



Sun Protection Policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	September 2026
Consultation	Parent community, Student Leadership, Staff and School Council
Approved by	School Council (7 th September 2026)
Next scheduled review date	Term 3 2029



Help for Non-English Speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Wodonga Middle Years College. Phone: (02) 6057 9000

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline how Wodonga Middle Years College will support sun protection behaviours to minimise the risk of health problems from sun overexposure, including skin cancer.

This policy provides guidelines to:

- support staff and students to use a combination of sun protection measures when UV index levels are 3 or above (Term 1 and Term 4 in Victoria)
- ensure that there are outdoor environments that provide adequate shade for students and staff
- ensure students are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills to help them to be responsible for their own protection
- support our school's strategies to meet its duty of care and occupational health and safety obligations to minimise harmful UV exposure and associated harm for students and staff.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities on and off-site, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

DEFINITIONS

- **Ultraviolet (UV) radiation** - a type of energy produced by the sun and some artificial sources, such as solariums and collariums. UV can't be seen or felt. The sun's UV can reach you directly and also indirectly (reflected off different surfaces and scattered by particles in the air). At least 95% of skin cancers are caused by UV exposure.
- **Sun protection times** - a forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology for the time-of-day UV levels are predicted to reach 3 or higher (when sun protection is recommended for all skin types). In Victoria, UV levels typically reach 3 or higher daily from mid-August to the end of April. Sun protection times are available for various locations across Victoria, nationally and globally on the free [SunSmart Global UV app](#). Schools are advised to continue to use sun protection beyond these times if students are outdoors for extended periods (e.g. during sports carnivals and all-day events).
- **Sun protection** - a combination of strategies (clothing, hats, sunscreen, sunglasses and shade) to protect from UV.
- **Skin cancer** - UV radiation damages DNA in the skin cells. If this damage does not repair itself, or the cells continue to be exposed to UV, further damage occurs leading to skin cancer including melanoma, which can spread to other organs.

- **Shade** - a barrier (built, natural and / or temporary) that protects from direct UV. Good quality shade can reduce UV by up to 90%. Shade design should also incorporate indirect UV protection through the choice or modification of low UV reflective surrounding surfaces.

POLICY

Overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause health problems including sunburn, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

UV radiation:

- cannot be seen or felt
- can be reflected off surfaces such as buildings, asphalt, concrete, water, sand and snow
- can pass through light clouds
- varies in intensity across the day and the year (highest from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria, which covers most of the school year)
- peaks during school hours.

Sun safety is a shared responsibility and staff, parents and students are encouraged to implement a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 or above. Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via the free [SunSmart Global UV app](#), or at sunsmart.com.au, or at the Bureau of Meteorology at bom.gov.au.

Wodonga Middle Years College has the following measures in place for all outdoor activities during the daily sun protection times to help reduce the risk of over-exposure to UV radiation for staff and students.

Shade

Wodonga Middle Years College provides sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- where students congregate for lunch
- the canteen
- outdoor lesson areas
- popular play areas
- assembly areas

Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outdoors during peak sun protection times, particularly if they do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing.

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Wodonga Middle Years College that may impact on the level of shade available to staff and students, a review of the shaded areas available will be conducted and further shading installed as appropriate.

Sun protective uniform/clothing

Wodonga Middle Years College's uniform or dress code includes sun-protective clothing, including:

- loose, cool, densely woven fabric
- shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
- tops with elbow length or long sleeves
- longer style shorts, dresses and skirts
- Rashies or t-shirts are recommended when swimming and must be worn when not in the water.

Wodonga Middle Years College's uniform or dress code applies on and off-site unless otherwise advised. When students are not required to wear school uniform (such as school camps, casual wear days), Wodonga Middle Years College will ensure steps are taken to encourage students to wear sun-protective clothing whenever UV levels reach 3 and above and in Term1 and Term 4 of the school year.

Hats

As we are a secondary school, we expect students to take responsibility for their sun safety by wearing a sun protective hat during outdoor activities and adopting other sun protection measures such as wearing sunscreen or using shade.

SunSmart Hats (broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hat) must be worn in Term 1 and Term 4. The SunSmart hat can be of individual choice, as long as it reflects school values and represents the school positively. Hats may also be worn outside of this time period, by parent or student choice.

Baseball or peaked caps and sun visors are not considered a suitable alternative, as they do not protect the ears, cheeks or neck.

Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or hats will be asked to use available areas of shade when outdoors or a suitable area protected from the sun.

Sunscreen

Wodonga Middle Years College encourages all staff and students to apply SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors, and reapplied every 2 hours (or more frequently if sweating or swimming).

Students and staff are reminded and encouraged to bring their own SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to school. Sunscreen that is supplied by the school is stored below 30 degrees and the expiry date monitored.

At Wodonga Middle Years College, if students do not have their own sunscreen, they are welcome to speak with their Connect Mentor or House Leader to access sunscreen.

Staff and students who may suffer from skin reactions from certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to contact the school to implement a plan to reduce the risk of a sunscreen reaction at school, such as families sending their child to school with a suitable alternative sunscreen.

Sunglasses

Where practical, Wodonga Middle Years College encourages students and staff engaged in outdoor activities 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.

Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices. They are supported to understand effects of sun exposure and are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school. Wodonga Middle Years College will address sun protection and UV safety education as part of HPE lessons.

Staff role-modelling and OHS

Staff are encouraged to access resources, tools, and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun smart behaviour across the school community. Staff may practice and role-model these behaviours even when the UV is below 3, particularly if they spend extended periods of time outdoors all year round.

UV radiation exposure is considered as part of our school's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities, i.e. UV radiation protection strategies are included in school camp activities, excursions, sports days and interschool sports events.

Families and visitors

Families and visitors participating in and attending outdoor school activities are encouraged to:

- wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
- apply SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and
- seek shade whenever possible when outdoors.

Community engagement

Sun protection behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school website, staff and parent meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/staff induction.

Families, students and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety at school and at home. Wodonga Middle Years College may provide information through communication strategies i.e. newsletters, school website and school assemblies.

Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

Available publicly on our school's website,

- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Discussed in student forums
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The Department's Policy and Advisory Library:

- [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
- [Heat Health](#)
- [Outdoor Activities and Working Outdoors](#)
- [Risk Management – Schools](#)
- [Shade Sails](#)
- [Student Dress Code](#)
- [SunSmart](#) and Cancer Council Victoria.
- [Sunscreen reactions](#).