



Sun Protection Policy

Policy Statement:

Pennant Hills Before and After School Care Service is committed to safeguarding the health and wellbeing of children by implementing best-practice sun protection measures. Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world, with melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers being the most common forms diagnosed. Childhood exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation is a major risk factor for the development of skin cancer later in life. By embedding sun safety practices from a young age, we can reduce this risk and instill lifelong habits that protect children as they grow.

In accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations as well as the Work Health and Safety Act 2012, our service ensures that all children and staff follow consistent sun protection procedures. These requirements are not only a matter of compliance but also a duty of care to provide a safe environment.

As Australia experiences some of the highest UV levels in the world, fostering a culture of sun safety is essential. Our educators will model appropriate behaviours, engage children in understanding the importance of sun protection, and work in partnership with families to reinforce these practices. We aim to empower children to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing, building a foundation for lifelong sun-safe habits.

Definitions:

UV Index - A measure of the intensity of ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun at a particular place and time. The higher the UV Index, the greater the potential for skin damage.

Sun Protection Times - The times of day when the UV Index is forecast to reach 3 or above. These times indicate when sun protection measures must be implemented for all children and staff.

Broad-Spectrum Sunscreen - Sunscreen that protects against both UVA and UVB rays. The service requires the use of SPF 30+ or higher, water-resistant, broad-spectrum sunscreen to reduce the risk of sunburn and skin cancer.

Considerations:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations:
 - Regulation 100 – Risk assessment must be conducted for activities and excursions

- Regulation 114 - Outdoor space must provide adequate shade
- Regulation 168 (2)(a)(ii) - Services must have policies and procedures in relation to sun protection
- Education and Care Services National Law:
 - Section 165-167 - Duties relating to the health, safety, and wellbeing of children
 - Section 174 - Requirement to notify the Regulatory Authority of prescribed incidents, complaints, or changes
- National Quality Standard:
 - Quality Area 2 - Children's Health and Safety
 - 2.2.1: At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
 - 2.2.2: Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities
 - Quality Area 6 - Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
 - 6.1.2: Families are supported from enrolment to understand and engage with service policies, including sun protection
 - 6.2.3: The service builds partnerships with community organisations (e.g., Cancer Council, SunSmart) to enhance children's wellbeing
- Work Health and Safety Act 2012
- My Time, Our Place Framework
- Cancer Council and SunSmart Guidelines

Policy:

UV Index Monitoring & Planning:

Educators will check and display the daily UV Index and recommended sun protection times using the SunSmart application or website. When the UV Index is 3 or above, sun protection measures must be implemented for all children and staff. If the Cancer Council advises that sun protection is not required (e.g., during winter months when the UV Index is consistently 2 or below), children will not be required to wear hats or sunscreen, though families may choose to provide them. It is important to note that damaging levels of UV radiation can occur on cloudy or cool days.

Outdoor activities will be scheduled to minimise exposure during peak UV periods. Educators will limit sun exposure between 10am-2pm (or 11am-3pm during daylight saving months). Activities will be prioritised in shaded areas, and risk assessments for excursions will include specific sun protection strategies. All sun safety practices will also apply when staff escort children to and from school.

Shade Provision:

The service will maximise the use of shade to reduce exposure to harmful UV radiation. Structured outdoor activities will be scheduled in shaded areas whenever possible when the UV Index is 3 or above. Educators will identify and promote available shade options throughout the day and year, adjusting play spaces and equipment to make best use of natural and built shade.

Portable shade structures will be utilised to supplement permanent shade, particularly during activities that require large, uncovered space such as the oval. Shade provision will be included in risk assessments for all planned activities and excursions, in line with National Regulation 114.

Children will be actively encouraged to seek shade during outdoor play, especially during peak UV periods. Educators will model this behaviour by positioning themselves in shaded areas during supervision and by reinforcing the importance of combining shade with other sun protection measures such as hats, clothing, and sunscreen.

Protective Clothing:

All children and educators are required to wear sun-safe clothing when outdoors during periods when the UV Index is 3 or above. Sun-safe clothing should be loose-fitting, made from closely woven fabric, and designed to cover as much skin as possible, particularly the shoulders, neck, and upper arms.

During vacation care and mufti days, children are encouraged to wear tops with sleeves along with longer style shorts, skirts, or trousers. Singlet tops are not considered appropriate as they do not provide adequate protection. Families are advised through the Family Handbook and enrolment information that children must attend the service in clothing that meets these requirements.

Sun-safe hats that protect the face, neck, and ears are mandatory during outdoor play. Recommended styles include bucket hats, broad-brimmed hats, or legionnaire hats. Baseball caps and visors are not preferred as they do not provide sufficient coverage. A strict, "no hat, no play" policy will be enforced by all staff at the centre. Children who arrive without a suitable hat or clothing will be directed to play in shaded areas only.

Sunscreen Use:

SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen will be provided at the service for use by children and educators. Sunscreen must be applied 20 minutes before outdoor play and reapplied at least every two hours or more frequently if children are engaged in water play or excessive perspiration.

Educators will actively remind and assist children to apply sunscreen prior to outdoor activities, particularly when children arrive at the service. Families are encouraged to apply sunscreen to their children before arrival at the service, especially during vacation care programs.

Where children have allergies or sensitivities, parents must provide an alternative sunscreen clearly labelled with the child's name. If sunscreen cannot be applied, children will be required to wear appropriate sun-safe clothing and remain indoors or in shaded areas only.

Educator Role Modelling:

Educators will consistently demonstrate positive sun protection behaviours to reinforce the importance of safe practices for children. Staff are required to wear sun-safe clothing, including tops with sleeves and covered necklines, longer style shorts, skirts, or trousers, and appropriate hats that protect the face, neck, and ears. Sunglasses and SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen must also be used when outdoors during peak UV exposure.

During outdoor supervision, educators will actively seek shaded areas wherever possible and encourage children to do the same. Staff will use opportunities in daily routines and conversations to discuss sun safety, helping children understand why protective measures are necessary. By modelling these behaviours, educators promote a culture of sun safety, aligning with the service's duty of care.

Collaboration with Children:

Children will be actively involved in the implementation of sun protection practices to build responsibility and awareness. Educators will provide opportunities for children to take leadership roles, such as checking the daily UV Index using the SunSmart app or being involved in distributing hats and sunscreen.

Children will be encouraged to remind one another about wearing hats, applying sunscreen, and seeking shade, fostering a culture of shared responsibility. By engaging children in these practices, the service empowers them to make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

Education & Information:

The service will ensure that all families, staff, and children are informed about sun protection requirements and practices. This policy will be made available to families upon enrolment and included in the Family Handbook. Parents will be advised of clothing and hat requirements and encouraged to apply sunscreen to their children before arrival, particularly during spring and summer vacation care periods.

Educators will incorporate sun safety awareness into the program through discussions, activities, and resources that help children understand the importance of protecting themselves from UV radiation.

Posters, notices, and materials from SunSmart NSW and the Cancer Council will be displayed throughout the service to reinforce key messages.

Where children have allergies or sensitivities to sunscreen, families must provide an appropriate alternative. In these cases, educators will ensure children remain in shaded areas or wear protective clothing to maintain compliance with sun safety practices. Staff will also receive ongoing training and reminders to uphold the policy, ensuring consistent implementation across the service.

Version	Action	Date
V.1	Original endorsement	30 th October 2020
V.1.2	Review and minor formatting changes. Added definitions.	17 th December 2025
V.1.2	PMC Approved	17 th February 2026