



## Thomastown West Primary School Sun Protection Policy 2024 - 2028

Thomastown West Primary School motto is **Together Working on Pathways to Success**. At Thomastown West Primary School, we want every child to achieve their full potential and we know that parents share this goal. Student health and sun safety is paramount in our considerations as a school.



### HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Thomastown West Primary School on 03 9465 4317 or [thomastown.west.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:thomastown.west.ps@education.vic.gov.au).

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage behaviours at Thomastown West Primary School to minimise the risk of skin and eye damage and skin cancer.

This policy provides guidelines to:

- support staff and students to use a combination of sun protection measures when UV index levels are 3 or above (generally mid-August– end of April)
- ensure that there are outdoor environments that provide adequate shade for students and staff
- ensure students are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills to help them to be responsible for their own protection
- support our school's strategies to meet its duty of care and occupational health and safety obligations to minimise harmful UV exposure and associated harm for students and staff.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities on and off-site, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff at Thomastown West Primary School.

### POLICY

Overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause health problems including sunburn, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

UV radiation:

- cannot be seen or felt
- can be reflected off surfaces such as buildings, asphalt, concrete, water, sand and snow
- can pass through light clouds
- varies in intensity across the day and the year (highest from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria)
- peaks during school hours.



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Sun safety is a shared responsibility and staff, parents and students are encouraged to implement a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 and above (typically from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria). Information about the daily local sun protection times is available on the free Sun Smart app, or at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au) or [bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au).

Thomastown West Primary School has the following measures in place for all outdoor activities during the daily sun protection times to help reduce the risk of over-exposure to UV radiation for staff and students.

### Shade

Thomastown West Primary School will provide sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- where students congregate for lunch
- outdoor lesson areas
- popular play areas such as playgrounds
- assembly areas
- sporting grounds

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Thomastown West Primary School that may impact on the level of shading available to staff and students, a review of the shaded areas available will be conducted and further shading installed as appropriate.

### Sun protective uniform/clothing

Thomastown West Primary School's school uniform and dress code includes sun-protective clothing and recommends that from the mid-August to end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, students come to school wearing their sun-protective school uniform, such as:

- loose, cool, closely woven fabric
- shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
- tops with elbow length or long sleeves
- longer style shorts and skirts
- a wide brim hat/ bucket or legionnaire style hat to be worn from mid-August to the end of April.

### Hats

From mid-August to the end of April, staff and students are expected to wear hat styles that protect the face, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket.

Baseball or peaked caps and sun visors are not considered a suitable alternative, as they do not protect the ears, cheeks or neck.

Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or a hat will be asked to play in the allocated shade area that is in a suitable area protected from the sun. (Shelter near room 3 and room 12)



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## Sunscreen

Thomastown West Primary School encourages all staff and students to apply SPF50 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors, and reapplied every two hours according to [manufacturer's instructions](#).

To avoid staff and students that may suffer from allergic reactions from certain types of sunscreens we encouraged staff and students to bring their own sunscreen from home to use at school.

Staff and families should role model Sun Smart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside.

## Sunglasses

Where practical Thomastown West Primary School encourages students and staff engaged in outdoor activities to wear close-fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

## Curriculum

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure. Thomastown West Primary School will address sun and UV safety education as part of the School's Health and Wellbeing Program.

Staff are encouraged to access resources, tools, and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun smart behaviour across the school community.

## Staff role-modelling and OHS

Staff are encouraged to access resources, tools, and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun smart behaviour across the school community.

UV radiation exposure is considered as part of our school's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities, i.e. UV radiation protection strategies are included in school camp activities, excursions, sports days and interschool sports events.

## Families and visitors

Families and visitors participating in and attending outdoor school activities are encouraged to:

- wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
- apply SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and
- seek shade whenever possible when outdoors.



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## Community engagement

Sun protection behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school website/intranet, staff and parent meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/new staff orientation.

Families, students and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety at school and at home. Thomastown West Primary School may provide information in the following ways listed below.

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website, Compass and/or Class Dojo
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Discussed in student assemblies
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- the Department's Policy and Advisory Library:
  - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
  - [Heat Health](#)
  - [Outdoor Activities and Working Outdoors](#)
  - [Risk Management – Schools](#)
  - [Shade Sails](#)
  - [Student Dress Code](#)
- SunSmart and Cancer Council Victoria:
  - [Primary schools free education resources, sample policies and information about the free SunSmart Schools Program.](#)
  - [Secondary schools free education resources and sample policies.](#)
  - [Sunscreen reactions.](#)



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### POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the Thomastown West Primary School four year policy review cycle

<b>Date Implemented</b>	2016; 2020; 2024
<b>Author</b>	Principal Assistant Principal TWPS Leadership Team First Aid Officer
<b>Approved By</b>	School Council
<b>Date Reviewed</b>	October 2016; October 2020; 19 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
<b>Responsible for Review</b>	Assistant Principal Principal
<b>Review Date</b>	05/09/2028
<b>References</b>	Victorian Government Schools Policy Advisory Guide