



CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT

SAFETY IN THE SUN GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

HS/ECS/056

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**Children and Young
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1. Introduction

This guidance has been produced using guidance provided by the Cancer Research UK SunSmart Campaign.

Schools and Children and Young People's Centres are encouraged to look at their existing arrangements and produce a policy for sun awareness using the information contained within this document and using the information listed on page 9.

2. Why is sun protection important for children and young people?

Skin cancer is one of the most common cancers in the UK and the number of cases is rising at an alarming rate. The good news is that the majority of these cases could be prevented. Most skin cancers are caused by UV radiation from the sun. If we protect ourselves from the sun then we can reduce our risk. This is particularly important for children and young people whose skin is more delicate and easily damaged.

Sunburn in childhood can double your risk of skin cancer. You will not see the damage immediately because skin cancer can take years to develop. But children who are exposed to the sun now are storing up problems for the future.

3. What is the SunSmart campaign?

SunSmart is the national skin cancer prevention campaign run by Cancer Research UK. The SunSmart schools initiative encourages schools to develop and adopt sun protection policies. They are part of a broader campaign communicating effective skin cancer prevention messages to the general public.

The five key SunSmart skin cancer prevention messages are:

Stay in the shade 11-3

Make sure you never burn

Always cover up - wear a t-shirt, hat and wraparound sunglasses

Remember children burn more easily

Then use factor 15+ sunscreen.

4. Why have a SunSmart sun protection policy?

We get around 80% of our sun exposure by the age of 21 and much of this exposure occurs when at school. Schools have a responsibility to ensure that pupils are protected from the harmful effects of the sun as much as possible during the school day. Although fair skinned people are more at risk from sun damage, sun protection is relevant to both fair and dark skinned children.

Developing a SunSmart sun protection policy is an important step towards encouraging good health in line with national healthy schools programmes.

5. Assessing the Risks

Look at what the school/centre is already doing to promote SunSmart behaviour. This will help you identify what needs to be done and how much progress you are making.

Think about:

- how long children and young people currently spend outdoors in the middle of the day;

- what sort of shade is available (if any);
- whether children, young people and staff wear protective t-shirts and hats;
- whether sunscreen is encouraged and correctly used in school/centre;
- whether sun safety is included in the school curriculum/centre activities.

6. SunSmart Sun Protection Policy Checklist

EDUCATION

It is important to raise awareness of why we need sun protection if you want to encourage children and young people to change the way they behave in the sun.

Sun Protection Strategy	In Place	Planned Soon	Not Planned	Comments
Sun protection is incorporated into curriculum for all ages				
Staff are trained in the importance of sun protection				
Sun protection is actively promoted to children and young people in other ways (eg. assemblies, workshops, talks)				
Parents are informed of the importance of sun protection				

PROTECTION

Consider sun protection when planning all outdoor activities from April to September (the sun is most dangerous at this time of year).

Sun Protection Strategy	In Place	Planned Soon	Not Planned	Comments
SHADE				
Trees have been planted to provide long-term shade				
Shade structures provide long/short-term shade				
Seats and equipment are moved to shady areas				
Organized activities make use of the shade available				
TIMETABLING				
Outdoor activities and events are planned outside of 11-3 where possible,				
In the summer term morning break is extended and lunch breaks shortened to avoid the midday sun				

CLOTHING

Children and young people are encouraged to wear wide-brimmed (or legionnaire style) hats when outside				
Children and young people are encouraged to wear tops that cover their shoulders (vests and strappy tops are discouraged)				
School uniform tops and hats offer suitable sun protection				
Children and young people are allowed to wear UV protective sunglasses				
Staff also wear suitable hats and clothing				

SUNSCREEN

Sunscreen is the last line of defence. But it is useful for covering exposed areas of skin when shade and protective clothing are not practical eg. during outdoor swimming, PE lessons and school excursions. The following are only suggestions – they may or may not be appropriate for your school

Letters are sent home asking for parental permission for staff to supervise application of sunscreen				
Only factor 15+ sunscreen is used in school				
Sunscreen is reapplied regularly, particularly at midday				
Each child/young person has their own labelled bottle of sunscreen				
There is a school stock of sunscreen for children and young people who forget/cannot afford their own				
The school/centre provides sunscreen free of charge for all children and young people				

This guidance document is based on the information and advice from Cancer Research UK and SunSmart.

7. SAMPLE POLICY – PRIMARY SCHOOL

At (*name*) school we want staff and pupils to enjoy the sun safely. We will work with staff, pupils and parents to achieve this through:

EDUCATION – these measures are in place from now on:

- We will talk about how to be SunSmart in assemblies at the start of the summer term.
- Parents and guardians will be sent a letter explaining what the school is doing about sun protection and how they can help at the beginning of the summer term.

PROTECTION

Shade:

- We are planting willow trees in the playground by the climbing frame (spring 05).
- The Parent/Teachers Association has kindly offered to purchase a canopy to provide shade in the parents outdoor waiting area
- We are fundraising to buy a free-standing permanent shade canopy and will hopefully have enough money for this by (*insert date*) ready for the (*spring/summer*) term.

Timetabling:

- Our sports days will start at 3 o'clock from now on. This will also allow parents who work to join us for games later on.

Clothing:

- We have ordered new school sun hats which will be available from (*date and location*)
- We have changed our sports uniform from vests to t-shirts. This will be introduced over the next 2 years.
- All teachers have agreed to wear hats when on playground duty and during sports lessons.

Sunscreen:

- Sunscreen use will be encouraged on school trips and staff will be provided with extra sunscreen in case children forget their own.
- We will send letters home asking for permission for children to apply sunscreen during the summer months.

We will monitor our progress and review the policy annually.

8. Additional Information can be obtained from:

SunSmart

www.cancerresearchuk.org/sunsmart/

NHS Leaflets

A Guide to Looking after Yourself and Others During Hot Weather available from:

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/08/72/00/04087200.pdf

Health & Safety Executive Leaflets

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg337.pdf Guide to Sun Protection

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg147.pdf Keeping Your Top On

www.hse.gov.uk/temperature/issuesandrisks/sunprotection.htm

Meteorological Office

www.metoffice.gov.uk