

Sun Protection

QA2 Health & Safety

Policy Statement

All enrolled children and employees attending Little Graces OSHC (the Service) shall be protected as far as practicable from skin damage caused by harmful ultraviolet radiation (UVR) through the implementation of personal and environmental sun protection strategies.

In addition to applying sun protection strategies the Service focuses on educating children, families, and educators in regard to the harmful effects of over exposure to UVR and the health benefits of vitamin D exposure.

Rationale

“Children have the fundamental right to be protected and kept safe when they attend an education and care service” (Guide to the National Quality Framework, 2018).

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with two of every three Australians developing some form of skin cancer during their lifetime. Sun exposure during childhood and adolescence is known to greatly increase the chance of developing skin cancer later in life. Unprotected exposure to UV radiation can also result in eye damage and premature aging of the skin.

By implementing best sun safe practices and providing children, educators, and families with information regarding sun protection, we aim to reduce the risk of skin and eye damage throughout participant’s lifetimes.

Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you (Proverbs 2:11).

Procedures

The Bureau of Meteorology UV index forecast is checked at the commencement of each day/care session at <http://www.bom.gov.au/places/wa/perth/forecast/>. The UV Index and recommended sun protection times are displayed on the Service noticeboard.

Personal and environmental sun protection measures will be implemented whenever children are participating in outdoor experiences and the UV Index forecast is three or above.

Shade

Children are encouraged to use shaded areas for outdoor play activities.

Areas used for focused play such as sandpits and fixed play equipment are provided with shade throughout the year.

As far as practicable, programmed outdoor experiences are scheduled outside of peak UV times or in covered shade areas.

The availability of shade is considered in planning excursions from the Service.



Hats

Educators, volunteers, and children are required to wear sun safe hats that protect their face, neck and ears. A sun safe hat is a:

- legionnaire hat.
- bucket hat with a deep crown and brim size of at least 5cm (adults 6cm).
- broad brimmed hat with a brim size of at least 6cm (adults 7.5cm).

Baseball caps or visors do not provide enough sun protection and are not considered a suitable alternative.

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). To maintain safe hygiene practices, spare hats are not provided.

Clothing

When outdoors, educators, volunteers, and children are required to wear sun safe clothing. Shirts that cover the shoulders and have collars and sleeves and longer style skirts and shorts are most suitable. Midriff and singlet tops are not considered to provide sufficient sun protection and are therefore not recommended.

Children wearing tank tops, singlets or dresses with strappy shoulders are required to play in areas protected from the sun. Alternatively, sun safe clothing may be provided.

Educators are encouraged to wear sunglasses while outside however reflective sunglasses are not to be worn.

Sunscreen

Families are asked to ensure children have sunscreen applied prior to arrival at OSHC for Before School Care, Vacation Care and Pupil free days.

The Service supplies SPF30+ broad spectrum, waterproof sunscreen for use by children and educators.

Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes prior to going outdoors and re-applied every two hours, as required.

Children are encouraged and supervised to apply their own sunscreen. Educators aid as required.

If a child experiences a skin reaction with the application of the sunscreen supplied, alternative arrangements for sun protection are planned with the child's family.

Sunscreen is stored in a cool place, out of the sun.

Educators monitor the expiry date of sunscreen and discard when out of date.

The World Health Organisation reports that people with naturally very dark brown or black skin (skin that rarely or never burns) may not be required to wear sunscreen as the melanin in their skin can often tolerate higher levels of UV radiation without burning. This is a decision for families to make. Hats remain necessary to protect the student's eyes from UV damage. With parental consent, children with naturally very dark skin may be exempt from wearing sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements.

Families who choose to exempt their child from the application of sunscreen must provide this exemption in writing.



Education

Learning about skin protection from the sun is incorporated into our program. Our *Sun Protection Policy* is reinforced through parent newsletters, noticeboards, and meetings.

Educators are provided with regular educational material relating to sun protection.

References

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