



Sun safety in state schools procedure

Version: 1.1 | Version effective: 04/05/2023

Audience

All state schools

Purpose

This procedure outlines how each state school will develop and implement its own comprehensive school-based sun safety policy.

Overview

Queensland state schools play an important role in educating students about, and promoting the importance of, sun safe practices. Principals and staff have a duty of care to do what is reasonably practical to protect students and staff from the harmful effects of the sun caused by high ultraviolet radiation (UVR) exposure.

Queensland state schools aim to minimise staff and student exposure to UVR through the development and implementation of their own school-based sun safety policy, which includes a range of sun-safe strategies and addresses workplace health and safety requirements.

In Queensland, the [UV Index](#) is typically at damaging levels (that is usually above 3) during school hours all year. Reducing students' sun exposure is the most effective way of reducing their risk of developing skin cancer later in life.

Responsibilities

Students

Are required to:

- wear protective clothing, including appropriate hats, when outdoors during the school day and school-related activities. **Note:** sun-safe hats are the preferred hat option.
- wear swim shirts/rash vests during all water-based activities at outdoor venues, except during their race/s at competitions and carnivals.

Principal (or delegate)

Is required to:

- supply an SPF 30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for students to use on uncovered areas of the skin, such as the face and the back of the hands, for all outdoor activities.
- develop, in consultation with the school community and with consideration for the [Guidelines for developing a school sun safety policy](#), a comprehensive [school-based sun safety policy](#).
- make the school's sun safety policy publicly available on the school's website.
- implement the sun safety policy strategies during school and school-related activities.
- review the sun safety policy annually, and update as necessary.
- consider sun safe options from the School uniform [Standing Offer Arrangement](#) (DoE employees only) when determining or reviewing school uniform designs.

Parents and Citizens' Associations (P&C)

Are required to:

- consider sun protection in relation to P&C activities and events held outdoors.

Process



Image 1: Flowchart for process of Sun safety in state schools

* Consultation with the whole school community should occur throughout each stage.

1. Develop a sun safety policy

Principal (or delegate)

- Develops a comprehensive school-based sun safety policy using the [exemplar sun safety policy](#). A comprehensive sun safety policy addresses a broad range of strategies to minimise the risks associated with UVR exposure.
- Refers to the [Guidelines for developing a school sun safety policy](#) for a list of considerations and questions that could assist with the development of the school policy.
- Ensures the school's sun safety policy includes the following strategies and information:
 - **Clothing requirements**
 - Students are required to wear protective clothing, including appropriate hats, when outdoors during the school day and during school-related activities (for example, excursions and camps).
 - Students are required to wear appropriate hats when outdoors. **Note:** sun-safe hats are the department's preferred hat option.

- Students are required to wear swim shirts/rash vests during all water-based activities occurring at outdoor venues, except during their race/s at competitions and carnivals.
- **Shade provision and use**
 - A description of how the school will maximise the use of available shade for outdoor activities.
- **Education**
 - A description of how the school will provide educational programs on sun safety and preventive measures.
- **Sunscreen provision**
 - The supply of SPF 30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for students to use.
- **Modelling sun safe behaviours**
 - A description of how the school promotes the importance of parent/carers, teachers, ancillary staff, volunteers and other adult supervisors as role models for students in relation to sun protection strategies.

2. Communicate, implement and monitor the sun safety policy

Principal (or delegate)

- Ensures the school's sun safety policy is published on the school's website and is accessible to the public.
- Clearly communicates on a regular basis to the whole school community:
 - the school's commitment to sun safety;
 - the sun safety policy requirements and expectations of staff, students and parents/carers, for example, in staff induction, assemblies and newsletters; and
 - how all students will be supported to safely access and participate in the same educational opportunities.
- Encourages staff, parents/carers, volunteers and other adult supervisors to model sun safety measures to students.
- Encourages the P&C to run events and activities that are sun safe.
- Ensures the sun safety policy strategies are implemented during school and school-related activities.

3. Review the sun safety policy

Principal (or delegate)

- Ensures the sun safety policy is reviewed annually for currency and relevance, and updated as necessary.
- Ensures the current version of the school sun safety policy is published on the school's website.
- Communicates any changes to the sun safety policy to the whole school community.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Delegate	For the purposes of this procedure, the delegate is selected by the principal and are school staff who have the capability and capacity to fulfil the responsibilities of the principal in relation to this procedure.
Skin cancer	Cancer which occurs when skin cells are damaged, for example, by overexposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun.
Sun-safe hats	Broad brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hats that provide maximum sun protection by shading the face, neck and ears.
Sun safety	Taking steps to protect people from the sun in order to reduce overexposure to ultraviolet radiation.
Ultraviolet radiation (UVR)	The part of sunlight that causes skin damage and can lead to the development of skin cancer. UVR is not related to light or temperature. It can be reflected by light and shiny surfaces such as sand, snow, concrete and water, and is present on cloudy days – heavy cloud does decrease UVR but scattered cloud has little or no effect on UVR levels.

Legislation

- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(Qld\)](#)

Delegations/Authorisations

- Nil

Policies and procedures in this group

- Nil

Supporting information for this procedure

- [Exemplar - School sun safety policy](#)
- [Guidelines for developing a school sun safety policy](#)

Other resources

- [Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure](#)
- [Requests for Voluntary Financial Contributions procedure](#)
- [Student dress code procedure](#)

- [Sun protection strategy for schools - Queensland Health](#)
- [Sun Safety - Queensland Government](#)

Contact

For further information, please contact your [closest regional office](#).

Review date

24/01/2025

Superseded versions

Previous seven years shown. Minor version updates not included.

Nil

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