POLICY

Sun Smart Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to create environments and encourage behaviours to minimise the risk of skin cancer. Overexposure to ultra violet (UV) radiation during childhood and adolescence is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk. Melanoma is the most common cancer in young Australians aged 13 to 24 years.

This policy is based on Cancer Council Victoria and SunSmart Australia advice, and is designed to:

- provide staff and sudents with a combination of sun protection measures that can be used when the UV index levels are 3 or above (generally mid-August – end of April) to reduce UV exposure.
- 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 MLC'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.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students, staff, visitors, contractors and parents engaged in College events or activities.

3. Policy Statement

3.1. Policy Principles

3.1.1. UV radiation

Excessive exposure 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 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 year (highest in Victoria from mid-August – end of April)
- 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 and above (typically from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria).

3.1.2. Reducing the risk of excessive UV sun exposure

The following measures have been put in place at MLC to reduce the risk of excessive UV sun exposure for staff and students:

a. Shade

MLC will provide options for shelter and shade, including man-made and natural, on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- where students congregate for lunch
- outdoor learning spaces
- popular play areas
- dresses and shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
- longer style shorts and dresses
- MLC bucket hat and MLC caps.

b. During Term 1 and Term 4 – between the hours of 8:30am and 5:30pm:

- Junior School students **must** wear a sun protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears for all outdoor activities. Hats may also be worn for all outdoor activities outside of the August to April time period, by parent or student choice.
- Students in Years 7 – 12 are expected to take responsibility for being SunSmart by applying sunscreen and wearing a school hat (an MLC bucket hat or cap, as appropriate) during outdoor activities (including being outside during recess and lunch) or they are required to stay in the shade.
- Staff and students are encouraged to wear hat styles that protect the face, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket. Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or a hat will be asked to move into the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun.
- A “no hat, no play” policy to be implemented in all Physical Education classes and sporting activities – students without hats will be given a hat from the communal store, managed by the PE/Sport Department. This applies to all students P-12.
- For staff conducting outdoor class activities, broad brimmed hats are available for loan from the PEC.

c. Sunscreen

Staff and students should use SPF 30+ (or higher) broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Sunscreen should be reapplied as per manufacturers’ specifications (most sunscreen manufacturers recommend every 2 hours). Sunscreen is available for staff and students to use at the following locations:

- Each School Office
- PEC
- Health Centre
- Staff Centre.

Staff and students who may suffer from allergic reactions to certain types of sunscreen are encouraged to contact the College Nurse to implement a management plan to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction at school.

MLC has strategies in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors, including:

- Reminder notices in the Staff and Student Daily, and the Staff and Student Hubs
- Year level or School Assemblies.

Staff and families should role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside.

d. Sunglasses

Where practical, MLC 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.

e. At the snow (winter) and on the water (any time of year):

- Reflective surfaces, such as water and snow increase the risk of sun damage as these surfaces also reflect ultraviolet (UV) radiation. In some cases an individual can receive almost a double dose of UV – directly from the sun and then through reflection.
- If engaged in outdoor activity at the snow or on the water, use the following guidelines, where appropriate, to ensure protection:
  - Plan your day (using the free SunSmart app) so you know the times of the day that sun protection is required.
  - Use the five sun protection steps together for maximum sun protection – Slip on long sleeved clothing, Slap on a hat, Slop on sunscreen, Slide on sunglasses and Seek shade where possible.
  - Apply SPF30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen and lip balm at least 20 minutes before going outside to protect any part of the body that is exposed.
  - Reapply sunscreen and lip balm every two hours – put a small tube of sunscreen in your jacket pocket or bag.
  - Plan your day to avoid peak exposure to the sun (early morning and late afternoon where possible).
  - Try to take breaks out of the sun during the middle part of the day.
  - When planning outdoor activities and excursions include consideration of shade, the duration of the activity and the timing of activities exposed to full sun.
  - Rash vests and T-shirts (high neck or collared are preferred) are compulsory for outdoor swimming, when students are waiting to compete or participating in warm-up activities e.g.: stretching

3.2. Responsiblities

Curriculum

Students at MLC are encouraged to make healthy choices and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure. MLC will address sun and UV safety education as part of its Health, Physical Education and Wellbeing curriculum.

Staff are encouraged to access resources, tools, and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote Sun Smart behaviours across the College community.

Engaging students, staff and families

SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole College community through Connections, the College intranet, School information evenings, School Assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/new staff orientation. Families and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety at school and at home.

Expectations will be clearly communicated to staff. This includes reminders in the Staff Daily, communication when Duty Rosters are published, Excursion guidelines and as part of the presentation to new staff on Orientation Days, at the commencement of the school year.

4. Supporting Information and Tools

4.1.1. UV Radiation

UV radiation comes directly from the sun and is dangerous because it's not like the sun's light which we see, or the sun's heat which we feel, so it can be damaging our skin without us knowing.

UV radiation can damage skin even on cool, cloudy days as it can pass through light cloud, and is not fully filtered out by heavy cloud. UV radiation can be scattered in the air and reflected by surfaces such as buildings, concrete, sand, snow and water.

Overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation potentially increases the risk of skin and eye damage, ultimately leading to skin cancer.

UV cannot be seen or felt. It is not like the sun's light which we see, or the sun's warmth (infrared radiation) which we feel. Our senses cannot detect UV so it can be damaging without us knowing. There is a huge variation in UV levels across Australia. The UV level is affected by a number of factors including the time of day, time of year, cloud cover, altitude, proximity to the equator, scattering and reflection.

4.1.2. What Ultra Violet (UV) levels mean

The UV level can be related to ultraviolet radiation exposure as follows:

UV Level	Exposure Risk	Sun Protection Measures
2 or less	Low	You can safely stay outdoors with minimal protection
3 to 5	Moderate	Wear sun protective clothing, a hat, sunscreen, sunglasses and seek shady areas
6 to 7	High	As above
8 to 10	Very High	As above
11 or higher	Extreme	As above

4.1.3. UV Assessment Tools

It is important to check the daily sun protection times for your location each day. This can be done using a variety of tools:

a. Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA)

ARPANSA maintains a network of data loggers situated in major Australian cities and in the Australian Antarctic territories. These data loggers continuously record the solar ultraviolet radiation (UVR) levels at each site. This data is available as UV Index and UV Dose values and graphs for major Australian cities for the current day on the ARPANSA website: http://arpansa.gov.au/uvindex/realtime/

b. SunSmart Global UV app

UV radiation is dangerous because it's not like the sun's light which we see, or the sun's heat which we feel, so it can be damaging our skin without us knowing.

The free SunSmart Global UV app puts sun protection advice at your fingertips.

The SunSmart Global UV app provides reliable at-a-glance real-time and forecast UV levels for locations across Australia and the world from reputable and trusted agencies and translates this data into clear, evidence-based health advice from Cancer Council Victoria to recommend sun protection for your location.

It uses forecast information from the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) and live UV data from the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) to provide sun protection times across Australia and the world.

Features:

- UV and sun protection alerts each day.
- Option to create unique alerts that suit your schedule and location.
- Access worldwide UV levels which can be tailored to your specific location, providing clear guidance on when sun protection is and is not required.
- Seven-day forecast of sun protection times and weather information.
- Available in eight languages including English, French, Spanish, Dutch, Chinese, German, Italian and Russian.
- Live UV levels across Australia and the world.

4.1.4. Useful Skin Cancer Facts & Stats

Source: Skin cancer facts & stats - SunSmart

- More than two in three Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer by the age of 70. [1]
- Around 2,000 Australians die from skin cancer each year.[2]
- Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world.[3]
- Medicare records show there were over a million treatments for squamous and basal cell carcinoma skin cancers in 2018 – that's more than 100 skin cancer treatments every hour. Basal and squamous cell carcinoma skin cancers accounted for one quarter of all cancer-related hospitalisations in 2014–15.[4] The cost to the health system of these skin cancers alone is estimated to be more than $700 million annually. The costs to the Federal Government and the community from basal and squamous cell carcinomas are predicted to continue to increase in the future.[5]
- In 2018, 3,097 Victorians were diagnosed with melanoma and 291 lost their lives to it.[6]
- It is estimated that approximately 200 melanomas and 34,000 other skin cancer types per year are caused by occupational exposures in Australia.[7]

1 Staples MP, Elwood M, Burton RC, Williams JL, Marks R, Giles GG. Non-melanoma skin cancer in Australia: the 2002 national survey and trends since 1985. Med J Aust. 2006;184(1):6–10.

2 Australian Bureau of Statistics. Causes of Death, Australia, 2017. Vol. 3303.0. Australian Bureau of Statistics: Canberra, Australia, 2018.

3 Ferlay J, Soerjomatram I, Ervik M, Dikshit R, Eser S, Mathers C, Rebelo M, Parkin D, Forman D, Bray F. GLOBOCAN 2012 v1.0, Cancer Incidence and Mortality Worldwide: IARC CancerBase No. 11. IARC, World Health Organisation, 2013.

4 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Cancer in Australia 2017. Cancer Series no.101. Cat.no. CAN 100. AIHW: Canberra, Australia, 2017.

5 Fransen M, Karahalios A, Sharma N, English DR, Giles GG, Sinclair RD. Non-melanoma skin cancer in Australia. Med J Aust. 2012;197(10):565–8.

6 Victorian Cancer Registry. Cancer in Victoria: Statistics & Trends 2018 Cancer Council Victoria: Melbourne, Victoria, 2019. Available from: www.cancervic.org.au/downloads/cec/cancer-in-vic/Cancer-in-Victoria-2018.pdf.

7 Fritschi L, Driscoll T. Cancer due to occupation in Australia. Aust N Z Public Health. 2006;30(3):213–9

5. Governance

Document Details	
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