



Sun Protection Policy

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Why Sun Protection Is Important?

Protection from the sun is important because skin cancer is now the second most common cancer in the UK. Its incidence has doubled in the past 20 years and it currently kills about 2000 people each year in the UK. Skin cancer is nearly always caused by over exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation, from the sun or a sunbed; sunburn can double your risk of skin cancer.

UV radiation is also reflected off light coloured surfaces such as water, sand and snow, which has the effect of increasing its strength. You can even get sunburnt through light cloud and too much sun can also cause heat exhaustion, skin irritation and sun stroke, especially in the very young, as well as thickening of the skin, leading to premature ageing and wrinkles.

However, 80% of cases of skin cancer can easily be prevented by protecting ourselves from the sun.

Particular care is needed:

- for children and babies as they spend longer outdoors and burn easily
- for very pale skin, fair or red hair
- if you have a lot of moles or freckles
- where there is a family history of skin cancer

- if you spend a lot of time outdoors

Children are particularly vulnerable as their skin is delicate and easily damaged and many skin cancers result from sun damage acquired during childhood.

Young children are unable to take responsibility for their own sun protection, so we have a duty to protect them from the harmful effects of the sun at all times, when they are attending nursery or any other early years setting, as well as when they are at home.

NB: Although black and brown skinned people are at lower risk of skin cancer it is important that this guidance is applied to all children, irrespective of skin colour.

NB: Unscented creams are recommended as they are less likely to attract insects and other pests.

Responsibilities

Headteacher

- Liaise with the appropriate authorities to ensure that there is up to date information regarding the management of sun issues and the protection of children from the sun.
- Ensure there is a written sun policy/ procedure and make it known to staff and parents/carers.
- Carry out an audit of outside areas – for shade and risk.
- Provide an appropriate environment to maximise the protection of children and staff.
- Make plans to improve and develop the outside area as appropriate.
- Work with parents to raise and reinforce awareness about sun safety and make clear the expectations, policy and strategies of the organisation in this area.
- Provide 'sun' information and reminders to parents (within the regular newsletters etc).
- Ensure that all staff are informed and clear about the sun protection procedures.
- Provide sunscreen for children who do not have any (as a last resort and with the permission of parents/ carers).
- Nominate staff to have responsibility for monitoring sun safety on a day to day basis.
- Monitor that all procedures are being followed.
- Ensure that all staff are familiar with child protection procedures and their implications for this policy.

Staff Working with Children

- Follow the agreed policies and procedures
- Be aware of child protection issues when applying sun screen and follow all agreed Child Protection/ Safeguarding policies and guidance
- Undertake training as necessary
- Act as good role models for children, for example by wearing hats and sunscreen when outside.
- Teach children how to protect themselves from the sun in order to reduce the risk of skin cancer
- Engage children in activities that promote safe sun behaviour.
- Liaise with parents/carers in order to work together for the protection of children.
- Ensure that parents/carers have signed consent forms for their child to wear sunscreen and have it applied by staff, if necessary.
- Ensure that children are not allowed outside unless they are wearing sun cream and are suitably clothed, when appropriate.
- Ensure children have access to (additional) drinks in hot weather.
- Avoid the temptation to wear open toed shoes or sandals whilst at work.

- Report any difficulties with these procedures to the appropriate senior member of staff.

Parents & Carers

- Understand that, as the child's main carer, you have prime responsibility for your child's health and welfare.
- Be aware of the Sun Protection Policy and Guidance.
- Work with staff to jointly ensure that children never get burned – ensure children are suitably dressed for sunny weather, particularly between April and September.
- Apply sunscreen cream to your child's skin at the start of the session/day.
- Sign a consent form giving staff consent to support their child to apply sunscreen cream (preferably Factor 50), as and when necessary, labelled with their child's name.

Sun Safety Code

Cover Up – wear loose, cool clothing to keep the sun off your skin; wear a hat with a wide brim, T-shirt and wraparound sunglasses; make sure you never burn.

Protect Children – sunburn during childhood can lead to cancer in later life; keep babies out of the sun completely and remember that children burn more easily.

Stay in the Shade – especially during the hottest part of the day, from 11.00am to 3.00pm and during the months of April to September.

Use a Sunscreen – SPF25 or higher on any exposed skin; use it an hour before going outside and reapply it frequently and generously.

Sun Protection Guidelines

Covering Up

- Staff and children should ensure that they are adequately covered when in the sun
- Wide-brimmed (or legionnaire style – with neck protection) sunhats will be provided for children who do not have their own; children will be encouraged to wear them outdoors.
- Staff will be encouraged to wear hats when in the sun in order to provide a good role model for children.
- Have spare clothing for children to wear if not appropriately dressed (e.g. teeshirts to ensure their shoulders are covered)
- Allow children to wear UV protective sunglasses.

Avoiding the Sun

- Think about creating a suitable outdoor environment which provides plenty of shade, for example through planting trees for long-term shade and installing structures such as gazebos or canopies (which can be retractable, fixed or removable), tables with umbrellas etc.
- Move seats and equipment to shady areas.
- Timetable outdoor events and activities to avoid the midday sun where possible.
- Timetable children to be outside for only very short periods of time during the hottest part of the day.
- Wherever possible give children a choice of indoor or outdoor play.

Using Sunscreen

- Ensure SPF25+ sunscreen is available to children.

- Parents to provide the sunscreen in a labelled bottle, wherever possible (we will stock cream for children who do not have their own but only use with the permission of parents to avoid possible allergic reactions).
- Date and label the sunscreen with the child's name.
- Encourage parents to apply cream to their child/ren before leaving home or on arrival at the setting.
- If children are within our Nursery School provision all day: sunscreen is to be regularly reapplied.
- Encourage and supervise older children applying it themselves with the help of mirrors; staff re-apply it where children cannot do it for themselves.
- Use about a dessert spoon of cream for a child and a table spoon measure for an adult; spread it evenly over exposed areas of skin, pay particular attention to areas that burn easily such as the ears and neck; rub it in well

NB: Please Note: sunscreen cream needs to be replaced annually as its strength is reduced to 50% after 12 months

NB: children with eczema can have their sunscreen cream prescribed by their GP.

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion and Sunstroke

Heat exhaustion and sunstroke usually only happen in England during unusually hot weather, such as a heat wave. Young children are more at risk because they sweat less. If they do occur, heat exhaustion and sunstroke can be very serious if they are not treated quickly.

Mild symptoms of heat exhaustion include thirst, fatigue, and cramps in the legs or abdomen.

A child with heat exhaustion should be moved quickly to somewhere cool and given fluids, preferably water, to drink. They should start to feel better within half an hour. Left untreated, heat exhaustion can progress to sunstroke.

Serious heat-related symptoms include:

- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Sweating that stops suddenly
- Headache
- Nausea
- Rapid heartbeat
- Rapid breathing
- Vomiting
- Decreased alertness

Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of the Sun Protection Policy should be monitored by recording its implementation, monitoring practice and recording any changes in the learning environment. Feedback should be gathered from staff and parents and any incidents of sunburn and monitored carefully to see if these incidents can be prevented; they should subsequently decrease over time.

Related Policies

- Health and Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy