

NQS

QA 2	2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
QA 3	3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings, are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
	3.2.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.

National Regulations

Regs	107	Space requirements – indoor
	108	Space requirements – outdoor space
	110	Ventilation and natural light
	113	Outdoor space – natural environment
	114	Outdoor space – shade
	115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision

Aim

It is a requirement under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* that employees provide a healthy and safe environment for all persons who access the Centre's facilities and / or programs.

Implementation

1. Outdoor Activities

Educators and staff will use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities from mid-August to the end of April and whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above. The sun protection measures include items below numbered 2-11.

Sun Protection times will be monitored at www.sunsmart.com.au or via the free Sun Smart app.

2. Shade

The Centre will provide and maintain adequate shade for outdoor play. Shade options can include a combination of portable, natural and built shade. Regular shade assessments will be conducted to monitor existing shade structures and assist in planning for additional shade. Outdoor activities will be planned in shaded areas. Play activities will be set up in the shade and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns. Children will be directed to use available areas of shade when outside.

3. Hats

Educators, staff and children are required to wear sun safe hats that protect their face, neck and ears. A sun hat is a :

- Legionnaire hat
- Bucket hat with a deep crown and brim size of at least 5cm (adults 6cm)
- Broad brimmed hat with a brim size of at least 6cm (adults 7.5cm)

Children without a sun safe hat will be asked to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under shade, veranda or indoors) or can be provided with a spare hat.

Please note: Baseball caps or visors are not sun safe because they do not provide enough sun protection.

4. Clothing

When outdoors, educators, staff and children will wear sun safe clothing that covers as much of their skin (especially the shoulders, back and stomach) as possible. This includes:

- Loose fitting shirts and dress with sleeves and collars or covered neckline
- Longer style skirts, shorts and trousers
- Dark coloured clothing that is made from cool, densely woven fabric

Children who are not wearing sun safe clothing can be provided with spare clothing

Please note: Midriff, crop or singlet tops are not sun safe because they do not provide enough sun protection.

5. Sunglasses

Children who choose to wear sunglasses will be encouraged to wear close fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3, or 4), are preferably marked eye protection factor 10, cover as much of the eye area as possible and have soft elastic to keep them in place.

6. Sunscreen

All educators, staff and children will apply SPF30+ or higher broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every 2 hours.

Sunscreen will be stored in a cool, dry place and the use-by-date monitored. Authorisation to apply sunscreen will be obtained from parents. Children and babies may not be able to play outside if we are not authorised to apply sunscreen.

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.

Sunscreen is stored in a cool place, out of the sun and the expiry date is monitored.

7. Babies (under 12 months)

When UV levels reach 3 or above babies will not be exposed to direct UV and they will be kept in the shade at all times. Their skin will always be well protected. They will wear sun safe hats and clothing. For babies over 12 months, small amounts of SPF30+ or higher broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen may be applied to their exposed skin.

8. Role Modelling

Educators and staff will act as role models and demonstrate sun safe behaviour by:

- Wearing a sun safe hat (see hats)
- Wearing sun safe clothing (see clothing)
- Applying SPF30+ or higher broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplying every 2 hours
- Using and promoting shade
- Wearing sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067

Families and visitors are encouraged to role model positive sun safe behaviour.

9. Education and Information

Sun protection will be incorporated regularly into learning programs. Sun protection information will be promoted to educators, families and visitors. Further information from the Sun Smart website

www.sunsmart.com.au

10. Policy Availability

The sun protection policy, updates and requirements (including hat, clothing and sunscreen) will be made available to educators and staff, families and visitors in our Parent Handbook and through other Centre communications.

11. Review

The Operations Manager will monitor and review the effectiveness of our sun protection policy regularly, at least once every 12 months and submit to Cancer Council Victoria every 3 years to maintain our Sun Smart Membership.

Extreme Heat

Extreme heat is usually defined as a period of abnormally and uncomfortably hot weather that could adversely affect people's health. The Department of Health and Human Services issues heat health alerts for each weather forecast district to subscribers. (Subscribe at <http://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/environmental-health/climate-weather-and-public-health/heatwaves-and-extreme-heat/heat-health-alert-status>).

This is based on calculated heat health temperature thresholds for each region. There is also a Better Health Channel Smartphone app which can be downloaded for free from www.vic.gov.au/social-media/mobile-apps/better-health-channel-health-information-and-services.html

Babies and young children are especially vulnerable to extreme heat. To protect the health of our children and educators / staff during periods of extreme heat educators will:

- Regularly offer children water to drink
- Regularly ask children if they would like to cool their faces with wet washers or by splashing water on their faces in the bathroom sink
- Regularly sponge the faces of babies using cool, wet washers
- Ensure children are dressed in cool clothing e.g. singlets, short sleeves
- Keep children indoors in a cool, comfortable environment with air conditioning or fans
- Organise water play activities inside
- Use awnings or blinds to block the sun, particularly on sides of the Centre facing the sun
- Cancel or postpone excursions and outdoor activities
- Check the storage instructions for medications and take appropriate action e.g. move medication to fridge or request new medication supply if extreme temperature likely to damage medication
- Listen for bushfire messages if in a bushfire risk area
- Review information / messages on the Better Health Channel app
- Ensure children, including siblings of children at the Centre, are never left in parked cars
- Make available to families the Victorian Government brochure 'How to Cope and Stay Safe in Extreme Heat'.

When the period of extreme heat has subsided educators will:

- Open the windows if there is a cool breeze
- Allow children outside following our sun safety procedures

If there is a complete loss of power during a heatwave, educators will implement Centre procedures for emergency power (see Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy) including the use of battery operated fans to cool children. Families will be contacted to collect children if educators believe children's health is at risk from the heat.

Sources

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Early Years Learning Framework

National Quality Standard

Cancer Council VIC Sample Sunsmart policy for ECEC services

Kidsafensw: Playground surfacing

Heat Health Plan for Victoria

Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) – The Victorian Teaching Code of Conduct – Principle 3.2

Australia Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) – Standard 4.4 and 7.2

ARPANSA Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation (2006)

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually. The review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

Last reviewed: 19.07.2023

Date for next review: July 2024