-the-sunsmart-program).
  + [Sunscreen reactions](https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety/about-sunscreen/sunscreen-reactions).

**POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

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| Policy last reviewed | October 2023 |
| Approved by | School Council |
| Next scheduled review date | August 2026 |