



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Sarah Pollnitz.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to support sun protection behaviours at Watsonia North Primary School to minimise the 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 when UV index levels are 3 or above (generally mid-August to the end of April in Victoria)
- 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 be responsible for their 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 (highest from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria)
- 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 or above. Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via the SunSmart widget on the school's website/intranet, the free SunSmart app, or at sunsmart.com.au or bom.gov.au.

Watsonia North Primary School has implemented the following measures to protect staff and students from over-exposure to UV radiation during outdoor activities, in accordance with daily sun protection times.

Shade

Watsonia North Primary School provides sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- where students congregate for lunch
- popular play areas

Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outdoors during peak sun protection times, particularly if they do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing.

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

Sun protective uniform/clothing

Watsonia North Primary School includes sun-protective clothing, including:

- loose, cool, densely woven fabric
- shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
- tops with elbow-length sleeves
- longer style dresses

Watsonia North Primary School's *uniform or dress code applies on and off-site unless otherwise advised. When students are not required to wear a school uniform (such as school camps, free dress day), Watsonia North Primary School will ensure steps are taken to encourage students to wear sun-protective clothing whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.*

Hats

From 1st September 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 period, 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

Watsonia North Primary School encourages all staff and students to apply SPF50 or SPF50+ 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 (or more frequently if sweating or swimming).

Watsonia North Primary School has strategies in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors [for example, reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies, sunscreen stations near entry and exit points].

At Watsonia North Primary School, if students do not have their own sunscreen, they are welcome to visit the school nurse to access sunscreen.

Staff and students who may suffer from skin reactions from certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to contact Kylie Birch (School Nurse) to implement a plan to reduce the risk of a sunscreen reaction at school, such as families sending their child to school with a suitable alternative sunscreen.

Sunglasses

Watsonia North 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 the effects of sun exposure and are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school. Watsonia North Primary School will address sun protection and UV safety education as part of Inquiry investigations and specific SunSmart awareness lessons in Health.

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 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 SPF50 or SPF50+ 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, staff and parent meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/new staff orientation.

Families, students and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety at school and home. Watsonia North Primary School may provide information through school assemblies, Compass and the school newsletter.

COMMUNICATION OF SCHOOL POLICIES

All Watsonia North Primary School Policies are communicated to the general public and school community via the school website.

[Policies - Watsonia North Primary School \(wats-north.vic.edu.au\)](https://wats-north.vic.edu.au)

School Operational and Curriculum Policies are available in classrooms, office spaces and communal areas for convenient access.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- the Department's Policy and Advisory Library:
 - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
 - [Heat Health](#)
 - [Outdoor Activities and Working Outdoors](#)
 - [Risk Management – Schools](#)
 - [Shade Sails](#)
 - [Student Dress Code](#)

- [SunSmart and Cancer Council Victoria.](#)
 - [Primary schools free education resources, sample policies and information about the free SunSmart Schools Program.](#)
 - [Secondary schools free education resources and sample policies.](#)
 - [Sunscreen reactions.](#)

Evaluation and Review

Evaluation of this policy will occur every four years as stipulated in the *Watsonia North Primary School Policy Review Cycle* document.

This policy was updated in July 2025, endorsed by School Council and is scheduled for review every three years.

Policy last reviewed	July 2025
Endorsed by	School Council
Next scheduled review date	July 2028