SUN PROTECTION POLICY

Meldreth Primary School

POLICY RATIONALE

Whilst we recognise that some sun is good for us, over-exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation (UVR) is an important safeguarding issue for schools. During the warmer months of the year, children are exposed to UVR from the sun, often when penetration is strongest (between 11am and 3pm). Without adequate protection, a child's delicate skin can easily burn, causing cumulative and irreparable damage. This can significantly increase their risk of developing skin cancer in later life. Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the UK with rates of the disease rising faster than any other cancer. Around 90% of skin cancers are caused by over-exposure to UVR, so it is almost entirely preventable. Sun exposure in the first 15 years of life contributes significantly to a person's lifetime risk of developing skin cancer, highlighting the importance of schools and parents working together to increase knowledge and influence behaviours, ensuring children are protected against UVR and learn how to enjoy the sun safely.

This policy outlines our commitment to:
PROTECTION: Providing an environment that enables children and staff to stay safe in the sun.
EDUCATION: Learning about sun safety to increase knowledge and influence behaviour.
COLLABORATION: Working with parents, the management structure and the wider community to reinforce awareness about sun safety.

CLOTHING & SUN HATS | RATIONALE & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARENTS

Clothing is one of the most effective barriers between our skin and the sun and should always be considered the first line of defence against UV exposure. Ideally clothing should cover as much skin as possible. Shoulders should always be covered as they can easily burn.

Sun hats provided by both parents and schools should be:
- Either broad-brimmed, bucket style or legionnaire to adequately shade the face, neck, ears and cheeks.
- Baseball caps are not recommended because they do not provide shade to the neck, ears or cheeks. Whilst we do not recommend baseball caps, they are still better than no hat at all! However extra care should be taken to protect the neck, ears and cheeks with sunscreen, as these areas can easily burn.

OUR POLICY ON CLOTHING AND SUN HATS	IMPLEMENTING	PLANNING/ INVESTIGATING
We actively remind parents to ensure children are equipped with an appropriate sun hat for use as required throughout the school day.	✔	
We make available additional/spare sun hats for all outdoor activities in the event a parent is unable to provide one, or if a child has lost or forgotten their own.	✔	
We make available appropriate uniform sun hats for parents to purchase.	✔	
We ensure children wear their sun hat outdoors when UV levels reach 3 or above.	✔	
Baseball caps are not recommended and will be phased out.	✔	
We use Sun Safe strategies to encourage children to cover up like 'No hat, play in the shade or indoors'.	✔	
We ensure pupils wear school and PE uniforms that keep shoulders covered. Sunglasses are optional.	✔	

SUNSCREEN | RATIONALE & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARENTS

Sunscreen recommendations:

- Use a sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30 or above with at least 4 star UVA protection.
- Apply generously to clean, dry exposed skin prior to school when the UV Index reaches 3 or above.
- Clearly label the product with your child's name / class and ensure it is taken to, or keep it at school for reapplication during the day.
- Ensure the product is in date. If an expiration date is not displayed, look for an open jar symbol with a number next to it (i.e. 12M) - that's the number of months you can safely use the sunscreen after opening.
- Sunscreen should be stored in a cool, dry place as heat exposure can reduce efficacy.

Sunscreen application in school:

- A practical approach towards application is necessary with self-administration by pupils encouraged under supervision.
- Parents can support schools by encouraging self-administration at home to build confidence and reinforce healthy habits.
- Teachers, and other school staff where it is not in their contract of employment, cannot be required to apply sunscreen to pupils.
- Where assistance may be necessary for the very youngest, or pupils with special needs, parents should request advice and follow guidance from the school.

OUR POLICY ON SUNSCREEN	IMPLEMENTING	PLANNING/ INVESTIGATING
We actively remind parents to ensure children are equipped with an appropriately protective sunscreen for use as required throughout the school day.	✔	
We make available additional sunscreen for all outdoor activities in the event a parent is unable to provide any, or a child has lost, forgotten or run out of their own. This is made available for parents to patch test upon request.	✔	
We ensure pupils apply sunscreen when UV levels reach 3 or above before extended periods of outdoor activities such as lunch breaks, PE, outdoor lessons, school trips.	✔	
A practical approach towards the application of sunscreen is necessary, with assistance provided only where necessary to younger or less able pupils, unless instructed otherwise by the parent/carer.	✔	

OUR POLICY ON SHADE	IMPLEMENTING	PLANNING/ INVESTIGATING
We currently provide shaded areas outdoors where children can congregate for outdoor play and activities.	✔	
We conduct shade assessments to consider future needs and are committed to improving shade solutions where necessary.	✔	
We encourage children to play in the shade as much as possible when UV levels reach 3 or above, particularly between peak UV hours (11am-3pm).	✔	
We monitor and limit time children spend outdoors when UV levels are high, particularly during peak UV hours between 11am and 3pm.	✔	

OUR POLICY ON MONITORING UV	IMPLEMENTING	PLANNING/ INVESTIGATING
We are committed to monitoring the daily UV Index during warmer months to ensure appropriate sun safety measures are implemented when necessary.	✔	
A child each day is selected to be our UV monitor and we display the daily UV level to engage the children and reinforce the importance of sun safety on a daily basis during warmer months.		✔

OUR POLICY ON STAFF AND ROLE MODELLING	IMPLEMENTING	PLANNING/ INVESTIGATING
We ensure all staff role model good sun safety behaviors such as applying sunscreen and wearing a sun hat when UV levels reach 3 or above.	✔	☐
We are committed to ensuring all staff are actively involved in the implementation of this policy and that they consider the UV forecast and sun protection/ control measures when planning outdoor play or activities.	✔	☐

OUR POLICY ON SUN SAFETY EDUCATION	IMPLEMENTING	PLANNING/ INVESTIGATING
We are committed to educating all pupils annually about safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, including how to reduce the risk of skin cancer using the comprehensive, curriculum linked lesson plans, activities and resources provided by the Sun Safe Schools national accreditation programme.	✔	☐

OUR POLICY ON INFORMING THE PARENT COMMUNITY	IMPLEMENTING	PLANNING/ INVESTIGATING
We communicate our policy and actively remind parents of the required support through a range of channels e.g. our website, newsletters, text messages, social media and staff meetings.	✔	☐
We provide parents / carers with sun safety and skin cancer awareness information to promote support and raise awareness of the prevention and early detection of skin cancer across our wider school community.	✔	☐

OUR POLICY ON HYDRATION	IMPLEMENTING	PLANNING/ INVESTIGATING
We are committed to ensuring children are kept hydrated with drinks, particularly water, available and encouraged regularly throughout the day, especially during warmer weather and physical activity.	✔	☐

REVIEWING OUR SUN SAFETY POLICY	IMPLEMENTING	PLANNING/ INVESTIGATING
Our school will regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy and will update the policy on an annual basis in-line with renewing our Sun Safe Schools annual accreditation.	✔	☐

DATE COMPLETED: 01/05/2026 **REVIEW DATE:** 01/05/2027