

# Sample SunSmart policy for secondary schools

# This SunSmart policy provides guidelines to ensure that students, staff and the school community are protected from damaging levels of ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun while engaged in school activities.

**Hoatu ai te kaupapahere SunSmart i etahi aratohu hei whakarite kei te noho marumaru ngā ākonga, ngā kaimahi me te hapori kura i ngā hihi o te rā i a ratou e whakauru ana ki ngā mahi kura.**

### **Rationale**

Too much of the Sun’s ultraviolet radiation (UVR) can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and lead to skin cancer, the most common cancer in Aotearoa New Zealand. Adolescence is a critical period during which accumulated UVR exposure can be an important risk factor for skin cancer later in life. Students spend long periods of time at school during the hours of peak UVR and their exposure to UVR can be higher on school days than during the weekend.

School settings provide an ideal sun protection opportunity for students, staff and the school community., Implementation and monitoring of a comprehensive SunSmart policy is key. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on ways schools can minimise UVR exposure and provide a supportive SunSmart environment. Schools can also provide excellent learning opportunities to encourage good life-long sun protection practices.

**Skin cancer is one of the most preventable cancers. More than 95 percent of skin cancers could be prevented by reducing exposure to UVR.**

### **Guidance**

Sun protection should be used whenever the Ultraviolet Index **(UVI)**[[1]](#footnote-1) **levels are 3 or higher.** For most parts of New Zealand this is between **September and April**, especially between **10am and 4pm**. Add the Sun Protection Alert widget[[2]](#footnote-2) to your school website or check the UVI level in your area by downloading the free UVNZ app from your App store[[3]](#footnote-3). Temperature is not a good indicator for deciding when to use sun protection as UVR levels can be high on cool or cloudy days.Outdoor activities are encouraged year-round (with sun protection when UVI levels are 3 or higher), because of broader health benefits, including vitamin D production.

In some instances, sun protection is required throughout the year including:

* When at high altitudes (in the mountains) or near reflective surfaces such as water and snow.
* When outdoors for extended periods of time.
* People that are sensitive to the sun due to a health condition or from taking medicines (such as antibiotics), should use sun protection year-round. This includes people/students with autoimmune diseases or medical conditions that weaken the immune system, as well as organ transplant recipients.

The sun protection policy applies to students and staff on-site at school and during excursions.

# Our sun protection policy:

All students and staff will use a *combination* of sun protection measures whenever UVI levels are 3 or above. Particular care is taken between September and April (between 10am and 4pm) when UVI levels reach their peak.

This policy is adopted from *[****DATE****]*so that students attending ***[NAME OF SCHOOL/KURA]*** are protected from harmful UVR from the Sun.

### **Slip, Slop, Slap and Wrap**

We will protect students and staff by:

1. **Slip into Shade │Whakaritea he wāhi marumaru**

There are shelters, such as trees and other shade areas providing enough coverage for students when they are outside, particularly in the following areas: popular lunch and sporting areas, outdoor assembly and lesson areas.

Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade.

* The availability of shade is considered when planning outdoor activities, gatherings and excursions. If no shade is available, we consider rescheduling outdoor activities to early morning or late afternoon when UVR is less intense.

As part of school planning, the school leadership team will consider how to increase shade where it is lacking. When re-modelling, planning new buildings and high use areas, providing shade will be considered from the start of the planning process.

### **2. Slip on Sun Protective Clothing****│Kuhunga he kākahu parekiri**

When outside out of uniform, students are encouraged to wear loose-fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible, e.g., tops with sleeves and/or collars, knee length or longer shorts and skirts.

Rash tops are encouraged for outdoor water activities/swimming sports.

Students can be exposed to high levels of UVR when playing outdoor sports. When sports uniforms are updated, sun protection is considered as a priority.

### **3.** **Slap on a Hat │Whakamauria he pōtae whānui te peha**

When outside, students are required to wear a hat that protects their face, neck and ears, such as a bucket hat with a deep crown and minimum 6cm brim, broad-brimmed or legionnaire. Baseball caps and visors do not offer enough protection and are therefore not recommended.

If students are exempt from wearing a sun protective hat due to cultural or religious reasons, other methods of sun protection, such as seeking shade, and wearing sunscreen and sunglasses should be emphasized.

### **4.** **Slop on Sunscreen │Pania he kirīmi pare tīkākā I mua I te putanga ki waho I te whare**

A water-resistant, broad-spectrum sunscreen of at least SPF 30 that meets the Australian and NZ standard (AS/NZ 2604) is available for staff and student’s use. Use a cream, lotion or gel sunscreen. Aerosol sunscreens are not as effective as it is difficult to ensure enough sunscreen is applied evenly to the skin.

Remind students to apply sunscreen **at least 20 minutes** before going outdoors and **re-apply every two hours** or more frequently if sweating or swimming (in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions on the container). Sunscreen should not be used to extend time outside.

Routine breaks are provided during outdoor activities for students to reapply sunscreen.

Sunscreen is stored in a cool place and products past their expiry date are not used.

### **5.** **Wrap on Sunglasses │Kuhunga he mōwhiti rā**

Where practical, sunglasses are recommended.

Sunglasses should be close fitting and cover as much of the eye area as possible. They should meet the AS/NZ Standard 1067:2016 (this is usually marked on the arm or swing-tag of the sunglasses).

### **6. Reinforce and role model SunSmart behaviour** **| Turuki me te whakatauira whanonga SunSmart**

* School staff protect themselves and act as role models by wearing sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses and using shade where possible.
* The school develops a communication strategy on sun protective practices for the whole school community, that includes: school website or apps, newsletters, noticeboards, staff and parent meetings, before school excursions and sports days, enrolment and staff orientation.
* Protection from UVR exposure is considered as part of the school’s risk management procedures for all outdoor events on and off-site, e.g., PE, sports days, school camps.
* Ensure the sun protection policy is available to staff, students, families, and visitors.

### **7. Monitoring and Review** **| Aroturuki me te Arotake**

Management and staff monitor and review the effectiveness of the sun protection policy at least every two to three years and revise the policy when required.

**Policy prepared by:** *[NAME]*

**On:** *[DATE]*

**Policy review:** *[DATE]*

### **Further information**

* Cancer Society SunSmart website: [www.sunsmart.org.nz](http://www.sunsmart.org.nz)
* General SunSmart information: [www.cancernz.org.nz/reducing-cancer-risk/what-you-can-do/sunsmart/](http://www.cancernz.org.nz/reducing-cancer-risk/what-you-can-do/sunsmart/)
* To find out if the UV level is 3 or above, download the free UVNZ app for iphone or Android: [www.sunsmart.org.nz/resources/uvnz-app/](https://www.sunsmart.org.nz/resources/uvnz-app/)
* Staff and parents can learn about sun protection by completing the free Cancer Society SunSmart online professional development module: <https://bit.ly/3j7M4lD>

### **Aotearoa NZ legislation and requirements**

There is no statutory obligation to have a policy to protect students, staff, educators and visitors from the sun, but there are general requirements for schools to manage the risk to health and safety from exposure to the sun appropriately.

**Students:**

* Education and Training Act 2020. Supporting student’s health, safety and wellbeing [www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2020/0038/latest/LMS170676.html](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2020/0038/latest/LMS170676.html)
* Ministry of Education Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga. Protection from UV radiation in schools: [www.education.govt.nz/school/health-safety-and-wellbeing/anaging-risks-and-hazards-at-school/](http://www.education.govt.nz/school/health-safety-and-wellbeing/anaging-risks-and-hazards-at-school/)
* Ministry of Education: Shade at School: www.education.govt.nz/education-professionals/schools-year-0-13/property/shade-school

**Educators, staff and visitors:**

Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 [www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2015/0070/latest/DLM5976660.html](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2015/0070/latest/DLM5976660.html)

Worksafe Mahi Haumaru Aotearoa: protect your staff from solar UV radiation [www.worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/work-related-health/protecting-workers-from-solar-uv-radiation/](http://www.worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/work-related-health/protecting-workers-from-solar-uv-radiation/)

**For further support and information:**

* Contact your local Cancer Society [www.cancer.org.nz/about-us/find-a-cancer-society-office-near-you/](http://www.cancer.org.nz/about-us/find-a-cancer-society-office-near-you/)
* Or email [sunsmart@cancer.org.nz](mailto:sunsmart@cancer.org.nz)

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1. Ultraviolet Index (UVI) measures the level of UV radiation from the Sun. The higher the number on the UVI, the higher theradiation level. A UV Indexof 3 ormore indicates that protection from thesun is required. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Sun protection alert: <https://www.sunsmart.org.nz/resources/sun-protection-alert/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. UVNZ App available: [www.sunsmart.org.nz/resources/uvnz-app/](http://www.sunsmart.org.nz/resources/uvnz-app/) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)