Cooee Primary School
SunSmart Policy

Our SunSmart policy has been developed to ensure that all students and staff who attend Cooee Primary School are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun. Over-exposure to UV (ultraviolet) rays from the sun causes sunburn, skin damage and increases the risk of skin cancer. **Inappropriate sun exposure in the first 18 years of life contributes significantly to the lifetime risk of developing skin cancer.** However, some skin exposure to the sun’s UV rays is needed for the production of vitamin D, vital for maintenance of healthy bones, teeth and general good health.

Being SunSmart is a whole-of-year approach. It means using sun protection when the UV is 3 and above (mid-September to mid-April), and safe sun exposure for vitamin D (mid-April to mid-September).

It is to be implemented throughout the year but with particular emphasis in Term 1 (to mid April) and from September through until the end of the year.

As part of the general SunSmart strategies, our school will:
- check the UV Alert on a daily basis.
- use a combination of sun protection measures from mid-September to mid-April, when average peak UV levels in Tasmania reach 3 and above.

**Hats**

Children are required to wear either broad brimmed or legionnaires hats as these protect the face, neck and ears whenever they are outside (e.g. recess, lunch, sport, excursions). **“No Hat, No Play”** will be enforced from September each year until the end of Term 1 (mid April).

**Clothing**

Children are required to wear sleeved shirts to school events - no singlet tops or crop tops are to be worn – shoulders are to be covered. Shorts and rash vests or T-shirts are to be worn over swimwear for outdoor swimming whenever possible.

**Sunscreen**

- The use of SPF 30+, broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen is encouraged and available for use.
- Sunscreen is applied 20 minutes before going outdoors.
- If outdoors for extended periods sunscreen is reapplied every 2 hours.

**Shade**

The school community is committed to providing shade in areas where students gather such as for eating, outdoor teaching and popular play areas. The use of these areas is encouraged.

**Sunglasses – encouraged but optional**

Close-fitting wrap-around sunglasses that comply with Australian Standards AS1067:2003 (Category 2, 3 or 4) are encouraged but optional.

**Advice for darker skinned children.**

Students with naturally very dark skin (skin types 5 and 6 – see enclosed) may need 4-6 times as much sun for vitamin D production and do not need long-sleeved tops or sunscreen, unless outdoors for extended periods. However, they should still wear hats or sunglasses to protect their eyes when UV is 3 or above.
To help maintain adequate vitamin D levels, sun protection will not be used from mid-April to mid-September, when average peak UV levels are below 3 - unless in alpine regions, near highly reflective surfaces such as water and snow or outdoors for extended periods.

**Behaviour when UV is 3 and above**

- encourage the daily application of sunscreen before school and prior to any outdoor activity.
- encourage children to use available areas of shade for outdoor activities, where possible.
- encourage parents to provide sunscreen for their child.
- provide time, space and reminders for students and staff to apply sunscreen.
- encourage staff and parents to act as role models by practising SunSmart behaviours while involved in outdoor activities.

**Curriculum**

- incorporate programs on skin cancer prevention and vitamin D into the curriculum at all grade levels.
- regularly reinforce SunSmart behaviour in a positive way through newsletters, parent meetings, student and teacher activities.
- ensure the SunSmart policy is reflected in the planning of all outdoor events (e.g. excursions, sporting events).

**Environment**

- where possible, outdoor activities will be planned away from the middle of the day during the period mid-September to mid-April (when UV levels reach 3 and above).
- where possible, organise outdoor activities to be held in areas with plenty of shade.
- work towards increasing the number of shelters and trees so as to provide adequate shade in the schoolgrounds.

**Evaluation**

Cooee Primary School SunSmart Committee will review the effectiveness of this policy each year. They will:

- Review the SunSmart behaviour of students, staff, parents and visitors and make recommendations for improvement.
- Assess shade provision and usage and make recommendations for increases in shade provision.
- Update and promote curriculum material relevant to SunSmart activities.
- The School’s sun protection policy will be submitted for review to Cancer Council Tasmania once every three years, for updating as new evidence becomes available.

Updated: March 2013