



Sun Protection

Introduction

St Thomas the Apostle Primary School is aware that staff members, casual relief teachers, students, contractors and members of the broader school community may be exposed to Ultraviolet Radiation (UV) as part of their daily activity. As a result the school has developed the following Sun Protection Guidelines designed to reduce exposure to UV Radiation and any subsequent harm.

Scope

These guidelines apply to all St Thomas the Apostle Primary School sites and to all teaching & non-teaching members of staff, casual relief teachers, students & contractors whilst at school or performing work on the school's behalf.

What is UV Radiation

UV radiation is the wavelength of sunlight that can damage the skin. The level of UV radiation varies depending on the time of the year and the proximity to surfaces such as concrete and metal which can reflect and scatter UV radiation.

In Victoria, UV radiation is most intense during the middle of the day from September to April (11 am to 3 pm during daylight savings and 10 am to 2 pm at other times). On a clear Summer's day (i.e. January), it can take only 10 to 15 minutes for skin damage to occur.

What is Skin Cancer?

Over exposure to UV radiation can damage the body's skin cells. This can result in various forms of skin cancer which can be fatal if not detected and treated early. It usually takes many years of exposure for skin cancer to occur. However, there are also cases of it being diagnosed in young people.

The most common types of skin cancer are:

- **Basal cell carcinoma** – the least serious form of skin cancer. Appears as a red lump or scaly area. Usually found on the head, neck and upper body.
- **Squamous cell carcinoma** – appears as a thick, scaly red spot that may bleed, crust or ulcerate. Occurs on most exposed areas of the body. Can spread to other parts of the body.



Sun Protection Measures

A risk assessment will be conducted for all outdoor work scheduled for the period from September to April, when UV radiation levels peak, to assist in developing appropriate sun protection measures. St Thomas the Apostle Primary School need to ensure protection measures are implemented.

The most effective way of reducing UV exposure is to use a combination of protection methods. In order of effectiveness, following the hierarchy of controls, they are:

- » Re-organising lessons to avoid the UV peak of the day.
- » Providing natural or artificial shade.
- » Providing appropriate protective clothing i.e. clothing covering as much exposed skin as possible,
 - Clothing – Long Sleeves and Pants
 - Broad Brimmed Hats
 - Sunglasses

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- » Applying 30+ Sunscreen regularly.

Sunsmart Protection Guidelines

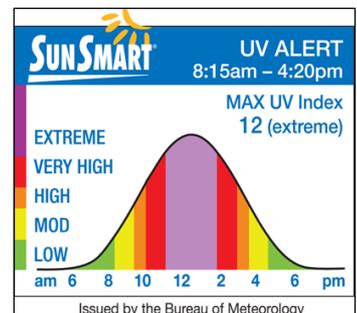
St Thomas the Apostle Primary School is aware that a balance of the sun's ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure is important for staff members & students' health and has developed the following guidelines in accordance with Sunsmart Victoria's policy for sun protection in schools.

The Aims of the Sunsmart Protection Guidelines are to:

- » Ensure that all staff members & students maintain a healthy UV exposure balance;
- » Encourage the entire school community to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index Levels reach 3 and above;
- » Encourage safe UV exposure whenever UV Index Levels are below 3;
- » Work towards a safe school environment that provides shade for staff members, students and the school community at appropriate times;
- » Assist staff members, students to be responsible for their own sun protection
- » Ensure that staff members, families and new staff are informed of the school's Sunsmart guidelines.

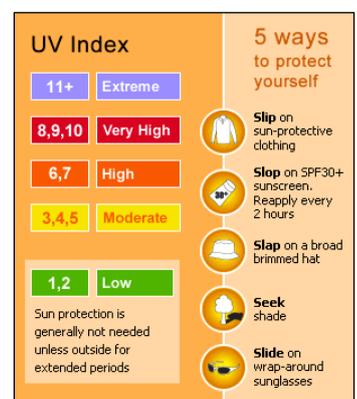
St Thomas the Apostle Primary School refers to the Bureau of Meteorology's UV Alert <http://www.bom.gov.au/vic/uv/melbourne.shtml> to assist the Leadership Team determine the UV Index and to plan school activities accordingly.

Where the UV Index Levels reach 3 and above (Moderate – Extreme) sun protection measures must be considered.



From September to April in Victoria (When average UV Index Levels reach 3 & above)

- » Staff members & students should use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index Levels reach 3 and above. Particular care is taken between 10am and 3pm when UV Levels reach their peak during the day.
- » The Sunsmart guideline listed below and detailed in the UV Index Chart adjacent, must be considered when planning all outdoor events such as assemblies and excursions.



1. Shade

The school will make sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the school grounds particularly in areas where students congregate e.g. lunch, canteen, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas.

The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all outdoor activities. Staff members & students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.

2. Clothing

Sun protective clothing is included in the school's uniform / dress code and sports uniform. School clothing is made of close weave fabric and includes shirts with collars and longer sleeves, longer style dresses, shorts and rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming.

Students who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun.

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St Thomas the Apostle Primary School is aware that staff members, casual relief-teachers, contractors & visitors to the school will also be affected by exposure to UV radiation and encourages them to also consider appropriate hats or outdoor clothing when participating in outdoor activities.

3. Hats

Staff members & students are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad brimmed or bucket hats, whenever they are outside.
(Baseball caps do not offer enough protection and are therefore not recommended.)

The school adopts a **No Hat No Play** policy for students. Staff members, casual relief-teachers, contractors & visitors are also required to wear an appropriate hat when participating in outdoor activities.

4. Sunscreen

SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is available for all staff members, casual relief teachers, contractors & visitors. This should be applied liberally before participating in outdoor activities;



Parents will be encouraged to supply their children with a broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30+ to be applied by the children to clean, dry skin;

Parents will be encouraged to apply sunscreen to their children before the children arrive at school (this is particularly important during Term 1 and 4 when sun protection will be recommended earlier in the day);

Time will be allocated for children to apply sunscreen 15-20 minutes before outdoor activities and to reapply every two hours if outdoors for a prolonged period of time, or more frequently if the children are involved with water play or are perspiring;

SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is available for all staff members & students to access. Sunscreen is visibly located in every classroom;

Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors particularly before lunch and PE (e.g. reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies);

With parental consent, children with naturally very dark skin (skin that rarely or never burns) are not required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements.

5. Sunglasses [SUGGESTED]

Staff members, casual relief teachers, contractors, visitors & students are encouraged 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.

6. Role Modelling

St Thomas the Apostle Primary School requires all staff members, casual relief teachers, contractors & visitors to act as role models for students when participating in outdoor activities by:

- » Wearing sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside;
- » Applying SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen;
- » Seeking shade whenever possible;



- » Regularly communicate the School's sun protection guidelines to staff members & students between September & April each year.