



Madras V.A. Primary School

'Every child will succeed in a caring and supportive environment'

Sun Smart Policy

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.

Adopt sun protection strategies

Encourage students and staff to wear protective clothing during summer term adopting the:

Slip (a t-shirt on), **Slap** (a hat on), **Slop** (sun cream on) method.

School Clothing is 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 required 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. Pupils should be encouraged to apply sunscreen above SPF 15 before school starts. Older children can be encouraged to bring in sun cream for application at lunchtime, which they can apply themselves.

Shade

- The school makes sure there is sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the school grounds particularly in areas where students congregate.
- In consultation with the education department, shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all outdoor activities.
- Children are encouraged to make use of available shaded areas when outside.
- Support recommendations to seek shade during breaks and dinner hour.
- Provide permanent or temporary shady structures within school grounds.

Involve staff, students and parents in the development and implementation of the policy

Role modelling

- Encourage staff to act as role models by;
- Wearing protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside.
- Apply SPF 15+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen.
- Seeking shade whenever possible.
- Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of these sun protection measures when attending and participating in outdoor activities.
- Schedule outdoor activities before 11am or after 3pm.
- Include skin cancer education in the curriculum.
- Encourage parents to support the school by acting as role models and providing protection for their children.
- Be positive in your approach. Allow sun protection strategies to be fun, involve everyone, and provide choices.
- Develop resources on skin cancer in school library.
- 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/students sunbathing /using shaded areas during lunchtime.
- Incorporate into curriculum.

Policy updated: March 2021

Review date: March 2024

Signature _____ Headteacher

Signature _____ Chair of Governors

Signature _____ School Council