ROBE CHILD CARE ON WHEELS SERVICE

SUN SAFE POLICY

Responsible Officer:	*Manager Childcare Services*
Version	*V3 (replaces Sun Smart policy)*
Date of Document Issue:	*July 2026*
Date of Next Review:	*July 2027*
Relevant Regulations:	EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS S. 2A Paramount consideration—safety, rights and best interests of children S. 12 Meaning of serious incident S. 165 Offence to inadequately supervise children S. 167 Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards 100 Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion 113 Outdoor space-natural environment 114 Outdoor space-shade 136 First aid qualification 161 Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record 162 Health information to be kept in enrolment record 168 Education and care service must have policies and procedures 168 (2)(a)(ii) Sun Protection 170 Policies and procedures must be followed 171 Policies and procedures to be kept available 172 Notification of change to policies or procedures

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National Quality Standards (NQS):	QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY 2.1 Health-Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted 2.1.1 Wellbeing and comfort-Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's needs for sleep, rest and relaxation. 2.1.3 Healthy Lifestyles-Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child 2.2 Safety-Each child is protected 2.2.1 Supervision- At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard QUALITY AREA 3: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT 3.1.1 Fit for Purpose-Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world with more than two in three Australians developing some form of skin cancer in their lifetime. Too much of the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. 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 (Cancer Council Australia). 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.

RELATED POLICIES

Administration of First Aid Policy	Health and Safety Policy
Bush Fire Policy	Physical Environment Policy
Clothing Policy	Supervision Policy
Emergency and Evacuation Policy	Water Safety Policy
Enrolment Policy	Work Health and Safety Policy
Excursion/Incursion Policy	

PURPOSE

By implementing a 'best practice' Sun Safe Policy, our Service can help protect all children and staff from the harmful effects of ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun and teach children good sun protection habits from an early age to reduce their risk of skin cancer. To ensure the outdoor environment provides shade for children, educators and staff to minimise UV exposure. Additionally, this policy provides guidance on how to protect children and staff from severe hot weather events which are becoming more prevalent in Australia resulting from climate change.

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Please note, UV radiation is an invisible source of radiation from the sun and unlike infrared radiation (heat) we cannot feel UV on our skin. UV levels are not dependent on weather conditions. Sun damage can occur on windy, cloudy and cool days. Sun damage is caused by UV radiation, not temperature or sunshine.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service will work in compliance with the *National SunSmart Early Childhood Program* to ensure children's health and safety is maintained at all times whilst at the Service. This policy has been reviewed and approved by the Schools and Early Childhood lead at SunSmart (2025).
Our Service will monitor the Australian Bureau of Meteorology for notification of severe heat events and implement risk mitigation strategies to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of children. This policy applies to all activities on and off site.

MONITORING SUN PROTECTION TIMES

The sun protection times are a forecast from the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) for the time-of-day that UV levels are predicted to reach 3 or above. At these levels, a combination of sun protection is recommended for all skin types
Our Service will monitor sun protection times daily through one or more of the following methods:

- using the smartphone *SunSmart global UV app* available at iTunes App Store and Google Play store
- using the SunSmart widget on the Service's website available at UV widget - SunSmart
- viewing the Bureau of Meteorology app or website http://www.bom.gov.au/index.php
- visiting www.myuv.com.au

UV levels vary across Australia and throughout the year. This listing highlights when the UV index is typically 3 and above in each state / territory. There may be times UV levels are 3 and above outside these periods.

SA August to end of April

Extra care is taken during the peak UV radiation times and outdoor activities are scheduled outside of these times where possible, or in the shade.

UV radiation exposure is considered as part of a Service's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities on and off-site. The sun protection measures listed are used for all outdoor activities during the daily local sun protection times.

SHADE

THE APPROVED PROVIDER WILL ENSURE:

- sufficient natural, portable, or man-made shade is provided, particularly in high use areas
- shaded areas will be used for play experiences and children actively encouraged to play in the shade
- play experiences will be monitored throughout the day and moved as required to remain in the shade
- regular risk assessments and reviews will be made of the outdoor area to assist in planning for further shade requirements
- children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are required to choose a shady play space or a suitable area protected from the sun and not move into unshaded areas of the playground
- children will still be required to wear hats, protective clothing, and sunscreen when playing under natural or portable shade.

HATS

Educators, staff, children, and visitors are required to wear sun safe hats at all times they are outdoors. Cancer Council Australia describes sun safe hats as:

- hats that protect a person's face, neck, and ears, which include:
    - a legionnaire hat – the front peak and flap should overlap at the sides and the flap should cover the neck
    - a bucket hat with a deep crown and angled brim that is at least 5cm for young children and at least 6cm for adults and must shade the face, neck, and ears
    - a broad brimmed hat with a brim size of at least 6cm for children or 7.5cm for adults. The brim should provide shade for the whole face

Please note: Baseball caps or visors do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not a suitable alternative.

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- Children without a sun safe hat will be required to play in an area protected from the sun. They may be provided with a spare hat by the Service if available.

CLOTHING

- When outdoors, staff and children will wear sun safe clothing that covers as much of the skin as possible. Cancer Council Australia recommends clothing that:
    - covers the shoulders, back and stomach
    - is loose fitting, such as loose-fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered neckline, or longer style skirts, shorts and trousers.
- Children who are not wearing sun safe clothing can be provided with spare clothing or will be required to play under shade or in an area protected from the sun *Please note: Midriff, crop or singlet tops do not provide enough sun protection and therefore are not recommended.*

SUNSCREEN

As per Cancer Council Australia recommendations:

- staff and children will apply SPF50+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every 2 hours or more frequently if washed or wiped off
- permission to apply sunscreen is included in the Service enrolment form (see *Enrolment Policy*)
- where children have allergies or sensitivity to the sunscreen, parents are asked to provide an alternative sunscreen, or the child will be required to play in the shade. A record of any allergy must be provided in writing from the parent/guardian and recorded on the child's enrolment record. Cancer Council Australia recommends usage tests before applying a new 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 supervised, cool, dry place and the use-by-date monitored.

SUN PROTECTION FOR BABIES

Recommendations for babies from the Cancer Council Australia include:

- babies under 12 months will not be exposed to direct sun during daily sun protection times, when the UV Index is forecast to reach 3 or above
- ensure routine includes inside activities during the middle of the day

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- physical protection such as shade positioning, clothing and hats are the best sun protection measures
- check the baby's clothing, hat and shade positioning regularly to ensure protection from UV
- for those small areas of exposed skin not protected by hats or clothing, apply sunscreen to infants 6 months and older

Avoid the use of sunscreen on babies under six months of age (or as recommended by recognised authorities) ACECQA, Sun Protection Guidelines (2025).

THE APPROVED PROVIDER, MANAGEMENT, NOMINATED SUPERVISOR AND EDUCATORS WILL:

- ensure obligations under the *Education and Care National Law and Regulations* are met
- educators, staff, students and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy
- new employees, students and volunteers are provided with a copy of the *Sun Safe Policy* and procedure as part of their induction and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed
- ensure risk assessments are conducted to identify any potential hazards to children during summer

  months that could cause harm or injury to children. Risk minimisation control measures will be put in place to protect children. Potential hazards could include:
  - hot equipment- slides, poles, guardrails, any metal surfaces
  - hot surfaces- rubber and synthetic grass, walkways, concrete surfaces
  - sun burn and dehydration
  - access to bodies of water (filled water troughs/containers/trays/pools)
  - severe heat
  - bushfires and air pollution
- complete a *Daily Playground Surface Temperature Check* during summer months or extreme hot weather
- use a thermometer or their hand to test surface temperature and make an informed decision about permitting children to play on equipment or in the outdoor space. If the surface temperature is determined to be too hot or is recorded as at or above 50°C Kidsafe Australia recommends that children do NOT play on the surface
- ensure children wear shoes when playing in the outdoor area- [children may remove shoes when playing in sand or mud pit see *Barefoot Play Procedure*]

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- monitor the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) for severe weather warnings and implement procedures to ensure the health and safety of all children and staff
- monitor bush fire activity and be aware of air quality and hazardous levels of air pollution caused by bushfires *(see Bushfire Policy)*
- ensure children have access to water at all times throughout the day and offer extra feeds/drinks to babies during hot weather to avoid dehydration
- be aware of the signs and symptoms of heat-related illness in babies and young children and implement first aid as required
- keep children indoors during severe heat events
- ensure fans/air conditioning are used to help keep children cool
- close blinds/curtains where required to prevent sun shining into rooms
- adhere to SA health department advice for hot weather risks and recommendations
- ensure sunscreen purchased for the Service complies with Australian Standard AS/NZS 2604:2012.

ROLE MODELLING AND WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

Cancer Council Australia acknowledges that children are more likely to develop sun-safe habits if they are role-modelled and demonstrated by adults around them. Occupational UV exposure is also a WH&S issue. All educators, staff at the Service will therefore be required to role model appropriate sun
protection behaviours by:

- wearing a sun safe hat (see Hats)
- wearing sun safe clothing (see Clothing)
- applying SPF50 or 50+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors (See Sunscreen section)
- using and promoting shade
- wearing sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067.1:2016 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4)
- discussing sun protection with children and demonstrating a positive and proactive approach to the management of sun protection in the Service
- families and visitors are encouraged to role model positive sun safe behaviour
- monitoring the UV Index Levels and Daily Sun Protection times throughout the day
- regularly monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the *Sun Safe Policy*

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- regularly drinking water and encouraging children to drink extra water in hot weather
- adapting the learning environment when severe weather events occur

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

- Sun protection will be incorporated regularly into learning programs. Children understand why sun safety is important and learn how to take effective sun protection, including taking leadership roles in managing sun protection e.g., accessing daily UV levels and sun protection times, hat reminders and management of sunscreen.
- Sun protection information will be promoted to staff, families and visitors
- SunSmart App daily sun protection times are promoted to guide staff, parents and children behaviour
- Severe hot weather events will be monitored through the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) and risk mitigation measures implemented
- Educators and staff are encouraged to complete the free Cancer Council Generation SunSmart online PL learning modules
- Further information and resources are available from the Cancer Council website and each state and territory SunSmart web page.
    - Sun safety
    - SunSmart in schools and early childhood
- The *Sun Safe Policy* will be made available to all educators, staff, students, families, volunteers and visitors of the Service to ensure a comprehensive understanding about keeping sun safe including appropriate hat, clothing and sunscreen requirements
- When enrolling their child/ren to our Service, parents will be required to give permission for educators to apply sunscreen to their child- either Service or family supplied sunscreen
- Should parents not provide permission for educators to apply sunscreen to their child for medical, sensory or other reasons, the child will be required to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under shade, verandah or indoors) with an appropriate hat and clothing. Management can request a GP letter outlining their advice, or work in consultation with the parent or guardian to develop and sign an individualised plan to minimise overexposure to UV in other ways.
- Information about Sun Safety will be included in our *Family Handbook* and sun protection information and resources made accessible and communicated regularly to families

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RISKS OF SUMMER PLAY

Australia has a hot climate and inevitably playground equipment and surfacing can heat up rapidly and retain heat. Many playground surfaces and equipment can exceed temperatures greater than 50°C and if young children come into contact with these surfaces, they can be burned severely within seconds. Surfaces can retain heat for long periods of time and cause burns to children. Play surfaces must be monitored before children have access to the outdoor environment.

SEVERE HEAT

Severe heat or heatwaves are periods of unusually hot weather. Climate change is resulting in more intense heatwaves in Australia and presents an extreme risk to the health and safety of children. Babies and young children can dehydrate quickly which can cause heat-related illness including heat stroke and heat exhaustion.

Active heatwave warnings are indicated within the Australian Warning System (AWS) and range from Advice to Emergency Warning. Risk management measures must be implemented and managed to ensure children remain safe and healthy during a severe heat event.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Sun Safe Policy* will be updated and reviewed annually, or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management and notification of any change to policies will be made to families within 14 days. Our Service will submit this *Sun Safe Policy* to the Cancer Council every three years to maintain SunSmart status (required if a SunSmart member).

Australian Safety Standards

AS 4174:2018 Knitted and woven shade fabrics
AS/NZS 1067.1:2016, Eye and face protection - Sunglasses and fashion spectacles
AS/NZS 4399:2020, Sun protective clothing - Evaluation and classification
AS/NZS 2604:2012 Sunscreen products - Evaluation and classification
AS/NZS 4685.0:2017, Playground equipment and surfacing - Development, installation, inspection, maintenance and operation.6.2.1 General considerations, 6.3.9 Shade and sun protection, Appendix A Shade and sun protection

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