

# 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 (UV) radiation 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**

Excessive exposure to the sun’s UV radiation 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 UV radiation exposure can be an important risk factor for skin cancer development later in life. Students spend long periods of time at school during the hours of peak UV radiation and their exposure 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, through the implementation and monitoring of a comprehensive SunSmart policy. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on ways schools can minimise UV radiation 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 in Aotearoa New Zealand. More than 95% of skin cancers could be prevented by reducing exposure to UV radiation.**

### **Guidance**

* Sun protection should be used whenever ultraviolet index **(UVI****)**[[1]](#footnote-1) **levels are 3 or higher.** For most parts of Aotearoa New Zealand this is between September and April, especially between 10am and 4pm.UVI levels can still be high on cool or cloudy days, so temperature is not a good indicator for deciding when to use sun protection. To check the UVI levels in your area, download the free UVNZ app from your App store[[2]](#footnote-2) or add the Sun Protection Alert widget to your school website.[[3]](#footnote-3)
* Use sun protection throughout the year when at high altitudes (in the mountains) or near reflective surfaces such as water and snow, or outdoors for extended periods of time.
* 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.
* Students with a health condition or taking medicines (such as antibiotics), that make them sensitive to the sun, should use sun protection year-round. This includes those with autoimmune diseases or medical conditions that weaken the immune system, as well as organ transplant recipients, or those taking medicines that increase sensitivity to UV radiation.
* This policy should apply to students, staff, family members, whānauand visitors, 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 UV radiation from the sun.

This SunSmart policy has been developed to ensure that all children and staff are protected from damaging levels of UV radiation from the sun during all outdoor activities.

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

We will protect students and staff by:

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

Making sure there are shelters, such as trees and other shade areas providing enough coverage for all tamariki and staff when they are outside.

Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.

* The availability of shade is considered when planning outdoor activities, gatherings and excursions. If no shade is available, consider rescheduling outdoor activities to when UV radiation is lower.

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, playgrounds 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 UV radiation 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 legionnaire, broad-brimmed (minimum 7.5 cm brim) or deep crown bucket hat (minimum 6 cm brim). 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 must 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 expired products 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 educators/staff protect themselves and act as role models by:

* Wearing sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside.
* Applying water-resistant, broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 and re-applying every 2 hours.
* Using shade whenever possible.

### **7. SunSmart information and skills** **| Pārongo Sunsmart me ngā pūkenga**

* Students learn about the harmful effects of UV radiation and the need for sun protection through learning programmes. The school may utilise free curriculum resources from the Cancer Society available from: www.sunsmart.org.nz/sunsmart-schools/sunsmart-schools-resources/

Educators are aware of the free online professional development SunSmart module available at: [www.sunsmart.org.nz/sunsmart-schools/sunsmart-schools-resources/ece-resources/](http://www.sunsmart.org.nz/sunsmart-schools/sunsmart-schools-resources/ece-resources/)

Sun protection policy is reinforced through staff and student activities and displays.

Staff and families are provided with information on the school sun protection policy and practices at enrolment and through family newsletters, school apps, notice boards, and meetings.

When enrolling their child, families are:

* Informed of our school’s sun protection policy.
* Asked to ensure their child wears sun protective clothing if a uniform is not required.
* Asked to provide a water-resistant, broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 for their child (if not provided by the school).

Encouraged to practice SunSmart behaviours themselves when at the school and in the home environment.

Required to provide an appropriate sunscreen if a child has allergies or sensitivity to sunscreen provided by the school.

### **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.

Ensure the policy is available to staff, families, and visitors.

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

**On:** *[DATE]*

**Policy approved by:** *[NAME]*

**Policy review due:** *[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 UVI 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: Shade at School: [www.education.govt.nz/education-professionals/schools-year-0-13/property/shade-school](http://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

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