



SUN PROTECTION POLICY P-6 2013-2015

School Context

North Ainslie Primary School is an ACT government school which works within the parameters of the ACTDET policy framework. It is situated in an inner northern suburb of Canberra. North Ainslie is a culturally and linguistically diverse school, which provides education for approximately four hundred and fifty students. North Ainslie is particularly unique because it is home, not only to a mainstream primary school (P-6), but also to an introductory English centre for migrant and refugee children (IEC), and to a learning support unit for students with autism (LSU). The main site at North Ainslie operates two fifteen hour preschool sessions. An additional preschool campus is located in the neighbouring suburb of Hackett. The school also provides mainstream integration for a number of children with learning disabilities. Our school community is one which covers a broad socio-economic base.

Purpose

This policy aims to ensure that sun protection is provided for students and workers while they are on the school premises during school hours or undertaking school activities when UV levels are 3 and above.

The policy is followed from the beginning of August until the end of May, when UV radiation levels reach 3 and above in Canberra for part or most of each day, and are strong enough to damage unprotected skin. This policy aims to protect students and workers, so far as reasonably practicable, from the dangers associated with over-exposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation (UVR).

When UV levels reach 3 and above a combination of sun protection behaviour is required by all students and workers.

The policy's success relies on the acknowledgment and acceptance by schools and parents/carers that this is a shared responsibility.

Rationale

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world - one out of two Australians will develop skin cancer in their lifetime. Exposure to ultraviolet radiation is a major contributory factor in the development of skin cancer, including melanoma.

Ultraviolet radiation comes both from direct sunlight and "skylight" as it is scattered in the atmosphere. Ultraviolet radiation is also reflected from surrounding surfaces such as water, sand, concrete and snow. High levels of radiation are received in wide open areas, such as school ovals, even on a cloudy day.

Ultraviolet radiation is 3 and above for part or most of each day between August and May in Canberra, peaking in December and January (i.e. Term 1 and 4). The middle of the day is when ultraviolet radiation is highest. Outdoor events therefore need to be minimised, when possible, between 11.00a.m and 3.00p.m during the summer/Daylight Saving Time. Damage to children's skin can occur before and after these hours but it takes longer.

Most Australians receive the bulk of their Vitamin D supply from exposing their skin to small amounts of ultraviolet radiation in sunlight. Due to low levels of ultraviolet radiation in Canberra during the winter months, The Cancer Council ACT does not generally recommend sun protection in June and July unless outdoors for extended periods. This is to reduce the risk of Vitamin D deficiency in the ACT region.

Implementation Procedures

Sun Protective Clothing

- North Ainslie Primary staff will require students to wear SunSmart hats when outside i.e. broad-brimmed (min. 6cm brim), bucket (min. 5cm brim with a deep crown) or legionnaire hats with adequate side flaps that cover the face, ears and neck.
- SunSmart hats should have cords removed or have safety cords which are designed to break under minimal strain as they can become a strangulation risk if caught on fixed playground equipment.
- North Ainslie Primary school will support the wearing of sun protective clothing: loose fitting, closely woven cotton fabrics and shirts with a collar during outdoor sport, lunchtimes, school camps and excursions.
- Students may wear sunglasses. Parents should ensure that these meet the Australian Standard for ultraviolet protection and are labelled A.S. 1067. A close fitting wrap-around pair will offer best protection.
- All members of the school community will model SunSmart practices by wearing SunSmart protective hats.
- SunSmart clothes will be sold at the Uniform Store.
- Students will wear SunSmart rash shirts or T- Shirts when participating in outdoor swimming programs, carnivals or recreational water play at a pool.
- Parents/Carers are to decide whether their child should wear SunSmart rash shirts or T Shirts when participating in competitions which are organised by the NAPS staff. Students are required to wear rash shirts or T Shirts during fun water play.

Shade

- Students are encouraged to play in the designated shade areas: the covered equipment areas on the Junior and Senior Playgrounds, and the Senior Oval gazebo. At preschool students are asked to play in the shade of the trees or under cover.
- The NAPS staff support the policy **NO HAT/ PLAY IN THE SHADE**. If a student does not have an approved SunSmart hat they must play in the designated shade areas (see above).
- NAPS staff will try to organise outdoor education programs to best protect students from peak ultraviolet radiation times. Outdoor events will therefore be minimised, if possible, between 11am and 3pm during the summer/daylight saving period.
- NAPS staff and the parent community will ensure that there is appropriate and effective shade at the school and will continue to provide more shade where it feels necessary in the future, including tree planting for future generations.

Sunscreen

- NAPS staff supports the use of broad spectrum and water resistant SPF 30+ sunscreen (4 hour) on exposed skin that cannot be protected by clothing.
- Parents are encouraged to check UV levels and apply sunscreen before their child leaves home, if the levels warrant this. They are also encouraged to provide 30+ broad spectrum and water resistant sunscreen for their child to use at school.

- Teachers are not expected to apply sunscreen to students but will remind students to do so and will supervise and assist younger students where necessary. During the normal school day teachers will remind students to reapply sunscreen prior to the recess break at 11am. At swimming carnivals and other all day outdoor events, students will be reminded to reapply sunscreen every two hours.
- Sunscreen is available from ALL classrooms at school for students to use prior to and at outdoor events i.e. play breaks, sports carnivals, PE lessons. Parents must notify the school on their child's medical form at the beginning of the year if he/she is allergic to sunscreen.
- With parent consent, children with naturally very dark skin will not be required to apply sunscreen.

Education Programs

- SunSmart Education is included in the Health and Physical Education (SHAPE) curriculum documents for all year levels, but also in other relevant classroom programs.
- Remember to:
 1. **SLIP** on some sun-protective clothing
 2. **SLOP** on SPF 30+ sunscreen (broad spectrum, water resistant)
 3. **SLAP** on a hat (that protects your face, head, neck and ears)
 4. **SEEK** shade
 5. **SLIDE** on sunglasses (that meet Australian standards)

All NAPS staff are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the daily SunSmart UV Index to assist them better with sun protection times in Canberra.

Work Health and Safety

Under Work Health and Safety legislation, the school has a duty of care to protect all workers from foreseeable harm, and this includes occupational UV exposure. Workers also have a responsibility to protect themselves from over-exposure to solar UVR when at work.

Timeline

The 1st August is hats on for all of us. The end of May is "hats off" day.

During the winter months of June and July the students and workers will not be required to wear a SunSmart hat or apply sunscreen. This is recommended by Cancer Council ACT and is to reduce the risk of Vitamin D deficiency.

North Ainslie Primary School was awarded national SunSmart status in 2007, and continues its affiliation with the Cancer Council ACT National SunSmart Schools Program. This policy is submitted to Cancer Council ACT every three years to be reviewed. This policy is updated accordingly to maintain high SunSmart standards.

References:

Cancer Council ACT National SunSmart Schools Program (October 2006, May 2010 and June 2013)
ACT Education and Training School Policy: Sun Protection (ACTDET, 2006)

Revised August 2013