EARLY LEARNING CENTRE
UV PROTECTION POLICY

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD RELATED STANDARDS/REGULATIONS

**Standard 2.1**
Health: Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted.

**Standard 2.2**
Safety: Each child is protected

**Regulation 168**
Education and care service must have policies and procedures

AIM
For parents, staff and students to understand and follow the procedures for sun protection at the Early Learning Centre, across all programs (Before School Care, Core Program, After School Care and Holiday Program).

EXPLANATION
It is important to recognise that a balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure is important for health. If we are exposed to too much of the sun’s UV, this can cause health problems including sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer (It has been proven that sun exposure in the first 10 years of life is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk). Conversely, if we are exposed to too little UV from the sun, this can lead to low vitamin D levels (Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones and muscles, and for general health). Due to Australia’s close proximity to the equator, our predominantly fair skin and love for the outdoors, a balanced sun protection policy must be in place within our Early Learning Centre.

PRACTICE
Students and staff at the Early Learning Centre are required and encouraged to protect their skin against over-exposure to the sun’s ultraviolet rays whenever possible during school time and school activities when UV levels are forecast to reach 3 and above and sun protection is recommended.
IMPLEMENTATION TIMES
This policy will be implemented from the **beginning of August through to the end of May**, when daily UV levels reach 3 and above. There will be a particular emphasis on sun safety during the peak UV period of the day (11am – 3pm; or 10am to 2pm – Daylight Saving Time) especially during Terms 1 and 4.

Due to Canberra’s low UV levels (under 3) during the winter period, the school will not enforce sun protection behaviour during June and July. This is to assist students and staff to maintain adequate vitamin D levels during the winter months in Canberra. Sensible sun protection may still be required if spending extended time outdoors during this period, ie excursions and carnivals.

STRATEGIES
Students of the Early Learning Centre are required to wear their broad brimmed, blue school hat, which offers adequate sun protection to the face, neck and ears, when taking part in ALL outdoor activities and events, when UV levels reach 3 and above. This includes outside play times, special outdoor activities, excursions and travel to and from the Junior School campus.

A “no hat, play in the sandpit” policy will be enforced during this period. It is emphasised that students in the Early Learning Centre are still developing in their ability to take responsibility for their own protection against skin damage. Staff will provide students with support to adopt a combination of sun protection measures.

The School also has a duty of care to protect all students and will do as much as reasonably practicable to encourage and support students to protect their skin and eyes from over-exposure to UV ie. by incorporating education around sun protection into the curriculum in all year levels, requiring practical clothing to be worn during outdoor activities and sporting events (sun protection clothing outlined in the uniform policy), planning events and activities outside the peak UV period of the year, making sunscreen easily accessible to all students and reinforcing the importance of shaded areas etc.

General sun protection strategies include:
Early Learning Centre students and staff will be required, during all times when outdoors, to adopt a combination of the 5 following sun protection measures. Parents are also encouraged to model these behaviours.

- Wear a hat that protects the face, neck and ears (caps are not recommended)
- Wear clothing that covers as much skin as possible
- Apply SPF 30 + broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen
- Seek shade whenever possible
- Take particular care between 11am and 3pm when daily UV levels peak during Summer/Daylight Savings
• Wear a close fitting wrap-around pair of sunglasses that meet Australian Standard 1067 (Category 2, 3 or 4).

The School will:
• Require the purchase of the regulation broad brimmed sun hat by all students and wearing of hats as above;
• Require parents to provide an SPF 30 + broad spectrum sunscreen for use by their child;
• Provide at least an SPF 30 + broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen in a number of locations around the School, including classrooms, for student and staff use during the School day; sunscreen will be applied 15-20 minutes before outdoor experiences and reapplied after 2 hours;
• Provide/maintain shelters and shade trees;
• Whenever possible ensure that adequate shade is provided at outdoor events; (The school will aim to hold such all-day outdoor events outside the daylight saving period of the year).
• Incorporate learning experiences and activities on sun safety and skin cancer prevention into its Curriculum in the Reception and Pre-Prep years.
• Reinforce regularly the Sun Smart Policy and positive practices through newsletters, enrolment, parent meetings, student and teacher activities, and website and throughout the school in general etc.
• Be aware that it has a duty of care to protect all students and staff (WH&S) from any foreseeable harm including over-exposure to ultraviolet radiation.
• Include adequate sun protective clothing and hats into the Early Learning Centre uniform policy;
• As a member of the Cancer Council’s National Sun Smart Early Childhood Centres program our centre will submit a copy of this policy to be reviewed every 3 years. This policy will be updated if necessary to maintain high national Sun Smart standards.
• Require ALL staff to act as positive Sun Smart role models and to be aware of their WH&S responsibilities when it comes to sun protection in the workplace.
• Encourage staff to access the daily Sun Smart UV Alert to assist them with their sun protection behaviour routine.

When enrolling a student, parents will be:
• Informed of this Sun Smart Policy;
• Required to purchase the regulation hat;
• Required to provide an SPF 30 + broad spectrum water-resistant sunscreen for their child’s use at school and to apply sunscreen on their child/ren before school in Term 1 and 4.
• Encouraged to act as positive Sun Smart role models when taking part in school activities and events.
Each child is asked to bring sunscreen which they will be asked to apply before going outside. The sunscreen will be kept at school for use during the year. Parents will be informed if/when the sunscreen runs out and will be asked to bring in a replacement.

REFERENCES

- Cancer Council ACT Sun Smart Schools Program 2011/Aug 2013
- Our next Cancer Council Sun Smart Review will be in August 2019

Policy reviewed and updated by ELC staff – 22/03/18