



**Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre Inc**

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<b>Written/Amended By:</b>	Jan Gilchrist CEO	<b>Policy No:</b>	01/03
<b>Authorised By:</b>	COM	<b>Version:</b>	8
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### SUNSMART POLICY for CHILDREN

Our Sunsmart Policy has been developed to ensure that all the children attending Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre (MPLCC) are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful U.V. rays of the sun. The policy will be implemented from the start of September until the end of April and whenever the UV index level reaches 3 and above. If this can't be checked daily sun protection times please use sun protection **from mid-August to the end of April** (when Victoria’s UV levels are typically above three). Please do not just use sun protection during Terms 1 and 4. Only using sun protection during these terms means children, Educators, Centre users and other staff will not be protected from UV when they need to be.

A combination of sun protection measures are used whenever the levels reach three and above. UV levels and sun protection times are monitored each day to help with the implementation of this policy.

This SunSmart policy provides guidelines to:

- ensure all children, Educators, Centre users and other staff are protected from over-exposure to UV radiation
- ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for children, Educators, Centre users and other staff;
- ensure children are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills;
- support duty of care and regulatory requirements; and
- support appropriate OHS strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harms for children, Educators, Centre users and other staff.

From May until August sun protection is not used unless the UV index level reaches 3 and above. This will be determined by information obtained from the website [www.bom.gov.au/weather/uv/](http://www.bom.gov.au/weather/uv/) which is also displayed on the MPLCC website. Too little UV from the sun can lead to low Vitamin D levels which is needed for healthy bones and muscles and for general health.

## **Purpose**

This SunSmart policy provides guidelines to:

- ensure all children, Educators, Centre users and other staff are protected from over-exposure to UV radiation
- ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for children, Educators, Centre users and other staff;
- ensure children are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills;
- support duty of care and regulatory requirements; and
- support appropriate OHS strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harms for educators, staff and visitors.

## **Background**

Too much of the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Infants and toddlers up to four years of age are particularly vulnerable to UV damage due to lower levels of melanin and a thinner stratum corneum (the outermost layer of skin). UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

# **SUNSMART PROCEDURE**

## ***Healthy physical environment***

### **1. Seek shade** (QA 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

- Management makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the outdoor area particularly in high-use areas.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning all outdoor activities.
- Children are encouraged to choose and use available areas of shade when outside.
- Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to choose a shady play space or a suitable area protected from the sun or what is deemed suitable by Educators.
- In consultation with the MPLCC Committee of Management, shade provision is considered in future plans and upgrades.
- A shade assessment is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.

## ***Healthy social environment***

### **2. Slip on sun protective clothing** (QA 1, 2, 4, 5)

- Children are required to wear loose-fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Clothing made from cool, densely woven fabric is recommended. Families are asked to choose tops with elbow-length sleeves, higher necklines (or collars) and knee-length or longer style shorts and skirts for their child. If a child is wearing a singlet top or shoestring dress, they will be asked to choose a t-shirt/shirt to wear over this before going outdoors.

### **3. Slap on a hat** (QA 1, 2, 4, 5)

- All children, Educators, Centre users and other staff are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears (legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket style). Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative. Children who do not have hats with them will be asked to play inside or in an area protected by the sun.
- Children who do not have a hat on any given day during Vacation care will be given a hat from the Centre's spares and charged a \$2.00 washing fee added to the parents account.

Should this continue to occur more than 2 times then the parent's account will be charged \$15 for a new hat from reception.

#### **4. Slop on sunscreen** (QA 1, 2, 4, 5)

- SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is supplied by families.
- Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes (where possible) before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours or more frequently if sweating or swimming.
- To help develop independent skills ready for school, children from three years of age are given opportunities to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of staff, and are encouraged to do so.

#### **5. Slide on sunglasses [if practical]** (QA 1, 2, 4, 5)

- Where practical, children and Educators are encouraged 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.

#### **Learning and skills** (QA 1, 2, 4, 5, 6)

- Sun protection is incorporated into the learning and development program.
- The SunSmart policy is reinforced by educators and through children's activities and displays.

#### **Engaging children, educators, staff and families (QA 2, 3, 4, 3, 6, 7)**

- Educators, staff and families are provided with information about sun protection through family newsletters, parent handbook, noticeboards and the MPLCC website.
- When enrolling their child, families are:
  - informed of the Centre SunSmart policy;
  - asked to provide a suitable sun protective hat, covering clothing and sunscreen for their child;
  - required to give permission for educators to apply sunscreen to their child; and
  - encouraged to use SunSmart measures themselves when at the Centre.
- As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, children, Educators, Centre users and other staff:
  - wear a suitable sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
  - apply sunscreen; and
  - seek shade whenever possible.
- Parents/Guardians are requested to apply SPF30+ water resistant sunscreen to children no more than 20 minutes before they are brought to the Centre. (This guards against any skin irritation from the use of different sunscreen being used.) Where children are attending the Centre for more than 2 hours, they are required to bring their own sunscreen to reapply every 2 hours when outdoors.
- Babies under 12 months are to be kept out of direct sun.

#### **Educators and Staff Will :-**

- Seek shade whenever possible.
- Wear appropriate clothing in accordance with the Dress Code Policy.
- Check the availability of shade when planning excursions and other outdoor activities.

- Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or suitably protected area from the sun or stay indoors.

### Monitoring and review (QA 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7)

- All staff, including management and educators, monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy and revise the policy when required (at least once every three years) by completing a policy review and membership renewal with SunSmart at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au).
- SunSmart policy updates and requirements will be made available to children, Educators, Centre users and other staff.

### Legislation and Standards

- [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004](#)
- [Children's Services Act 1996](#)
- [Children's Services Regulations 2009](#)
- [Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 \(Vic\) \(Part 2: Principles for children\)](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#): Section 167: Protection from harm and hazards
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011](#)

Reg 100	Risk assessment for excursions
Reg 113	Outdoor space: natural environment
Reg 114	Outdoor space: shade
Reg 168 (2)(a)(ii) (2)(a)(ii)	Policies and procedures: Sun protection

### [National Quality Standards](#)

Quality Area (QA) / Standard (S) / Element (E)

QA 1	Educational program and practice
S 1.1	An approved Learning Framework informs the development of a curriculum that enhances each child's learning and development.
E 1.1.1	Curriculum decision making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.
E 1.1.2	Each child's current knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.
E 1.1.3	The program, including routines, is organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.
E 1.1.5	Every child is supported to participate in the program.
E 1.1.6	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions and to influence events and their world.
S 1.2	Educators and co-ordinators are focused, active and reflective in designing and delivering the program for each child.
E 1.2.2	Educators respond to children's ideas and play and use intentional teaching to scaffold and extend each child's learning.
QA 2	Children's health and safety
S 2.1	Each child's health is promoted.
E 2.1.1	Each child's health needs are supported.

S 2.3	Each child is protected.
E 2.3.2	Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.
<b>QA 3</b>	<b>Physical environment</b>
S 3.1	The design and location of the premises is appropriate for the operation of a service.
E 3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources are suitable for their purpose.
E 3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.
E 3.1.3	Facilities are designed or adapted to ensure access and participation by every child in the service and to allow flexible use, and interaction between indoor and outdoor space.
S 3.2	The environment is inclusive, promotes competence, independent exploration and learning through play.
E 3.2.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces are designed and organised to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
<b>QA 4</b>	<b>Staffing arrangements</b>
S 4.1	Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development and ensure their safety and wellbeing.
E 4.2.1	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.
<b>QA 5</b>	<b>Relationships with children</b>
S 5.1	Respectful and equitable relationships are developed and maintained with each child.
E 5.1.2	Every child is able to engage with educators in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning.
E 5.2.1	Each child is supported to work with, learn from and help others through collaborative learning opportunities.
<b>QA 6</b>	<b>Collaborative partnerships with families and communities</b>
S 6.1	Respectful and supportive relationships with families are developed and maintained.
E 6.1.1	There is an effective enrolment and orientation process for families.
E 6.1.3	Current information about the service is available to families.
S 6.2	Families are supported in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about child rearing are respected.
E 6.2.2	Current information is available to families about community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
S 6.3	The service collaborates with other organisations and service providers to enhance children's learning and wellbeing.
E 6.3.1	Links with relevant community and support agencies are established and maintained.
<b>QA 7</b>	<b>Leadership and service management</b>
S 7.1	Effective leadership promotes a positive organisational culture and builds a professional learning community.
E 7.1.2	The induction of educators, co-ordinators and staff members is comprehensive.
S 7.3	Administrative systems enable the effective management of a quality service.
E 7.3.5	Service practices are based on effectively documented policies and procedures that are available at the service and reviewed regularly.

### Relevant documents / links

- [Belonging, Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework](#) (July 2009)
- [Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework](#) (VEYLDF) (May 2016)
- DET [Building Quality Standards Handbook](#) (BQSH): Section 8.5.5 Shade Areas
- [Get Up & Grow: Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood](#) (Section 2) 2009
- Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) [The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct](#) - Principle 3.2
- [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) (APST) – Standard 4.4 and 7.2
- ARPANSA [Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation](#) (2006)
- Safe Work Australia: [Guidance Note – Sun protection for outdoor workers](#) (2016)
- AS 4685.1: 2014 Playground equipment and surfacing – General safety requirements and test methods



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## Sun protection agreement and permission form

I understand Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre is a registered SunSmart Early Childhood Program member and follows SunSmart and Cancer Council Victoria recommendations to use a combination of sun protection measures (clothing, sunscreen, a hat, shade, and if practical, sunglasses) during the daily local sun protection times (whenever UV levels reach 3 or higher), typically from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria.

I agree to help support this membership and help minimise my child's potential risk of skin and eye damage and skin cancer by doing the following:

(Please tick all that apply)

- Dress my child in cool clothing that covers as much skin as possible e.g. tops that cover the shoulders, arms and chest, has higher necklines or collars, and long shorts and skirts. I understand that singlet tops or shoestring dresses do not provide adequate sun protection and are best layered with a shirt or t-shirt.
- Remind my child to bring and wear a sun-protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears (e.g. wide-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire hat). I understand that baseball / peak style caps do not provide adequate sun protection and are not appropriate for outdoor play.
- To give permission for Educators/staff to apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen (that I have supplied and labelled with my child/children's name) to all exposed parts of my child's skin including their face, neck, ears, arms and legs. I agree that this sunscreen will be kept at the Centre or in the child's bag and it is my responsibility to make sure there is always an adequate supply available.
- To give permission for Educators/staff to assist my child to develop independent, self-help skills by applying SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to all exposed parts of their own skin including their face, neck, ears, arms and legs. (Recommended from ages three and above)

Child(ren)'s name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date