



Sun Protection Policy



Help for non-English speakers.

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Maryborough Education Centre on 5461 7900.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Maryborough Education Centre (MEC) 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 (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 or above (typically from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria). Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via the SunSmart widget on the school's website, the free SunSmart app, or at sunsmart.com.au or bom.gov.au.

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

Shade

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

- where students congregate for lunch
- the canteen
- outdoor lesson areas
- popular play areas
- assembly areas
- sporting grounds/pools.

Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outdoors during peak sun protection times.

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at MEC 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

MEC's school uniform and dress code includes sun-protective clothing, including:

- 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.
- wearing a wide brimmed, hat with a brim of at least 7cm whenever outside (compulsory for Prep to 6 mainstream and Specialist in Terms 1 and 4)
- encouragement for Year 7-12 mainstream and Specialist Students, whenever outside, to wear a sun protective hat with a brim or seek shade.

MEC's school uniform and dress code applies on and off-site unless otherwise advised. When students are not required to wear school uniform (such as school camps, out of uniform days), MEC will ensure steps are taken to encourage students to wear sun-protective clothing whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

P- 6 & Specialist

From mid-August (exact date to be set by the school annually) 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.

7-12

We expect 7-12 students to take responsibility for being SunSmart by wearing a school hat during outdoor activities or staying in the shade if they are not wearing sunscreen.

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.

Students are required to wear a school hat or another hat style that protects the face, neck, and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket. Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or a hat may be asked to play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun.

Sunscreen

MEC 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 (or more frequently if sweating or swimming).

At MEC students are welcome to attend a staff room in their area to access sunscreen. Staff and students who may suffer from skin reactions from certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to contact the First Aid Officer to implement a management plan to reduce the risk of a sunscreen reaction at school, such as families sending their child to school with a suitable alternative sunscreen.

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

Sunglasses

Where practical MEC 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 and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure. MEC will address sun and UV safety education as part of the health curriculum and through the school nursing program.

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, 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 at home. MEC may provide information through newsletters, noticeboards, school website and school assemblies.

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.
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions.
- 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](#)
 - [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](#).
- The [Healthy Schools Achievement Program](#)'s Sun Protection health priority area [schools will need to register for the free program to gain access to these resources]

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	26 th March 2024
Consultation	Education Policy 12 th March 2024
Approved by	School Council
Next scheduled review date	This policy was last updated on 26 th March 2024 and is scheduled for review as part of the school's 3-year review cycle.

Signed:



Anita Ford
School Council President

Date 26/3/2024