

SUNSMART POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Skene Street Specialist School to minimise the risk of skin and eye damage and skin cancer.

This policy provides guidelines to:

- support staff and students to use a combination of sun protection measures when UV index levels are 3 or above (generally mid-August – end of April)
- 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, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

POLICY

Excessive exposure 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 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 year (highest in Victoria from mid-August – end of April)
- 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 whenever UV levels reach 3 and above (typically from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria). Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via the free SunSmart app, or at sunsmart.com.au or bom.gov.au.

Skene Street Specialist School has the following measures in place to help reduce the risk of excessive UV sun exposure for staff and students.

Shade

Skene Street Specialist School will provide sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- the courtyard area
- classroom backyard areas
- play areas

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Skene Street Specialist School that may impact on the level of shading available to staff and students, a review of the shaded areas available will be conducted and further shading installed as appropriate.

Sun protective uniform/clothing

Skene Street Specialist School recommends that from mid-August to end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, students come to school wearing sun-protective clothing such as:

- loose, cool, closely woven fabric
- shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
- tops with elbow length or long sleeves
- longer style shorts and skirts
- rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming activities.

From mid-August to 30 April, all students **must** wear a sun protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears for all outdoor activities. Hats may also be worn for all outdoor activities outside of the August to April time period, by parent or student choice.

Staff and students are encouraged to wear hat styles that protect the face, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket. The school will provide hats to all students and staff.

Sunscreen

Skene Street Specialist School encourages all staff and students to apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours according to [manufacturer's instructions](#).

At Skene Street Specialist School students can access sunscreen from their classroom. Staff will assist students in applying sunscreen if required, before each break time or outdoor activities.

Staff and students who may suffer from allergic reactions from certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to contact their classroom teacher to discuss a management plan to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction at school.

Staff and families should role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside.

Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure. Skene Street Specialist School will address sun and UV safety education

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.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website and in parent permissions at the beginning of each school year where a parent agrees/or not to allow their child to have sunscreen
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- [the Department's Policy and Advisory Library:](#)
- [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
- [Duty of care](#)
- [SunSmart](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2022
Approved by	School Council
Next scheduled review date	May 2026
