

Sun Safety

Aim

The aim of this policy is to protect children and staff from skin damage and the risk of skin cancer caused by the effects of ultraviolet radiation from the sun.

Context

The increasing incidence of skin cancer is an issue that affects parents and schools. Prolonged over-exposure to the sun and episodes of sunburn under the age of 15 are risk factors for skin cancer later in life. Exposure to the sun can also cause premature ageing of the skin. The British Association of Dermatology estimates that four out of five skin cancer deaths are preventable.

It is therefore important to protect the more delicate skin of young children and teenagers to reduce the risk of cumulative damage and sunburn. Guernsey has a higher rate of skin cancer than anywhere in England.

The Ladies' College Sun Safety Policy consists of two elements:

Education about sun safety: learning about sun safety can help to instil positive attitudes and practices that persist into adulthood. Sun safety is covered in the curriculum for Science, PSHCE, Tutor time and PE. The importance of sun protection will be re-iterated in assemblies and group meetings. Parents will be sent a letter/reminder encouraging them to support sun-safe behaviour by applying sun cream before students come to school, supplying hats, glasses and appropriate clothing where necessary. Teachers should set a good example by using sun cream, hats and sunglasses when outside in the sun.

Protection from the sun: avoiding over exposure, seeking practical protection in the form of shade, appropriate clothing (some clothes have ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) ratings) and high factor sun protection cream are the most effective ways of preventing sunburn and reducing the risk of skin cancer. Sunscreen suggested (SPF of at least 30) blocks 93% of UV rays. Use one which blocks UVA and UVB rays to guard against skin cancer and re-apply regularly.

As part of the Sun Safety policy the Ladies' College will:

- **Encourage pupils to use sunscreen when appropriate.** Letters detailing equipment needed for College trips and activities in the summer months will include a reminder to wear/bring sun protection cream with a skin protection factor (SPF) of 30 or above and bring hat and sunglasses. Recommendations; 0 – 5 years 50+, 6 – 10 years 30-50, 11 – 17 years 30 and over 18 depends on skin type mostly 30 – 50.

- **Encourage all pupils to wear sun protection cream while at school during the summer months or while on outdoor trips and activities.** Parents of Melrose pupils are reminded to apply sunscreen to their daughters before they come to school each morning. Girls may bring a named tube or bottle with cream that they are able to apply themselves. Senior school students are encouraged to bring their own sunscreen to College with them during the summer months and follow application directions on the bottle. Notices will be displayed on the information screens during the summer months recommending that girls apply sunscreen when going outside. Sunscreen should be sealed in a plastic bag to protect books, bags and lockers from spillages. DBS checked staff and volunteers can apply sunscreen to non-sensitive areas of children when in the company of other adults or, dependant on age, can oversee buddy pairs of youngsters applying sunscreen to each other. There are sunscreen dispensers in the Senior School (by the gym and pool area), as well as the Junior Cloakroom and the Pre-Preparatory Department, should girls need extra cream during the day.
- **Encourage younger pupils to wear a sun hat.** Melrose pupils are encouraged to have a hat at school every day during sunny weather. Regular reminders are issued in newsletters to parents. A wide brim hat is ideal as it protects the neck, ears, eyes, nose and scalp. Hats must pose no danger to the wearer or other participants in terms of the quality of the item and the nature of the activity.
- **Provide areas of shade for use during break time and lunch time.** For example, some of the outdoor picnic benches can be moved to beneath trees or in the shade of buildings.
- **Provide areas of shade such as marquees or gazebos during outdoor sports activities and events.** House Athletics has been moved to Footes Lane where there are covered stands for spectators; Parasol shade/marquees are available at House swimming and Athletics competitions.
- **Encourage all pupils to keep hydrated during the day.** Water is the best fluid to maintain hydration levels. It is especially important during warm weather. Pupils at Melrose are encouraged to bring full, named water bottles to school every day. These are taken home each afternoon. They can be refilled from the water fountain during the day if necessary. At the senior school bottles of mineral water are available from The Core. In addition, students may fill their own bottles from free water fountains found around the College campus.
- **Trips.** Staff must consider (in their Risk Assessments) the weather as a fundamental part of planning and how the environment might impact on conditions.

Heat Stroke and Heat Exhaustion

Heat related conditions could be seen as an illness at work. Heat exhaustion and heat stroke from over exposure to the heat or sun are two related health conditions that can be very serious if not treated quickly. All staff and visit leaders should remember that some young people may be more at risk of developing this.

Heat exhaustion is where a person experiences fatigue (extreme tiredness) as a result of a decrease in blood pressure and blood volume. It is caused by a loss of bodily fluids and salts after being exposed to heat for a prolonged time period. Someone with heat exhaustion may feel sick, faint and sweat heavily. If a person with heat exhaustion is quickly taken to a cool place, is given water

to drink and has excess clothing removed, they should start to feel better within half an hour and have no long-term complications. However, without treatment they could develop heatstroke (see below). Certain groups are more at risk of developing heat stroke or suffering complications from dehydration and should be taken to hospital.

These include:

- Children under two years of age
- Very elderly people
- People with kidney, heart or circulation problems
- People with diabetes who use insulin

Heat stroke is a more serious condition than heat exhaustion. It occurs when the body's temperature becomes dangerously high due to excessive heat exposure. The body is no longer able to cool itself and starts to overheat. Signs of heat stroke include dry skin, vertigo, confusion, headache, thirst, nausea, rapid shallow breathing (hyperventilation) and muscle cramps.

Suspected heat stroke should always be treated as a medical emergency – dial 999 and request an ambulance.

While waiting for the ambulance to arrive you should:

- Immediately move the affected person to a cool area
- Increase ventilation by opening windows or using a fan
- Give water to drink (if the person is conscious), but do not give medication such as aspirin or paracetamol
- Shower their skin with cool but not cold water. Alternatively, cover their body with cool, damp towels or sheets, or immerse them in cool (not cold) water.

Left untreated, heat stroke can lead to complications, such as brain damage and organ failure.

It is also possible to die from heat stroke.

Associated Documents

Sun-safe resources are available from:

- Health Promotion Unit – telephone 707311
- <http://www.sunsmart.com.au/tools/videos/past-tv-campaigns/slip-slop-slap-original-sunsmart-campaign>
- <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/causes-of-cancer/sun-uv-and-cancer>
- <https://www.teenagecancertrust.org>
- <http://www.sunsmart.org.uk/schools/schools-and-sun-protection>
- <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Heat-exhaustion-and-heatstroke/Pages/Introduction.aspx>
- [http://www.ConnectED/Outdoor Education/Emergency Action Plan.docx](http://www.ConnectED/Outdoor%20Education/Emergency%20Action%20Plan.docx)
- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/myth/myth-busting/2013/case176-teachers-suncream.html>

Appendix 1: Sun Protection Policy Checklist for Primary Schools

It is important to raise awareness of why sun protection is needed if you want to encourage young people to change the way they behave in the sun.

Sun Protection Strategy	In place	Planned Soon	Not planned	Comments
Sun protection and the dangers of sunbed use are incorporated into the curriculum for all ages				
All teachers and staff are made aware of this policy and the importance of sun protection within the school environment				
Sun protection is actively promoted to young people in other ways at significant points of the school year including before and during summer and prior to summer holidays (e.g. assemblies, workshops, talks)				
Parents are informed of the importance of sun protection through information sent home in a letter informing them of the sun protection policy				

PROTECTION

Consider sun protection when planning all outdoor activities from April to September (the sun is at its strongest at this time of year).

Sun Protection Strategy	In place	Planned Soon	Not planned	Comments
SHADE				
Fundraising for trees and shade structures				
Seats and equipment are moved to shady areas				
Organised activities to make use of the shade available				

TIMETABLING				
Outdoor activities and events are planned outside of 11am-3pm where possible and appropriate (if this is sometimes unavoidable, ensure hats, clothing and sunscreen are worn to minimise risk of sunburn				
In the summer term, morning break is extended and lunch breaks shortened to minimise time in the midday sun				
CLOTHING				
Young people are encouraged to wear wide-brimmed (or legionnaire style) hats when outside				
Young people are encouraged to wear tops that cover their shoulders (vests and strappy tops are discouraged)				
School uniform tops and hats offer suitable sun protection				
Young people are allowed to wear UV protective sunglasses				
Teachers and assistants also wear suitable hats and clothing to reinforce role modelling				
SUNSCREEN				
<p>Sunscreen should be used for covering exposed areas of skin when shade may be unavailable and protective clothing is not practical e.g. during outdoor swimming, PE lessons and school excursions. Choose a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 which is also labelled broad spectrum to protect from UVA and UVB rays and ensure that sunscreen is applied regularly and generously.</p>				
Letters are sent home asking for parental permission for teachers to supervise application of sunscreen				

At least SPF 30 sunscreen is used in school and is applied generously and regularly. For the average person, this means two teaspoonfuls for the head, arms and neck or two tablespoonfuls if in a swimming costume				
Sunscreen is reapplied regularly, as it can be easily washed, rubbed or sweated off				
Each young person has their own labelled bottle of sunscreen				
There is a school stock of sunscreen for young people who forget their own				