



Rockingham Montessori School Incorporated  
ABN: 68 115 270 695

**POLICY TITLE:** Sun Protection Policy

**BOARD APPROVAL DATE:** November 2018

**SIGNED BY CHAIR:**

**BOARD REVIEW DATE:** November 2021

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### **OVERVIEW:**

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. More than 75% of all skin cancers can be prevented by practicing sun protection in childhood and adolescence.

Studies have shown:

- Sun exposure has been identified as the cause of around 99% of non-melanoma skin cancers and 95% of melanoma in Australia
- “Sun exposure in the first 10 years of life determines to a substantial degree the lifetime potential for skin cancer, while sun exposure in later life determines the extent to which this potential is realised”
- In those aged 15–44 years, melanoma is the most common cancer, making up almost a quarter of all cancers for this age group

This policy:

- outlines the duty of care the School has to protecting children from sun exposure.
- outlines to Staff the procedures and requirements that facilitate sun protection and the promotion of a ‘sun-smart’ environment.
- outlines to parents and caregivers their responsibilities to facilitate sun protection in their children.

### **PRINCIPLES:**

Damage to the skin from sun exposure accumulates over a lifetime. Exposure to the sun’s ultraviolet radiation during childhood is a major cause of skin cancer in later life. Sun exposure causes more than 75% of skin cancers, including malignant melanoma, squamous cell and basal cell carcinomas.

Sun protection during childhood and adolescence is critical to reducing an individual’s LIFE LONG RISK OF SKIN CANCER. Hence, Rockingham Montessori School has a duty of care to ensure that a

sun protection policy is adopted, and that parents/guardians agree to be bound by this policy when they enroll their children at the School.

### **Duty of Care:**

Rockingham Montessori School undertakes steps to ensure that children achieve sun protection whilst in the care of the School. The School acknowledges that it is in a powerful position to influence the attitude of children to sun exposure, and thus develop a lifelong respect for sun-protection and an awareness of the potential hazards of sun exposure. This educational influence extends beyond the children to include their parents/guardians and the wider community.

### **Sun Protection Cream:**

The School supports the use of sun protection cream. This should be:

- broad spectrum (blocking both UVA and UVB radiation).
- high sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30.
- water resistant to ensure against loss of effect due to perspiration or water exposure.
- applied ideally 15-30 minutes before sun exposure, or prior to coming to School.

The School supports the use of sun protection cream all year round, regardless of season, but with particular emphasis during the months September to May.

### **Sun Protection Clothing:**

The School requires that hats be worn for any outdoor play or activity. Hats should be:

- broad brimmed – minimum 6cm brim, deep crown; or legionnaire style.

Clothing that provides adequate protection from UV radiation:

- shirts should have collars and sleeves.
- be of coarsely woven, natural fibres.
- rash vests or shirts used for swimming.

The School's uniform providers utilise fabric with an ultraviolet sun protection factor - UPF50+ rating. Parents are encouraged to select clothing for their children with an UPF rating.

### **PROCEDURES:**

1. A 'no hat, play in the shade' policy is adhered to. This includes camps and excursions.
2. Shirts with sleeves and a collar are required for physical education.
3. Exposed skin that is not adequately protected by clothing is to be covered with broad spectrum SPF 30+ water resistant sunscreen. **The application of sunscreen is the responsibility of caregivers. It should be applied prior to the child coming to School.**

4. If a child is allergic to sunscreen, parents/guardians must provide a medical certificate indicating exemption from its application.
5. Outside School activities will be scheduled, as much as possible, to avoid time spent in the sun between 10am and 3pm.
6. Students should be encouraged to use shade areas for outdoor activities.
7. The School will ensure that adequate areas of shade are provided (tree plantings, pergolas). All permanent outdoor play equipment will be shaded during September to May.
8. 'Sun Smart' behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community (eg. via the newsletter and at school meetings).
9. The Sun Protection policy is included in the School Handbook and the School website.
10. Staff, parents and volunteers should demonstrate positive role modeling of sun protection behaviours.
11. The School will include sun protection education in the School curriculum.
12. The School will maintain its recognition as a Sunsmart School from the Cancer Council WA.
13. The School Principal or Educational Leader will review the effectiveness of this policy tri-annually.

#### **REFERENCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

1. Association of Independent Schools, *Sun Protection Policies and Procedure Guidelines for Schools*.
2. Sun Smart Schools Policy Guidelines.