

SUN PROTECTION

1. Policy statement

Children’s safety and wellbeing are paramount at Weldon Children’s Services and are fostered through our child safe culture, responsive relationships, engaging experiences, and safe and healthy environments. We are committed to providing children with a safe environment that includes shade and other sun protection measures to support their learning, play, and wellbeing.

Weldon ensures that all educators, staff, and children maintain a healthy balance of ultraviolet (UV) exposure and are suitably protected whenever outdoors. Educators and staff role model and actively promote sun protection measures, supporting children to develop an understanding of sun safety and encouraging lifelong protective behaviours.

Weldon Children’s Services complies with the Cancer Council NSW SunSmart Program and ensures that all sun protection practices are evidence-based, consistent, and applied across all activities on and off site. We are committed to maintaining children’s health and safety while supporting opportunities for active play and outdoor learning.

This policy ensures that:

- Sun protection is considered during all outdoor activities, particularly during high UV periods (generally 10:00am to 3:00pm from September to April in Australia).
- Children and staff wear appropriate clothing and hats, and sunscreen is applied regularly.
- Shade is provided and outdoor activities are scheduled to minimise UV exposure where possible.
- Families are informed of sun protection requirements and are encouraged to provide suitable clothing and hats for their children.
- Staff model sun safe behaviours and actively support children in learning about sun safety.
- The service regularly reviews and updates sun protection practices to ensure compliance with National Quality Standard (QA 2 – Children’s Health and Safety), regulations, and current public health guidelines.

2. Background

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to have policies and procedures in place in relation to sun protection to safeguard children’s health and wellbeing. Ultraviolet Radiation (UVR) from the sun poses significant health risks, including sunburn, dehydration, heat illness, eye damage, and long-term consequences such as skin cancer. Exposure to UVR is particularly relevant in early childhood settings, as young children often attend education and care services during the times of day when UV levels are at their peak.

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, with more than 2000 deaths each year and skin cancers making up a significant proportion of all cancer diagnoses nationwide. Two in three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer before the age of 70, and repeated UV exposure throughout life contributes substantially to this risk. The majority of

skin cancers, including melanoma and non-melanoma types, are caused by UVR exposure and are largely preventable through effective sun protection practices.

Young children are especially vulnerable to UV damage. Infants and toddlers up to four years of age have lower melanin levels and a thinner outer skin layer (stratum corneum), making their skin more susceptible to harmful UV effects. UV damage accumulated in childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

While sunlight is the best natural source of vitamin D, which is essential for bone health and normal growth and development, *sensible sun protection does not put people at risk of vitamin D deficiency*. Most people obtain adequate vitamin D from incidental sun exposure during everyday activities, and sun protection is recommended when UV levels reach 3 or above.

The World Health Organization cautions that children’s UV exposure should be carefully limited, as growing bodies and developing immune systems are more susceptible to environmental threats than those of adults.

The approved provider must ensure that outdoor spaces include adequate shaded areas that meet recognised authorities’ recommendations to protect children from UV over-exposure. Shade may be provided by large trees, shade cloth, pergolas, and solid roofs, and should be considered in the design and use of outdoor environments (Guide to the NQF – Operational Requirements, Quality Area 3).

Because excursions and off-site activities may present different sun exposure risks, sun protection must be included in excursion risk assessments to ensure children’s safety across all environments.

To support best practice, Weldon Children’s Services works in compliance with the Cancer Council’s SunSmart Program and evidence-based guidelines to protect children, staff, and families from harmful UV exposure while also supporting healthy outdoor play and development.

3. Legislative requirements

Section / Regulation	Description
Education and Care Services National Law – Section 167	Requires the approved provider to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of children while attending the service, including protection from environmental hazards such as UV exposure.
Education and Care Services National Regulations – Regulation 73	Health policies: The service must have a health policy that includes practices for sun protection and prevention of illnesses related to UV exposure.
Education and Care Services National Regulations – Regulation 77	Health, hygiene, and safe food practices: Supports safe outdoor practices and supervision during high UV periods.

Education and Care Services National Regulations – Regulation 102 & 102c	Provide for interactions with children and safety management, which includes ensuring outdoor environments are safe and shaded.
Education and Care Services National Regulations – Regulation 103	Premises, furniture, and equipment must be safe and suitable, including shaded outdoor areas for children.
Education and Care Services National Regulations – Regulation 113	Outdoor space: Premises must have adequate shaded areas to ensure children are protected from UV exposure while playing outdoors.
Education and Care Services National Regulations – Regulation 114	Outdoor space design and equipment: Ensures outdoor areas and equipment are safe and suitable for children, including shade coverage.
Education and Care Services National Regulations – Regulation 168	Policies and procedures: The service must maintain policies for health, safety, and wellbeing, including sun protection.
Education and Care Services National Regulations – Regulation 170	Records: The service must maintain accurate records of children’s enrolment and health information, including health risks related to sun exposure if relevant.
Education and Care Services National Regulations – Regulation 171	Records management: Policies must ensure that records relating to children’s health and safety are securely stored and accessible when needed.
Education and Care Services National Regulations – Regulation 172	Storage of records: Health and safety records, including sun protection procedures and staff compliance, must be stored safely and confidentially.
National Quality Standard (NQS) – QA 2.1.3	Healthy lifestyle: Children are supported to develop healthy lifestyle practices, including protection from sun exposure and education on sun safety.
National Quality Standard (NQS) – QA 3.1.1	Environment: Outdoor spaces provide shade and protection from environmental hazards, including UV radiation.
Child Safe Standards – Standard 1 & Standard 2	Embed child safety in organisational leadership and create safe environments where children’s wellbeing is protected, including safe exposure to sunlight.
Cancer Council SunSmart Program Guidelines	Evidence-based best practice: Includes UV monitoring, sun-safe clothing, sunscreen application, use of shade, and scheduling outdoor activities to minimise harmful UV exposure.
SunSmart Australia – UV Index Awareness	Ensures children and staff are protected when the UV Index is 3 or above, including daily monitoring, clothing, hats, sunscreen, and shade strategies.

4. Principles informed in this policy:

Child Safety, Health, and Wellbeing

- Children’s safety, health, and wellbeing are our highest priority. Educators and staff implement policies and procedures to protect children from UV radiation and burns from overheated surfaces.
- A child safe culture ensures all children are actively engaged in decisions affecting their environment and supported to reach their potential.
- Adequate supervision, reasonable precautions, and clear emergency procedures are in place to protect children at all times, indoors and outdoors.
- Educators consider diverse needs, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disabilities, and children more vulnerable to sunburn due to skin type or medical conditions.

Shade and Outdoor Environment

- Outdoor areas provide sufficient shade through trees, shade cloth, pergolas, or solid roofs, particularly in high-use areas.
- Educators actively encourage play in shaded areas and monitor children, moving activities as required to minimise UV exposure.
- Regular risk assessments guide planning for additional shade and outdoor safety improvements.

Hats and Clothing

- Sun-safe hats covering face, neck, and ears are required for staff, educators, and children.
- Children without appropriate hats are directed to shaded areas or provided with a spare hat.
- Sun-safe clothing that covers shoulders, back, and stomach is worn during outdoor play.

Scheduling Outdoor Activities and Monitoring UV Levels

- Outdoor play is essential for children’s learning, growth, and wellbeing, and UV exposure is managed carefully.
- Educators conduct temperature checks on surfaces (metal, concrete, synthetic grass, rubber, softfall) to prevent burns; surfaces that cannot be touched for five seconds by hand are deemed unsafe.
- Outdoor play follows UV Index guidelines, with sun protection implemented when UV levels reach 3 or above, using resources such as the SunSmart app, BOM website, or myUV.com.au.

Sunscreen

- SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen is applied 20 minutes before outdoor play and reapplied every 2 hours or after washing.

Considerations for Babies

- Infants and young children are protected using physical barriers (wraps, clothing, hats, shade).
- Sunscreen is applied only to exposed areas, and sunscreen use is minimised for babies under 6 months as recommended by dermatology authorities.

Extreme Heat

- Heatwave and extreme temperature conditions are monitored.

- Educators provide readily accessible drinking water, observe children for heat-related symptoms, and adjust outdoor activities as required.

Role Modelling and Staff Practices

- Educators and staff model sun-safe behaviours, supporting children to develop lifelong sun protection habits.
- Staff receive training, resources, and guidance to maintain safe sun practices and protect themselves from occupational UV exposure.

Education and Family Engagement

- Sun protection is incorporated into the daily program and learning experiences.
- Families are informed, engaged, and encouraged to support sun safety practices, forming a collaborative approach to children’s health and wellbeing.
- Staff, families, and visitors are regularly provided with sun protection information and updates.

5. Key terms

Term	Meaning	Source
ACECQA – Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources, and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.	acecqa.gov.au
Risk assessment	Assessing the risk means working out how likely it is that a hazard will harm someone and how serious the harm could be.	acecqa.gov.au/media/29421
Sun protection times	Sun protection measures are recommended when the UVI is 3 and above.	bom.gov.au/uv/ cancer.org.au/cancerinformation/causes-andprevention/sun-safety/uvindex
Sun protection factor (SPF)	The Australian standard for sunscreen, the SPF indicates the level of protection provided against UVR.	arpansa.gov.au/understanding-radiation/radiation-sources/moreradiation-sources/sunprotection-sunscreen
Ultraviolet Index (UVI)	A measure of the level of UVR. The higher the UVI, the greater the potential for damage to the skin and eyes, and the less time it takes for harm to occur. Sun protection measures are recommended when the UVI is 3 and above.	who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/ultraviolet-(uv)-index bom.gov.au/uv/
Ultraviolet radiation (UVR)	The portion of the electromagnetic spectrum between 100 nanometers (nm) and 400nm:	arpansa.gov.au/understanding-radiation/whatis-

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘UVA’ – UVR in the range 315nm to 400nm is thought to contribute to premature aging and wrinkling of the skin and has been implicated as a cause of skin cancer. • ‘UVB’ – UVR in the range 280nm to 315nm is more dangerous than UVA and has been implicated as the major cause of skin cancers, sunburning, and cataracts. • ‘UVC’ – UVR in the range 100nm to 280nm is extremely dangerous but does not reach the earth’s surface due to absorption in the atmosphere by ozone. 	radiation/non-ionisingradiation/ultraviolet-radiation
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6. Links to other policies

The following policies may be linked to this policy:

- Interactions with children
- Excursions
- Providing a child safe environment
- Enrolment and orientation
- Governance and management

7. Induction and ongoing training

- Induction and ongoing training will be implemented, focusing on this policy and related procedures.
- Information will be shared with relief/ casual and educator assistants on induction and as relevant to the environments that they are working in, their shift responsibilities and the children in their care.
- Procedures and clear expectations about conducting assessments are part of Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person induction training, and regularly reviewed at staff meetings.

8. Monitoring, evaluation, and review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every two years.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making

any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family’s ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

Policy created:		
Review Date	Assignee	Notes
04/02/2026	Lauren Roberts	Updated policy statement Updated background and included Cancer Council data Update principles that inform this policy Update legislative requiremntns

SUN PROTECTION GUIDELINES

1. Title

Sun Protection Procedure

2. Reference to policy and philosophy

Weldon Children's Services is committed to fostering a safe, healthy, and supportive environment where children are actively engaged in learning, wellbeing, and life-long protective habits. Sun protection practices align with our philosophy of promoting child safety, health, and wellbeing, supporting outdoor learning, and modelling responsible behaviours for children, families, and staff.

3. Procedures

Shade and Outdoor Environment

Provide adequate shade in outdoor play areas using trees, shade cloth, pergolas, or solid structures. Position outdoor play areas and equipment to maximise shade during high UV periods (10:00am–3:00pm, September–April).

Conduct regular risk assessments of outdoor environments to identify areas requiring additional shade.

Hats and Clothing

Children, educators, staff, volunteers, and students must wear sun-safe hats that cover face, neck, and ears.

Encourage sun-safe clothing that covers shoulders, back, and stomach.

Children without appropriate hats/clothing are directed to shaded areas or provided with spare items.

Scheduling Outdoor Activities

Plan outdoor experiences according to UV levels, using the SunSmart app, BOM website, or myUV.com.au.

Avoid outdoor play during extreme UV or heat conditions; provide indoor alternatives when surface temperatures exceed safe limits (cannot be touched comfortably for 5 seconds).

Sunscreen Application

SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen is applied 20 minutes before outdoor play, and reapplied every 2 hours or after washing/physical activity.

Ensure sunscreen is applied to all exposed skin.

Considerations for Babies

Use physical barriers (wraps, clothing, hats, shade) to protect infants.

Minimise sunscreen use for babies under 6 months, applying only to exposed areas if necessary.

Heat and Environmental Safety

Monitor children for heat-related illness: swelling, prickly heat, cramps, exhaustion, or heatstroke.

Ensure accessible drinking water at all times.

Adjust outdoor activities and schedules during heatwaves or extreme temperatures.

Role Modelling and Staff Practices

Educators and staff model sun-safe behaviours, supporting children to develop lifelong sun protection habits.

Staff receive training, resources, and guidance to maintain safe sun practices and protect themselves from occupational UV exposure.

Education and Family Engagement

Sun protection is incorporated into the daily program and learning experiences.

Families are informed, engaged, and encouraged to support sun safety practices, forming a collaborative approach to children's health and wellbeing.

Staff, families, and visitors are regularly provided with sun protection information and updates.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure compliance with Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations relating to health, safety, and outdoor environments (Regs 73, 113, 114, 168). • Ensure outdoor environments provide adequate shaded areas and safe equipment. • Provide resources, training, and supervision to maintain sun safety practices across all programs. • Monitor compliance and regularly review policies, procedures, and risk assessments.
Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that sun protection procedures are implemented daily and staff adhere to them. • Oversee UV monitoring, heat safety, and sunscreen application. • Conduct temperature checks on outdoor surfaces before children access them. • Report and document incidents related to UV or heat exposure. • Provide guidance to educators regarding sun-safe practices and emergency responses.
Educators and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervise children to ensure shade, hats, clothing, and sunscreen are used appropriately. • Model sun-safe behaviour consistently. • Monitor UV levels and heat risks throughout the day. • Adapt outdoor programs to minimise UV and heat risks. • Apply sunscreen to children who are unable to do so themselves.
Volunteers and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow all sun protection practices and instructions from educators and supervisors.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model sun-safe behaviour when engaging with children. • Participate in training and induction regarding sun safety procedures.
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide sun-safe clothing and hats for their child. • Ensure sunscreen is applied before arrival if possible. • Support the service in following sun protection procedures. • Engage with educators regarding children’s individual sun safety needs (e.g., medical conditions, skin sensitivity).