

4.7 SunSmart

Policy statement

Skin cancer is one of the most common cancers in the U.K and sunburn in childhood can double the risk of suffering cancer in later life.

Very young children have sensitive skin that can easily be damaged by the sun, therefore carers, including childcare settings, have a responsibility to ensure that children are protected from the harmful effects of the sun.

Sun protection is relevant to all children regardless of their skin tone.

In 2005 Cancer Research UK launched a preventative campaign to encourage pre-schools to adopt a "SunSmart" policy.

The five key skin cancer prevention messages are:-

- **S**tay in the shade 11-3
- **M**ake sure you never burn
- **A**lways cover up
- **R**emember children burn more easily
- **T**hen use factor 30+ sunscreen

Procedures

In order to help prevent incidents of sunburn in children, our setting aims to:-

- Provide opportunities for outside play before eleven am and after 3pm during the summer term
- Provide areas of shade during outside play

- Ensure that sunhats are worn by children whilst playing outside
- Provide ample water to drink throughout the morning, not just at snack time
- Adults supervising outside play will set a good "SunSmart" example by wearing appropriate clothing whilst outside
- If the supervising adult feels a child may be at risk of sunburn/heat stroke, they will encourage the child to play in the shade or indoors and offer an explanation to the child.
- Provide a few wide brimmed or legionnaire style hats available as spares to offer to children who have forgotten their own sun hats
- Incorporate "SunSmart" activities into the curriculum planned for the summer term (see Appendix)
- Adults in the setting will not be responsible for applying sun screen to children
- If a child is not wearing clothing offering suitable protection from the sun and no spare hats/tops are available from the playgroup stock, staff may consider allowing that child to participate in indoor activities only for that session. In this event the parent/carer who collects the child will be informed at the end of the session.
- At the start of each summer term we will send out a letter out to parents/carers reminding them that it is recommended that :-
 - They apply factor 30 or higher, long-lasting sunscreen to their children in the morning before bringing them to the setting
 - They provide their child/children with a suitable named sunhat (preferably wide brimmed or legionnaires style to protect the back of the neck)
 - T-shirts/dresses cover the shoulders and are not "strappy"

APPENDIX

Below are a few examples of activities:-

- Look at the different ways animals protect themselves from the sun (e.g. pigs coat themselves in mud to act like sunscreen; fish hide under big shady lily leaves; dogs drink lots of water etc). Children could make animal masks and act out these different behaviours and the activity can end with the adult linking what animals do to what we do.
- Have dressing up races where children have to put on a suitable top, hat and (pretend) sunscreen. This could be extended by giving children the choice between a strappy top and one that covers shoulders; a legionnaire style hat or a cap and the winner is whoever finishes first with the most appropriate items.
- Make a SunSmart song to the tune of "Here we go round the mulberry bush"
- Read and discuss books such as Dr Xargles book of Earth Weather

Further guidance

<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/causes-of-cancer/sun-uv-and-cancer>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg337.pdf>