Cheltenham Community Centre Early Learning Childcare

E16. Sun Smart

1. Policy

1.1 Cheltenham Community Centre (CCC) Children's Services is committed to:

- To ensure that all children and staff are protected from too much UV exposure which can result in sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer.
- While ensuring that children have enough UV exposure to maintain a healthy intake of Vitamin D required for development and maintenance of healthy bones and muscles and for general health.
- Ensuring the outdoor environment provides shade for children, educators and staff
- Ensuring children are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills.
- Support our service's strategies to meet its duty of care and occupational health and safety obligations to minimise harmful UV exposure for children, staff, and visitors.

1.2 This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Early Childhood Educators, staff and parents/guardians who wish to enroll or have already enrolled at CCC.

1.3 In order to assess whether the values and purposes of this policy have been achieved, we will:

- Welcome feedback from everyone affected by this policy regarding its effectiveness
- Monitor the implementations, 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, and
- Notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

Background

The sun's UV can't be seen or felt. Whatever the weather, it's important for people of all skin types to use sun protection whenever UV levels are three or higher.

Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. More than two in three Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime. Infants and toddlers 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 strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.
By teaching sensible sun protection habits from an early age and implementing sun protection measures, early childhood services can play a significant role in reducing skin cancer risk.

2. Procedure

2.1 To assist with the implementation of this policy, educators and children are encouraged to access the local sun protection times via the SunSmart widget on the service's website, the free SunSmart app or at sunsmart.com.au

2.2 Staff will be inducted into SunSmart practices at orientation, ongoing discussion, and professional development of SunSmart procedures and considerations will occur at regular Early Childhood Educator meetings.

2.3 Families will be provided with parent information about SunSmart practices during orientation into the program, through noticeboard displays, discussion with staff and newsletter articles.

2.4 SunSmart activities will be included in the early childhood program.

2.5 Protection procedures are to be implemented from mid-August to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach three and above.

2.6 From May to mid-August (when the UV rating level is under 3) protection measures will not be implemented so that children are able to gain adequate exposure to Vitamin D.

2.7 When outside, children wear loose fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible.

2.8 **All** children are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck, and ears. E.g., wide-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire style hats are recommended. Peak caps and visors are not appropriate for sun protection and families will be asked to provide a more protective hat.

2.9 Children without sun protective hats or covering clothing will need to play inside or in an area protected from the sun.

2.10 Children will be encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor play activities.

2.11 Parents should apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen to children prior to a session.

2.12 Parents should provide consent for staff to reapply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen to children every two hours while attending CCC.

2.13 Sunscreen is to be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours if outdoors.

2.14 An annual shade audit will be conducted by Early Years Educators and Team Leader using guidelines and tools provided by SunSmart.

2.15 When enrolling children in the Children's Service parents will be:

- Informed of the Sun Smart Policy
- Asked to dress their child in sun protective clothing, apply sunscreen and a hat for their child/children while in care.
- Encouraged to practice Sun Smart behaviour and to reinforce the need for protection from the sun.

3. Legislation and regulations

3.1· Relevant legislation and standards include, but are not limited to:

Occupational Health and Safety Act (2004)
Children's Services Act 1996
Children's Services Regulations 2009
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for children)
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 167: Protection from harm and hazards
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

- Part 4.2: Children's health and safety
  - Reg 100 - Risk assessment must be conduction before excursions
  - Reg 101 – Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
- Part 4.3: Physical Environment
  - Reg 113 - Outdoor space: natural environment
  - Reg 114 - Outdoor space: shade
- Part 4.7: Leadership and service management
  - Reg168(2)(a)(ii) – Policies and procedures: Sun protection
  - Reg 170 – Policies and procedures to be followed
  - Reg 171 – Policies and procedures to be kept available
  - Reg 172 - Notification of change to policies or procedures

4. Definitions

4.1 **Shade:** Well-designed and positioned shade can significantly reduce direct and indirect UV exposure and create cool, comfortable spaces for outdoor learning and play. Shade can be natural (trees, shrubs or shadow cast from nearby buildings), built (pergola, shade sails, etc.), portable (shade umbrellas, marquees, etc.) or a combination of these. Ensure shade is easily accessible, aesthetically pleasing, in good condition and regularly maintained. Use surfaces that reflect less UV, e.g., natural, dark or rough surfaces such as grass, soil and tanbark. When combined with appropriate clothing, hats and sunscreen, children can be well protected from UV 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.

4.2 **Sunglasses:** If practical for your setting, 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. Wearing a hat with a brim that shades the eyes can also reduce UV radiation to the eyes by 50%.

4.3 **Sun protection times:** The sun protection times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology showing when UV levels will be 3 and above. At this level there is a risk of skin damage for most Australians. In Victoria, UV levels regularly reach 3 and above from mid-August to the end of April. You can find the sun protection times for your location on the free SunSmart widget and app or at sunsmart.com.au or at myuv.com.au.

4.4 **Sun protective Clothing:** If you can see skin, UV can reach it. Clothing can be a great barrier between the sun's UV and your skin. Cover as much skin as possible with cool, loose-fitting clothing made from densely woven fabric like cotton. This includes tops that cover the chest, shoulders and arms and longer style shorts or skirts. If a child is wearing a singlet top or dress with thin straps, they add a t-shirt or shirt before outdoor play.

4.5 **Sun protective hat:** A hat should shade the face, neck and ears such as a wide-brimmed or bucket hat (at least 5cm brim for young children) or legionnaire hat (make sure the front peak

and back flap overlap at the sides). Caps and visors do not provide enough protection and should be swapped for a UV protective hat.

4.6 **Sunscreen:** Sunscreen should be labelled SPF30, SPF50 or SPF50+ and be broad-spectrum and water-resistant. For all children over 6 months, apply sunscreen to any skin not protected by clothing 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours or after water activities. Make sure it has an Australian Licence (Aust L) number and monitor the expiry date. Store sunscreen below 30 degrees and out of direct sun. Cancer Council recommends a usage test before applying a new sunscreen. The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended.

4.7 **UV Index:** The World Health Organization's Global Solar UV Index measures UV levels on a scale from 0 (Low) to 11+ (Extreme). Sun protection is recommended when UV levels are 3 (Moderate) or higher. The UV level is affected by a number of factors including the time of day, time of year, cloud cover, altitude, location and surrounding surfaces. https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/radiation-the-ultraviolet-(uv)-index

4.8 **Ultraviolet (UV) radiation:** Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is a type of energy produced by the sun and some artificial sources, such as arc welders and solariums. The sun's UV is the main cause of skin cancer. Too much UV exposure also causes sunburn, tanning, premature ageing and eye damage. You can see the sun's light. You can feel the sun's heat. But you can't see or feel the sun's UV radiation. UV can reach you directly from the sun. It can also be reflected off different surfaces and scattered by particles in the air. Your senses cannot detect UV radiation, so you won't notice it is all around you and you won't immediately notice any damage.

5. Sources and related policies

5.1 **Sources – including relevant standards/links**

- ACECQA Sun protection policy and procedure guidelines (August 2021)
- ACECQA Providing appropriate outdoor space (July 2023)
- ARPANSA Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation (2006)
- Sun Smart Be SunSmart, Play SunSmart
- ACECQA Belonging, Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework (V2.0, 2022)
- Bureau of Meteorology Australia's official weather forecasts & weather radar - Bureau of Meteorology
- Safe Work Australia: Guide on exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation (UVR) (2019)
- Suggested learning experiences for sun protection
- Sun protection resources and information for early childhood services
- Sun protection advice for parents and carers
- Sun protection information for babies and toddlers
- Sun protection information in different languages

- SunSmart website Accessibility tool - for accessible information and to translate all content into audio/text for over 100 languages

- SunSmart - Schools and Early Childhood

- The World Health Organization

5.2 **Services related policies**

- Interactions with Children
- Parent complaint procedure
- Enrolment & Orientation
- Workplace health and safety
- Child Safe Environment
- Governance and management
- Water safety
- Child Safe and Wellbeing

Revision History

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