

ASHBURY MEADOW PRIMARY SCHOOL



Sun Protection Policy

June 2009

Rational

Too much exposure to ultraviolet light (UV) radiation from the sun causes sunburn, skin damage and increases the risk of skin cancer. Sun exposure in the first 15 years of life contributes significantly to the lifetime risk of skin cancer. There is enormous potential for schools to help prevent skin cancer in future generations. Schools are central to protecting children's skin this is because:

- Children are at school five out of seven days a week at times when UV rays are high.
- Most damage due to sun exposure occurs during the school years.
- Schools can play a significant role in changing behaviours through role modelling and education.
- Students and teachers are at risk of sunburn within 10 - 15 minutes of being exposed to strong sunlight.
- Students spend an average of 1.5 hours outside per school day, more if involved in sports and outdoor activities.
- Skin cancer is largely preventable through behaviour modification and sun protection during early years.

Sun protection strategies

We encourage children and staff to wear protective clothing during the summer term.

- **School Clothing** is best if made of close weave fabric and includes shirts with collars and longer sleeves, longer style dresses and shorts. Sports clothes should not include vest style tops.
- **Hats** children are encouraged to wear wide brimmed hats (6 - 10cm) that protect their face, neck and ears such as legionnaire or bucked hats, when they are outside.
- **Sunglasses** Children's eyes are very sensitive to light. It is important therefore to protect their eyes by ensuring they wear wide-brimmed hats and sunglasses if possible. Make sure the sunglasses have UV protection. (look for BS EN 1836:1997 on the label.)

Sunscreen

Covering up and seeking shade are the most important sun protection measures. In addition, sunscreen can provide protection to exposed skin. However, sunscreen should not be used to increase the amount of time spent in the sun. We encourage pupils to apply sunscreen before school starts - SPF 15 or above. Children can bring in sun cream for application at lunchtime.

Shade

- The school has some areas providing shade.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and outdoor activities.
- Children are encouraged to make use of available shaded areas when outside.

Role modelling

- Staff are encouraged to act as role models by:
 - ✓ Wearing protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside.
 - ✓ Apply SPF 15+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen.
 - ✓ Encouraging children to seek shade whenever possible.
- Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of these sun protection measures when attending and participating in outdoor activities.
- Include skin cancer education in the curriculum
- Encourage parents to support the school by acting as role models and providing protection for their children.
- Encourage fund raising events for materials and shady structures.

Reviewing and evaluating the policy

- Review current health education guidelines annually.
- Conduct small surveys in school, e.g. attitudes and behaviours towards sunshine, level of knowledge of sun protection strategies, number of teachers/pupils sunbathing / using shaded areas during lunchtime.
- Incorporate into curriculum.