



## Sun-protection Policy

2025



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Bass Coast Specialist School on 03 5672 4474 or email on [bass.coast.ss@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:bass.coast.ss@education.vic.gov.au).

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to support sun protection behaviours at Bass Coast Specialist School to minimise risk of health problems from sun overexposure, including 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 to the end of April in Victoria)
- 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.

### 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.

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 or above. Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via the SunSmart widget on the school's website, the free SunSmart app, or at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au) or [bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au).

Bass Coast Specialist 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

Bass Coast Specialist School provides sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- outdoor lesson areas
- popular play areas

Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outdoors during peak sun protection times, particularly if they do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing.

When building works or grounds maintenance is conducted at Bass Coast Specialist School that may impact on the level of shade 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

Bass Coast Specialist School recommends that from mid-August to end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, students come to school wearing sun-protective clothing such as:

- loose, cool, densely woven fabric
- shirts with a collar and/or high necklines
- tops with elbow length or long sleeves
- longer style shorts, dresses and skirts
- rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming activities.

## Hats

From mid-August (exact date to be set by the school annually) to 30 April, all students **must** wear a sun protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears for all outdoor activities. Hats may also be worn for all outdoor activities outside of the August to April time period, by parent or student choice.

Students wear a school hat or a hat that protects the face, head, neck and ears when outdoors, for example broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hat.

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 hats will be asked to use available areas of shade when outdoors or a suitable area protected from the sun.

## **Sunscreen**

Bass Coast Specialist School encourages all staff and students to apply SPF50 or SPF50+ 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 (or more frequently if sweating or swimming).

Bass Coast Specialist School supplies SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for staff and students to use and the location is communicated to all staff and students, so it is readily accessible.

Bass Coast Specialist School reminds students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors.

Sunscreen that is supplied by the school is stored below 30 degrees and the expiry date monitored.

At Bass Coast Specialist School, if students do not have their own sunscreen, they are welcome to access the classroom sunscreen.

Staff and students who may suffer from skin reactions from certain types of sunscreens are encouraged to bring their own sunscreen from home, clearly labelled, for personal use. Please contact the office to implement a management plan to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction at school.

Staff and families should role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF 50 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen when outside.

## **Curriculum**

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices. They are supported to understand effects of sun exposure and are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school. Bass Coast Specialist School will address sun protection and UV safety education as part of Health & PE lessons in class, and explicit teaching of how we are “safe” in all settings (SWPBS matrix).

## **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.

## Community engagement

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

## COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Noted in staff handbook/manual
- Noted in transition and enrolment packs
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- 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.](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	August 2025
Approved by	School Council
Next scheduled review date	August 2026