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## Rationale

Australia has one of the highest incidences of skin cancer in the world, with at least two in three people being diagnosed with skin cancer before they are 70. Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Melanoma is the most common cancer in 12-24-year-olds, and sun exposure during childhood and adolescence is a critical factor in determining future skin cancer risk.

Cancer Council SA advises people to protect their skin at times when the ultraviolet (UV) radiation level is 3 and above—this is when it is strong enough to cause damage to unprotected skin. In South Australia, UV radiation levels are 3 and above every day from **1 August to 30 April** and it is during these months that sun protection is necessary. UV radiation cannot be seen or felt and differs from infrared radiation that we feel as heat. UV levels are determined by many factors including the angle of the earth to the sun, time of day and time of year, but not temperature, and levels can be high even on cool and cloudy days. Damage from UV radiation is cumulative and irreversible.

In line with the Department for Education requirements and Cancer Council SA guidelines, our Sun Smart policy is in place during terms 1, 3 and 4 (1 August until 30 April), and when UV radiation levels are 3 and above at other times. It is highly recommended that UV radiation levels are monitored, particularly during May as they still may be 3 or above depending on your location. Cancer Council SA also recommends that particular care should be taken during the peak UV times of the day when the UV radiation levels are at their highest.

A balance of ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure is important for health. Too much of the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Too little UV radiation from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones and muscles, and general health. Sensible sun protection when UV is 3 and above does not put people at risk of vitamin D deficiency.

## Aims

The aims of the 'Greenwith Primary School Sun Protection Policy' are to promote among children, staff, volunteers and parents:

- encourage the entire school community to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above
- work towards a safe school environment that provides shade for students, staff and the school community at appropriate times
- assist students to be responsible for their sun protection
- ensure families, volunteers and new staff are informed of the school's sun protection policy.

## Implementation

This policy is for implementation during terms 1, 3, and 4. Outside of this time care should also be taken when the ultraviolet radiation level is 3 and above. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all members of our primary school are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful UV rays of the sun. It is an expectation that all staff, students, volunteers and parents of Greenwith Primary School will use the following skin protection strategies:

1. Staff are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times on the SunSmart app or <http://www.myuv.com.au/>, when possible to assist with implementing this policy. The SunSmart UV indicator is also available on our school website.
2. Sun protective clothing is included in the school uniform/dress code and sports uniforms. Clothing made of a closely woven material including tops with collars and elbow-length sleeves, and longer style shorts and skirts are recommended. Rash tops or t-shirts are worn for outdoor swimming.
3. The school supplies SPF 50 broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and students to use.
  - Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours if remaining outdoors or immediately after perspiring, water-based activities, towel drying or being washed off.
  - Students are reminded to apply sunscreen before going outdoors
  - Families with children who have naturally dark skin are encouraged to discuss their vitamin D requirements with their GP or paediatrician.
4. All students, staff and volunteers are required to wear school-approved hats that protect their face, neck and ears, whenever they are outside. This includes broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket style hats with no cords or toggles. Baseball or peak caps are not acceptable. Beanies are optional, but must be following our Uniform Policy, and can be worn under school hats in Terms 1, 3 and 4.
5. A shade audit is conducted when possible to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
  - a. The Governing Council ensures there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade on the school grounds, particularly in areas where students congregate e.g. canteen, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas.
  - b. The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities.
  - c. Care is taken during the peak UV radiation times, and outdoor activities are scheduled outside of these times or in the shade where possible.
  - d. Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
  - e. Students who do not have appropriate hats or clothing are asked to play under the shade shelter, outside the Resource Centre, protected from the sun during recess and lunch.
6. A combination of sun protection measures is considered when planning outdoor activities, such as excursions, sporting activities, swimming carnivals and camps. As part of WHS UV risk controls and role modelling, when the UV is 3 and above, staff and volunteers will:
  - wear sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside
  - apply SPF 50 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen
  - seek shade whenever possible

Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures e.g. sun protective clothing and hats, sunglasses, sunscreen and shade when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.
7. SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, our school homepage, staff meetings, school assemblies, staff handbooks, parent handbooks and enrolment packs. Programs on skin cancer prevention are included in the curriculum at every year level, every year.
8. The 'Greenwith Primary School Sun Protection Policy' will be reviewed at least every three years with staff, Student Voice and Governing Council input. Families will be informed of this policy. The next review date will be May 2025.