

## **Introduction**

This policy is adopted from March 2005 so that children attending Earlsdon Primary School are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful UV radiation of the sun. The policy is to be implemented particularly during the Spring and Summer Terms.

## **Rationale**

The incidence of skin cancer in the UK has doubled over the last 15 years and continues to rise. It is the most common form of cancer in the country and is almost always caused by the sun. Skin cancer is therefore preventable and by protecting the skin of young children and teenagers it is possible to reduce the risk of sunburn and cumulative damage caused by the sun. There is evidence that sunburn in childhood increases the risk of skin cancer later in life.

Some people are more at risk of skin cancer than others. People with fair or freckled skin who burn easily are most at risk and should take great care when out in the sun. Brown skinned people have a much lower risk of sunburn but still need to take care in stronger sun, for example tropical sun. Black skinned people hardly ever burn and have a very low risk of skin cancer because their skin has naturally high levels of protective melanin, the pigment that gives skin its colour. People with brown or black skin do not normally need to protect themselves with sunscreen in the UK although they should avoid excessive sun exposure because of the risk of over-heating and dehydration.

Protection against the sun is necessary when UV radiation levels are at their highest.

In the UK this is:

- Between April and September.
- Between 11 am and 3 pm.
- On cloudless days even when the temperature is not high or there is a cooling wind (although cloud reduces UV levels, it is still possible to burn under light cloud).
- When UV is also reflected, adding to the overall intensity that reaches the skin; light surfaces like concrete, water, sand and snow reflect UV.

## **Aims**

To raise awareness among children of the dangers of excessive sun exposure through appropriate curriculum areas, particularly Science, PSE and PE

To explain the different levels of risk for individuals to staff, parents and pupils, so that everyone is clear who is most at risk and why this group might receive special attention

To create a suitable environment with adequate shade and protection

- Maximise existing shade, for example, pergola and the shade of the building, by facilitating and encouraging children to use these shaded areas during breaks.
- Move seats and tables to areas of shade.
- Consider erection of portable shelters in exposed areas.

To provide access to indoor spaces during very hot break times after the necessary risk assessment has been undertaken, similarly to the school's wet weather procedures.

To encourage children to bring to school and wear protective clothing eg sun hats, tops that cover shoulders, necks and arms.

To take appropriate precautions and risk assessments for all activities such as Sports Day, After-school sports and clubs, school outings and trips.

To provide access to fresh water supplies and provision of advice on regular consumption of liquid to prevent dehydration.

### **Use of Sunscreen in School**

*“The use of sunscreens should be only one sun safety measure to be considered. Protective items such clothing, hats, sunglasses, and lip balm during all outdoor activities, including before and after school activities, must also form part of the protection routines, as should evaluation and use of shade”* (COVENTRY CITY COUNCIL EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES SERVICE GUIDANCE FOR SUN PROTECTION WITHIN SCHOOLS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS)

Our policy is to permit and encourage the use of sunscreens provided by parents/carers in school , when our risk assessment indicates it is required, and will endeavour to ensure that they are used correctly through -

- Ensuring parental permission – parental/carer involvement in the implementation of sun safety measures is essential. Parents/carers will be asked to complete a consent form relating to sun protection procedures. (Appendix 1 and 2)
- Reminding parents/carers that sunscreen provided should be of SPF15 or above depending on the individual child's needs and that they are responsible for giving their child clear directions on how to apply sunscreen safely and effectively.
- Teaching and support staff reinforcing directions on how to apply sunscreen safely and effectively.
- Key Stage 1 children keeping their named sunscreen in a class container to enable staff to monitor application.
- Whenever possible teachers supervising the application of sun screen. Self-application of sunscreen, where necessary, by pupils is the preferred option and practical in most circumstances. Sometimes it may be necessary for teachers or support staff to help or support children to apply the sunscreen, particularly in the Foundation and Key Stage

1. There is no legal requirement for staff to do this and they will do so using their professional judgment. (See Appendix 3)

**Detailed guidance and procedures on legalities and applying sunscreen are available for all staff parents and carers in “COVENTRY CITY COUNCIL EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES SERVICE GUIDANCE FOR SUN PROTECTION WITHIN SCHOOLS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS”.**

## **Staff**

Teachers and support staff will be familiar with the aims and guidance in this policy and ensure that they are correctly implemented.

Staff will follow protective procedures and act as role models.

The school will endeavour to convey a positive message so that children can enjoy outdoor safety by being “sunwise”.

This policy will be monitored, reviewed and amended regularly and as required.

It has been endorsed and accepted by the Governing Body.

Reviewed May 2006

## Sun Safety at Earlsdon Primary School– School Year 2005 to 2006

Dear Parent

We are concerned about protecting staff and pupils from sunburn and from skin damage that can be caused by the harmful ultra-violet rays in sunlight. Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the country. As sunburn and almost all skin cancer is caused by the sun, it is possible to prevent this happening. The school believes that by encouraging sun safe behaviour at school and teaching children about the risks of sunlight, we can prevent them burning and contribute towards preventing skin cancer.

The school would like your help and support in this matter. We will be encouraging children to avoid sunburn and overexposure to the sun by:

- **Seeking the shade, particularly during the middle of the day**
- **Wearing suitable hats**
- **Wearing clothing that protects the skin, particularly for outdoor activities and school trips**
- **Using a high factor sunscreen (SPF 15+).**

Staff will be encouraged to set an example. The school is reviewing the amount of shade available and considering what can be done about clothing and hats. Your views are welcomed.

Some children are at greater risk of sunburn than others, babies, for example, should be kept out of direct sunlight. Teachers and support staff on outdoor duties or in charge of school outings will remind those most at risk of burning to cover up in the sun and use sunscreen.

You can help by encouraging your child to bring, and wear, a hat at school, particularly on sports days and school excursions. Also by encouraging your child to wear longer sleeved shirts and longer shorts when outdoors. The school will remind parents of the sun safety policy from time to time, particularly around the start of the summer term, sports days, and outings.

Sunscreens provide added protection and may be useful when other measures are not available.

Dermatologists recommend that a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or above will provide children in this country with adequate protection.

The rules/procedures for the use of sunscreens at school are attached. I would ask that you complete the attached form so that the school has a record of your support for the sun safety policy and your wishes with regard to sunscreen use by your child/ren. Please note that the school does not permit the use of aerosol sprays.

**All sunscreens must be named.**

**In Reception, years 1 and 2 the sunscreen will be kept by an adult.**

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Parental consent form for the School Year 2005 to 2006

The school wishes to encourage pupils to protect themselves from the sun. One way of doing this is to use sunscreen at the appropriate time. You are asked to sign this form to show that you have received the letter about the school's approach to sun safety and support the school's policy.

Not all children are at equal risk of sunburn. If your child is at risk and you wish him/her to use a sunscreen at school, please indicate this below. You are asked to provide a sunscreen and agree to your child using the product at the school.

If your child has any allergies or skin sensitivities you may want to check with your GP before providing a sunscreen.

The school will inform you if your child has any adverse reaction that may be due to the sunscreen, and will take medical advice if necessary.

The school policy states that whenever possible teachers will supervise the application of sunscreen. Sometimes it may be necessary for teachers or support staff to help children apply the sunscreen. Please indicate below whether you are happy for approved teaching, support staff, and parent/adult helpers to do this.

PUPIL DETAILS

Name.....

Class.....

**please tick:**

I have read and support the school's sun safety policy.

I will provide my child/ren with a non-aerosol sunscreen product for use at school and on school outings in accordance with the school's procedures.

I give my permission for approved teachers and support staff to apply sunscreen when this is considered necessary.

Signature .....Parent/Guardian

Date .....

### **Appendix 3**

Under the terms and conditions of their contracts, teachers are not required to administer medicines or to give first aid to pupils. There is however no legislation that prevents teachers and support staff from administering sunscreens where other controls cannot provide protection, but this would have to be on a purely voluntary basis. Teachers will use their professional judgment to decide whether or not they volunteer to administer medication or sunscreen.

Where, through risk assessment, it has been decided that all other control measures such as limiting exposure and use of shade, are either inadequate or unavailable and the **use of**

**sunscreen to provide protection cannot be avoided**, the following advice must be considered:

- The protective effect of sunscreen products is reduced over time, as the sunscreen is absorbed and/or rubbed-off.
- Sunscreen applied before school, generally, provides insufficient protection for a whole day, unless specific long-life creams have been used.
- Most children will be able, with some direction, to apply sunscreens themselves, self-application is recommended. This prevents allegations of abuse and encroachment into learning time.
- Dermatologists recommend that a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or above, and capable of protecting against UVA and UVB spectra, will provide children in this country with adequate protection.

Sunscreens should not be used to prolong the amount of time spent in the sun but as a form of protection when other measures are unavailable or impractical, or when additional protection is required.

At school, this would include:

- Outdoor breaks, particularly lunch breaks.
- PE, swimming, or other outdoor lessons.
- Sports days.
- Educational visits, including winter ski-ing trips.

Where the decision has been made to use sunscreen as a control measure, it will be necessary to ensure that they are applied correctly; teachers need to advise pupils to:

- Use about a dessert spoon of the cream/lotion (sufficient for a child, the equivalent for babies and adults is about a teaspoon and tablespoon respectively).
- Spread it evenly over the exposed areas of the body (face, neck, arms and legs) with particular attention to those areas that burn easily, such as the ears and neck.
- Rub it in well.
- Young children and some children with special needs may require assistance.

**Teachers should avoid touching a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent and should be aware of those children for whom touching is unwelcome.**

**Permission for someone else to apply sunscreen must be gained from parents and carers.**

**Teachers who do help to apply sunscreens should do so only to the face, neck and arms and in accordance with relevant school policies to minimise the risk of abuse allegations.**

The risk assessment process must include consideration of horseplay and the levels of supervision required to ensure that pupils who bring their own sunscreens to school use such products appropriately.