

SUN PROTECTION POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the Victorian School of Languages (03) 9474 0500

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to support sun protection behaviours at the Victorian School of Languages (VSL) to minimise the 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 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

Over-exposure 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 year (highest from mid-August to 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 free SunSmart app, or at sunsmart.com.au or bom.gov.au.

The VSL 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 sun exposure for staff and students.

Shade

At the VSL there are over 40 centres each with different settings. During the 20-minute recess period the VSL will provide sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- where students congregate for recess
- the canteen (where operational)
- outdoor areas- if lessons are facilitated outside
- popular play areas
- assembly areas
- sporting grounds/ovals

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 a VSL centre site that may impact on the level of shading available to staff and students, a review of the shaded areas available will be conducted to offer further shading options.

Sun protective clothing

The VSL recommends that from the mid-August to the end of April, and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, staff and students are encouraged to wear hat styles that protect the face, neck and ears when outdoors. It is recommended that students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or a hat play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun. This applies on and off-site unless otherwise advised.

Sunscreen

The VSL encourages all staff and students to apply SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily whenever UV levels reach 3 and above. Staff and students should bring their own sunscreen according to personal skin requirements. Each VSL Centre Office will have a generic sunscreen that can be used. (Appendix A). Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours. Sunscreen that is supplied by the school is stored below 30 degrees and the expiry date monitored.

Staff and families should role model SunSmart behaviour and are encouraged to apply SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when outside.

Sunglasses

Where practical the VSL encourages students and staff engaged in outdoor activities to wear sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

Curriculum, Staff role-modelling and OHS

Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices and are supported to understand the benefits and risks of sun exposure. SunSmart posters are displayed in VSL offices and also in Student F-10 Language Passports and VCE Student Handbooks. Staff address sun protection and UV safety at the student's induction to Child Safety (including Sun Protection) at their first lesson.

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.

Community engagement

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

Families and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety at school and at home. The VSL provides this information through newsletters, bulletins, noticeboards, and school website.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website www.vsl.vic.edu.au
- Included in staff and student induction processes
- Included in our staff handbook
- Reminders Area & School Bulletins
- Discussed in an annual staff briefing/meeting
- Made available in hard copy 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	September 2024
Consultation	School Council: 18/09/2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2028

Appendix A: VSL Centre Office location

Area	Centre Office location	Centre Office location	Centre Office location	Centre Office location
Central	University High Music Wing Room 158	Brunswick A Block Ground floor	Collingwood VSL Office. The first room on the left in the reception foyer	
Country 1	Matthew Flinders Helen Fraser Campus office	North Geelong General Office	Point Cook General Office	Werribee Foyer
Country 2	Bendigo Building B Pod. Between B6 and B7. Lockable storeroom with no student access.	Croydon Building C Staff room – Level 1	Shepparton VSL Store room - Administration Building – FG.07 VSL office Saturday morning – Biyala, Murray (Teal) entrance	Wodonga A Wing Lockable cabinet outside A3
Distance Ed	Thornbury DE Office, Level 2	Seminars Portable First Aid Kit that teachers take to seminars		
East 1	Doncaster VSL office. Located between Room C9 and C10. (In the portable classroom block)	Blackburn VSL office between D7 and D6. (Right behind the Dunlop Building and next to the STEM building)	Box Hill P01 (Right behind the Box Hill High School, Performing Art Centre)	
East 2	Glen Waverley Between Staff Centre & Science/Tech Building.	Carwatha Room at far end of school library.	Mildura School library	
North	Thomastown Admin General Office Building. Next to staff room.	Epping Admin/staff General office room.	Lalor VSL Portable- Staff carpark (Next to general office portable)	Roxburgh Park Admin & Staffroom building-
North West	Keilor Downs VSL Area Office First Aid in Main Reception	Hume Central Year 8 Building VSL Office	Mt. Ridley Willandra building Main reception	Taylors Lakes Main Reception Area
South	Mentone JLC Building First Aid Kit in VSL office	Brentwood Room K9 First Aid Kit in VSL office	Keysborough Junior Building First Aid Kit in VSL office	Traralgon Office Building First Aid Kit in VSL office
South 2	Westall Area office B25 in B block opposite staff room	South Oakleigh Saturday – work out of the Staff room. Area office: storeroom in front of A3	McKinnon VSL office in F01.5 (as it is between F01 and F02).	
South East	Dandenong 'A' building, main administration block	Hampton Park Reception of Hampton Park SC and meeting room opposite reception	Berwick Main staff room behind Berwick College reception	
West 1	Footscray FHS General Office	Altona North Bayside SC General Office	Sunshine Conference Room opposite General Office	Ballarat Rm 102 Admin Building
West 2	Caroline Springs (Creekside College) Area 4 – VSL Admin Office facing entry, VSL Office and storeroom on the right	Melton (Staughton College) Staff Room	Truganina (Truganina P-9 College) Room 93 Area J	