



## LANGFORD ISLAMIC COLLEGE

### SUN SMART POLICY

**Category: Student Health**

Next review: February 2021

#### 1. RATIONALE

A healthy balance of the sun's ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure is important for health. Too much UV from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Two in three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer before they are 70.

Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is a major cause of skin cancer. Sun protection is needed whenever UV levels reach three and above. Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D regulates calcium levels in the blood. It is also necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones, muscles and teeth.

Our Sun Protection Policy has been adopted to ensure that all students and staff attending Langford Islamic College are protected from skin damage caused by UV radiation from the sun. This policy is to be implemented throughout the year, but in particular, from **the beginning of September through to the end of May**. The sun protection practices outlined in this policy will be applied to all school outdoor activities, including recess and lunch, PE periods, sports carnivals, excursions and camps. The policy has been developed in consultation with the whole school community.

#### 2. OBJECTIVES

This SunSmart Policy has been developed to:

- Ensure all students and staff have some UV exposure for vitamin D.
- Encourage the entire school community to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above.
- Work towards a safe school environment that provides shade for students, staff and the school community at appropriate times.
- Educate and assist students to be responsible for their own sun protection.
- Ensure that families and new staff are informed of the school's SunSmart policy.
- Encourage safe UV exposure.

Care is taken between 10:00am and 3:00pm when UV levels reach their peak during the day. Our Sun Smart policy should be considered when planning all outdoor events e.g. assemblies,

outdoor activities, camps, excursions and sporting events.

Staff are encouraged to access the SunSmart UV Alert at <https://www.sunsmart.com.au/> to find out daily local sun protection times to assist with the implementation of this policy.

### 3. DUTY OF CARE

Schools and teachers owe to the students under their control and supervision a responsibility to take reasonable care for the safety of students. Reasonable care, or duty of care, means that schools and teachers **must respond to all elements of foreseeable risk and take reasonable steps to ensure that a student does not risk injury and that the health of the student is not put at risk.**

Schools should communicate with parents/carers and reach agreement about their respective responsibilities.

Due to Australia's high skin cancer rate and the publicity surrounding careful sun protection practices such as 'Slip, Slop, Slap' (*Slip on a shirt, slop on sunscreen and slap on a hat*) and 'No Hat, No Play', were introduced. It would thus be reasonable to expect that sun protection of both students and staff would form part of a school's duty of care.

The Cancer Council, Western Australia recommends that to fulfil this duty of care, each school should have a sun protection policy for all staff and students attending the school.

Negligence in this area may constitute a breach of a school's duty of care. A quote from the Sun Herald 27 December 2003 highlights this. *"Alarming health authorities is the news that twelve children have been admitted to Adelaide Women's and Children's Hospital suffering from first-degree burns from the sun in the past two weeks."*

Recent court cases have highlighted the importance of sun protection in the workplace and how skin cancer can be a serious occupational injury. Employers are responsible for ensuring that all staff are regularly briefed and trained on health and safety issues like sun exposure.

### 4. IMPLEMENTATION OF A SUNSMART POLICY

A sun protection policy encourages schools to minimise the dangers of excessive UV radiation exposure for both staff and students and to ensure a healthier environment with long term health benefits.

We use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities from September to the end of May and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, the level that can damage skin and

eyes. We also incorporate this into the appropriate Key Learning Areas of the school curriculum. Programs on skin cancer prevention and healthy UV exposure levels are included in the curriculum for all year levels. Sun Smart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school website, parent meetings, staff meetings, school assemblies, and student and teacher activities.

## **5.1 SHADE**

- A shade audit is conducted annually to determine the current availability and quality of shade as part of Building and Grounds.
- The school community makes sure there are enough shelters and trees providing shade in the school grounds particularly in areas where students congregate e.g. lunch areas, cafeteria, outdoor lesson areas and popular recreation areas.
- In consultation with the Board of Governors, shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all outdoor activities.
- Children who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.

## **5.2 UNIFORMS/CLOTHING**

- Students and staff are actively encouraged to wear broad-brimmed (minimum 7.5cm brim), legionnaire or bucket (minimum 6cm brim, deep crown) hats outside.
- Parents are actively encouraged to wear broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hats when attending outdoor school activities.
- Students with special needs may need assistance in remembering to or assistance in putting their hat on.
- Sun protective clothing is included in our school uniform/dress code and sports uniform. School clothing is made of densely-woven fabric and includes shirts with collars and longer sleeves, longer style dresses.
- During Physical Education, students are supplied with sunscreen and are encouraged to wear hats.
- All teachers in this school model the SunSmart strategies.

## **5.3 HATS**

- Children and staff 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). School uniform includes a school hat and most parents purchase it.

#### 5.4 SUNSCREEN USE

- Staff and students are actively encouraged to apply SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen regularly.
- Students with special needs may need assistance in remembering to or assistance with putting sunscreen on.
- Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours if outdoors.
- Particular attention is given on Sports days, excursions and camps.
- Children are reminded to apply sunscreen before going outdoors.
- The school community provides the Health and Physical Education learning area with sunscreen for use in their programs.
- Health and Physical Education teachers model correct SunSmart strategies and insist students apply sunscreen.
- Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors in other learning areas.

#### 5.7 SPORT AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMING

- Making the wearing of broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hats compulsory for sport and physical education.
- Sports uniforms are sun protective e.g. shirts with collars, longer sleeves, longer length shorts/skirts and rash vests/shirts for swimming.
- Maximise use of indoor and shade facilities.
- Where possible, outdoor lessons and sports carnivals to be scheduled when the UV Index is below 3 (or as far from solar noon as possible).  
Refer to UV Alert times available from the Bureau of Meteorology [www.bom.gov.au/uv](http://www.bom.gov.au/uv)
- HPE teachers model and reinforce the sun safe message.
- **Students with Special Needs:** Students with medical issues should have these issues recorded on their school medical profile. This includes students using the acne treatment Roaccutane as these students cannot be exposed to the sun and their medical records should reflect this information. It is recommended that parents also inform the HPE teacher of any issues.
- HPE is a compulsory part of the curriculum in Australia and exemptions from HPE will only be given when supported by an appropriate medical specialist.

## **5.8 CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS**

- Making broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hats, sun protective clothing and sunscreen compulsory on all camps and excursions.
- Using shade for activities where available.
- In letters to parents/guardians inform them that sun protection is required for an excursion (where appropriate) and if students need to supply their own protection.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions or outdoor activities.
- Sunscreen is housed in the all Langford Islamic College admin Senior High School buses for excursions. It is the responsibility of the teacher-in-charge of excursion to ensure supply is current and available.
- Students with Special Needs: Students with medical issues should have these issues recorded on their school medical profile and should be considered.

## **5.9 MEDICATIONS**

- Some medications render students sun sensitive (e.g. Roaccutane, Doxycycline, Metronidazole). Parents are asked to inform the appropriate form teacher as well as Admin if a student is on sun sensitive medication so it can be included on excursion medical records.
- A student's Physical Education teacher should be informed if a student is taking a sun sensitive medication.
- Where appropriate, sunscreen and long – length clothing is recommended when sun exposure cannot be avoided.

## **6. ROLE MODELLING**

Staff act as role models by:

- wearing sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside
- applying SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
- seeking shade whenever possible
- families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, sunglasses, sunscreen and shade) when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.
- The sun smart policy at Langford Islamic College is encouraged all year round, but more especially during September and May. This helps maintain a routine and keep students sun aware.

## **7. WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- Consideration is given to sun protection for all staff involved in outdoor activities, including yard duty. Physical education and sport education teachers are required to take appropriate sun protection measures as they are particularly at risk from UV radiation.

## 8. ASSEMBLIES

- All assemblies are held either indoors, in shade or in the under-cover area.

## 9. REINFORCEMENT/PROMOTION OF SUNSMART MESSAGE

- Student involvement in initiatives to protect the school community from over-exposure to the sun.
- Promotion of sun protection will occur throughout the year via assemblies, newsletters, staff and parent meetings etc.

### New plan to upskill pre-service teachers in sun protection

New research from Cancer Council WA and Edith Cowan University suggests that pre-service teachers may be lacking the vital knowledge they need to help keep primary school students properly protected from ultraviolet (UV) radiation.

Dr Joseph Scott, lecturer at Edith Cowan University, surveyed over 260 pre-service primary teachers at Edith Cowan University. Results indicated that almost 60% did not feel they had sufficient knowledge and skills to properly teach sun safety. Only 55.6% reported that they understand the UV index, with 29.9% reporting they never check it.

Dr Scott says it's encouraging that teachers in training understood the importance of sun safety and being able to understand UV in order to explain it to their future students.



*"98% of participants reported that they feel it is important that teachers understand UV to protect children while they are at school," Dr Scott said.*

*"So it's unfortunate that they currently don't feel they have the knowledge and skills to properly teach children about sun protection. Our findings indicate there is an urgent need to strengthen teachers' knowledge and understandings of UV and proper sun protective measures."*

Cancer Council WA will use the results of the survey to inform a new intervention which would aim to get teachers up to speed on the evidence behind **slip, slop, slap, seek** and **slide** before they embark on their teaching career.

The intervention will involve pre-service teachers participating in a workshop on UV and sun protection, aiming to increase this knowledge. We know that teachers play a vital part in both role-modelling to children and teaching them how to be SunSmart.

SunSmart currently offers free online professional learning modules for teachers, student teachers, Community Health Nurses and school staff. Topics include UV radiation, how to be SunSmart and developing a sun protection policy. To complete the modules, visit [generationsunsmart.com.au](http://generationsunsmart.com.au).

**REFERENCES:**

<http://www.des.wa.gov.au/schooleducation/nongovernmentschools/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.ais.wa.edu.au/>

AISWA Policy Guidelines

**REVIEW HISTORY**

Year of Review	Reviewed By	Amendments/Review
2012	YI	Originally Released
2014	PR	Revised
2020	NM	Revised and Amended
2021		Next review