



Wangaratta Children's Services Centre

Sun Protection Policy and Procedures

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Department	Children's Services
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Responsible Officer	Family & Early Childhood Services Coordinator
Authorising Officer	Director Community and Infrastructure
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National Quality Standard

2.1	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.1	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 eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child
2.2	Each child is protected
2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child

National Regulations

Section/ Regulations	Description
Section 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Regulation 100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursions
Regulation 113	Outdoor space – natural environment (centre-base services)
Regulation 114	Outdoor space – shade (centre-base services)
Regulation 116	Assessments of family day care residences and approved family day care venues
Regulation 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 169	Additional policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available

Regulation 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures.
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Statement and Purpose

The Rural City of Wangaratta Children's Services is committed to providing children and staff with a safe environment that provides shade and other sun protection to minimise unsafe UV exposure.

All members of our service, including educators, staff, children, families, and volunteers, will be supported in implementing this policy and have opportunities to provide feedback.

Policy and Procedures

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators and staff will:

- Monitor the UV levels using the SunSmart app. Sun protection is required when UV levels reach level 3 or above; and
- Ensure protection measures are adequate for children with all skin types, including children with very fair skin Educators will provide children with opportunities to take leadership roles in managing sun protection.

In relations to outdoor activities

Educators and staff will ensure sun protection measures are considered when planning outdoor activities, including excursions. Active outdoor play is encouraged throughout the day, provided sun protection measures are used when UV levels are 3 or above. At these levels, a combination of sun protection is recommended for all skin types. The Service will use a variety of sun protection measures (see below) whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above.

Shade:

- Sufficient natural, portable or built shade is provided, particularly in high use areas.
- Experiences will be set up in the shade and moved throughout the day to take advantage of shade patterns.

- Regular risk assessments and reviews will be made of the outdoor area to assist in planning for further shade requirements.

Hats:

Educators, staff and children are required to wear sun safe hats that protect their face, neck and ears. Cancer Council Australia describes sun safe hats as:

a hat that protect a person's face, neck, and ears, which include:

- Legionnaire hat – the front peak and flap should overlap at the sides and the flap should cover the neck.
- Bucket hat with a deep crown and angled brim that is size of at least 5cm for young children and at least 6cm for adults and must shade the face, neck, and ears.
- 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.

Children without a sun safe hat will be required to play in an area protected from the sun (e.g. under shade, veranda or indoors) or can be provided with a spare hat.

Clothing:

Educators, staff, and children are required to 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; and
- Is loose fitting such as loose-fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered necklines, or longer style skirts, shorts, or 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 or provided with spare clothing. Midriff, crop or singlet tops are not sun safe because they do not provide enough sun protection.

Educators are required to wear long sleeves and pants to cover arms and legs when outside when UV is higher than 3.

Sunscreen:

As per Cancer Council Australia's recommendation:

- Staff and children will apply SPF30 or higher 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 will be included in the Service enrolment form;
- Where children have allergies or sensitivity to the sunscreen, parents are asked to provide an alternative sunscreen or the child is encouraged 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 cool, dry place and the use-by-date monitored; and
- To minimise the spread of germs when applying sunscreen, you need a well cleaned face and properly cleaned hands. One tissue per child is recommended to apply Sunscreen or you could also use the child's hand.

Babies (under 12 months):

Recommendation for babies from the Cancer Council Australia include:

- Babies under 12 months will not be exposed to direct sun when the UV index levels is 3 or above;
- Physical protection such as shade positioning, clothing and broad-brimmed hats are the best sun protection measures; the front peak and flap should overlap at the sides; and
- The widespread use of sunscreen on babies under 6 months old is not recommended.

Risk 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 encounter these surfaces, they can be burned severely within seconds.

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and educators will:

- 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;
- 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 it is recommended by Kidsafe Australia that children do NOT play on the surface.

Education and Information

- Educators and staff are encouraged to complete free Cancer Council Generation SunSmart online learning modules;
- This policy will be made available to all educators, staff, families, 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.

Extreme Heat

Extreme heat is usually defined as a period of abnormally and uncomfortably hot weather that could adversely affect people's health. The Department of Human Service and Health issues heat health alerts for each weather forecast district to subscribers. (Subscribe at <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/environmental-health/climate-weather-and-publichealth/heatwaves-and-extreme-heat/heat-health-alert-status>) This is based on calculated heat health temperature thresholds for each region.

Babies and young children are especially vulnerable to extreme heat. To protect the health of our children and educators/staff during periods of extreme heat educators will:

- Regularly offer children water to drink;

- Ensure children are dressed in cool, loose sun protective clothing;
- Keep children indoors in a cool, comfortable environment with air conditioning or fans;
- Cancel or postpone excursions and outdoor activities;
- Listen for bushfire messages if in a bushfire risk area; and
- Make sure children are never left in parked cars.

If there is a complete loss of power during a heatwave, educators will keep children as cool as possible. Families will be contacted to collect children if educators believe children's health is at risk from the heat.

Breaches

Any breaches of this policy will be referred to the Family and Early Childhood Services Coordinator for determination and any remedial actions must be provided in accordance with the Centre's Code of Conduct and any Council documents if applicable.

Human Rights

This policy has considered and complies with the Human Rights and Responsibilities contained in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

Gender Impact Assessment

This policy has considered and applied Council's Gender Impact Assessment Template and satisfies the provisions established in the *Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)*.

References

- Cancer Council VIC Sample SunSmart policy for Early Childhood Education Centre services.
- Heat Health Plan for Victoria.
- Vic Government Better Health: How to cope and stay safe in extreme heat.
- Cancer Council VIC and the National SunSmart Early Childhood Program.

Definitions

Term	Definition	Source
Risk assessment.	Assessing the risk means working out how likely it is that a hazard will harm someone and how serious the harm could be.	acecqa.gov.au/media/29421
Sun protection times.	Sun protection measures are recommended when the UV is 3 and above.	cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety/uv-index
Sun protection factor (SPF)	The Australian standard for sunscreen, the SPF indicates the level of protection provided against UVR	arpana.gov.au/understanding-radiation/radiation-source/more-radiation-sources/sun-protection-sunscreen

Review

This policy must be reviewed at least every four years or whenever required due to legislative or operational change.

Version History		
Version Number	Date of change	Reasons for change
1.0	September 2023	Re-formatting and re-structure of Council's Children Services policy framework

