

# GORDON STREET PRE SCHOOL INC.

## SUN PROTECTION POLICY

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Mandatory – Quality Area 2



### PURPOSE

This policy will provide:

- guidelines to ensure children, staff, volunteers and others participating in Gordon Street Pre School programs and activities are well protected from overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun
- information for parents/guardians, staff, volunteers and children attending Gordon Street Pre School regarding sun protection.

### POLICY STATEMENT

#### 1. VALUES

Gordon Street Pre School is committed to:

- promoting sun protection strategies for children, families, staff and visitors to minimise the harmful effects of over exposure to the sun's UV radiation
- ensuring that curriculum planning will minimise over exposure to the sun's UV radiation and also promote an awareness of sun protection and sun safe strategies
- providing information to children, staff, volunteers, parents/guardians and others at the service about the harmful effects of exposure to the sun's UV radiation.

#### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisors, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Gordon Street Pre School.

This policy will apply from the 1<sup>st</sup> September until 30<sup>th</sup> April each year. During this period, a combination of sun protection measures are used for all outdoor activities.

In Victoria UV levels are usually three or higher from mid-August to the end of April. Please check the daily local sun protection times (refer to *Definitions*) to be sure you are using sun protection when it is required. Active outdoor play is encouraged throughout the day all year, provided appropriate sun protection measures are used when necessary.

#### 3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

##### Background

Over exposure to the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world.

Children 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.

A combination of sun protection measures (hats, clothing, sunscreen, shade and sunglasses) is recommended whenever UV levels are three or higher during daily sun protection times (refer to *Definitions*).

It is also important to have a healthy balance of UV radiation exposure. Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones and muscles, and for general health. Appropriate levels of sun exposure can vary from child to

child. According to the World Health Organisation, children with naturally very dark skin may not be required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements. This should be discussed with parents/guardians prior to the child commencing at the service.

### **From May put sun gear away**

Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones, muscles and general wellbeing. The best natural source of vitamin D is the sun's UV. From May to August when UV levels are low (below 3), Victorian services are advised to put sunhats and other sun protection gear away and ensure staff and children get some sun for vitamin D. At this time of year, most people need to expose their face, arms and hands (or equivalent area of skin) to midday winter sun for 2-3 hours spread over the week. Those with naturally very dark skin may need 3-6 times this amount. Sun protection is not normally required at this time of year, unless near highly reflective surfaces such as snow, outside for extended periods or when the UV reaches 3 and above.

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

Legislation that governs the operation of approved children's services is based on the health, safety and welfare of the children and requires that children are protected from hazards and harm.

### **Legislation and standards**

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for Children)
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Section 167
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: including Regulations 100, 101, 113, 114, 168(2)(a)(ii)
- *National Quality Standard*, including Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

## **4. DEFINITIONS**

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

**Clothing for sun protection:** Clothing that is loose-fitting, made from cool, densely woven fabric and covers as much skin as possible: tops with elbow-length sleeves and, if possible, collars and knee-length or longer shorts and skirts. Singlet tops and shoestring tops/dresses do not provide adequate protection in the sun.

**Shade:** An area sheltered from direct and indirect sun, such as a large tree, canopy, verandah or artificial cover. Shade can be built, natural or temporary and can reduce overall exposure to the sun's UV by 75%. When combined with appropriate clothing, hats and sunscreen, children can be well protected from UV over exposure when outdoors. Research shows that preschool environments with trees, shrubbery, and broken ground not only provides better sun protection in outdoor play but also triggers more physical activity.

**Sunhat:** To help protect the neck, ears, temples, face and nose, a broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket-style hat is required. Baseball caps and visors offer little protection to the cheeks, ears and neck, and are not permitted.

**Sunglasses:** Sunglasses are optional. If worn, it is recommended that glasses are a close fitting, wrap-around style that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible. Wearing a hat with a brim that shades the eyes can also reduce UV radiation to the eyes by 50%.

**Sunscreen:** SPF 30 or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen. Monitor the expiry date and store in a cool, dry place. From 3 years of age, children are encouraged to apply their own sunscreen under supervision of staff.

## 5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

### Sources

- AS 4685.1: 2014 Playground equipment and surfacing – General safety requirements and test methods
- Safe Work Australia: [Guidance Note – Sun protection for outdoor workers](#) (2016)
- Cancer Council Australia: [www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart](http://www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart)
- *Get Up & Grow: Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood*. Department of Health resources. Particularly Section 2 of the Director/Coordinator Book and the Staff Book: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-early-childhood-nutrition-resources>
- 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)
- [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

### Service policies

- *Excursions and Service Events Policy*
- *Nutrition and Active Play Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- ensuring parents/guardians are informed about the *Sun Protection Policy* on enrolment, including the need to provide an appropriate sunhat and clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) for their child when attending the service
- providing a supply of sunscreen for use on all persons to whom this policy applies
- ensuring parents/guardians provide an authority for staff to apply sunscreen prior to their child commencing at the service (Attachment 1) and that this is stored with each child's enrolment record (refer to *General Definitions*)
- ensuring children wear appropriate sunhats, clothing for sun protection and sunscreen when attending the service
- providing appropriate spare sunhats for children and adults that will be laundered after each use
- ensuring there is adequate shade in the service grounds to protect children from over exposure to UV radiation (Regulation 114)
- ensuring that program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- ensuring that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events (Regulations 100, 101)
- ensuring that information on sun protection is incorporated into the educational program
- ensuring educators, staff, children and other participants at the service wear sunhats, clothing for sun protection and sunglasses (optional) when outside, apply sunscreen and seek shade during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- Advising parents/guardians that sunscreen should be applied prior to the session, and (four year old group children) will be re-applied with sunscreen once during the session where necessary
- reinforcing this policy by providing information on sun protection to service users via newsletters, noticeboards, meetings and websites etc.

### **The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:**

- ensuring parents/guardians are informed of the *Sun Protection Policy* on enrolment, including the need to provide an appropriate sunhat and clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) for their child when attending the service
- obtaining a parent's/guardian's authority for staff to apply sunscreen prior to their child commencing at the service (Attachment 1) and storing this with each child's enrolment record (refer to *General Definitions*)
- ensuring program planning includes the application of a combination of sun protection measures for outdoor activities during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- ensuring information on sun protection is incorporated into the educational program (refer to the SunSmart website)
- ensuring that the availability of shade is considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other outdoor events (Regulations 100, 101).
- Applying sunscreen to children who are attending the Extended Care session

### **All other Staff are responsible for:**

- wearing sunhats, clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) and sunglasses (optional) when outside, applying sunscreen and seeking shade during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- ensuring each child, and any other participant at the service, wears an appropriate sunhat, clothing for sun protection and sunscreen for all outdoor activities during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- checking that all sunhats brought to the service meet the recommendation for adequate protection, are named and stored individually
- ensuring spare sunhats are laundered after each use
- applying sunscreen (refer to *Definitions*) to children's exposed skin – except in cases where parents/guardians have not given authority. Where possible this should be done 20 minutes before going outdoors. Children, where appropriate, will be encouraged to apply sunscreen with the assistance of an educator (sunscreen will be applied once during a four year old session)
- storing sunscreen in a cool place and monitoring the expiry date – including for sunscreen supplied by parents/guardians
- ensuring that children without appropriate sunhats or clothing for sun protection play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun
- encouraging children to seek shade when playing outside and utilise shaded areas for outdoor equipment that is not fixed during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- encouraging children to wear sunhats when travelling to and from the service
- ensuring that sun protection strategies are a priority when planning excursions
- co-operating with their employer with respect to any action taken by the employer to comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*.
- Applying sunscreen to children who are attending the Extended Care session

### **Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- providing a named sunhat (refer to *Definitions*) for their child's use at the service
- applying sunscreen to their child before the commencement of each session during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy
- providing written authority for staff to apply sunscreen to their child
- providing, at their own expense, an alternative sunscreen to be left at the service if their child has a particular sensitivity to the sunscreen provided by the service
- wearing a sunhat, clothing for sun protection (refer to *Definitions*) and sunglasses (optional) when outside at the service, applying sunscreen and seeking shade during the times specified in the *Scope* of this policy.

**Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.**

## **EVALUATION**

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider and Person with Management or Control will:

- regularly seek feedback from educators, staff, parents/guardians, children, management and all affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy or its procedures.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- NIL

## **AUTHORISATION**

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Gordon Street Pre School on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019.

**REVIEW DATE: 9<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2021**