



Birmingham City Council

Sun Protection Policy

ST THOMAS CENTRE NURSERY SCHOOL

Why Sun Protection Is Important

Protection from the sun is important because skin cancer is now the second most common cancer in the UK. Its incidence has doubled in the past 20 years and it currently kills about 2000 people each year in the UK. Skin cancer is nearly always caused by over exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation, from the sun or a sunbed; sunburn can double your risk of skin cancer. UV radiation is also reflected off light coloured surfaces such as water, sand and snow, which has the effect of increasing its strength. You can even get sunburnt through light cloud and too much sun can also cause heat exhaustion, skin irritation and sun stroke, especially in the very young, as well as thickening of the skin, leading to premature ageing and wrinkles.

On the positive side, 80% of cases of skin cancer could easily be prevented by protecting ourselves from the sun.

Particular care is needed:

- ◆ for children and babies as they spend longer outdoors and burn easily
- ◆ for very pale skin, fair or red hair
- ◆ if you have a lot of moles or freckles
- ◆ where there is a family history of skin cancer
- ◆ if you spend a lot of time outdoors

Children are particularly vulnerable as their skin is delicate and easily damaged and many skin cancers result from sun damage acquired during childhood. Young children are unable to take responsibility for their own sun protection, so we have a duty to protect them from the harmful effects of the sun at all times, when they are attending nursery or any other early years setting, as well as when they are at home.

NB: All children, regardless of skin colour, are at risk of skin cancer; it is important that this guidance is applied to all children, irrespective of skin colour.

Responsibilities

Manager / Head Teacher

- ◆ Liaise with the appropriate authorities to ensure that there is up to date information regarding the management of sun issues and the protection of children from the sun
- ◆ Ensure there is a written sun policy/procedure and make it known to staff and parents/carers
- ◆ Carry out an audit of outside areas - for shade and risk
- ◆ Provide an appropriate environment to maximise the protection of children and staff
- ◆ Make plans to improve and develop the outside area as appropriate
- ◆ Work with parents to raise and reinforce awareness about sun safety and make clear the nursery expectations, policy and strategies in this area
- ◆ Provide 'sun' information and reminders to parents via newsletters
- ◆ Ensure that all staff are informed and clear about the sun protection procedures
- ◆ Provide sunscreen for children who do not have any (as a last resort and with the permission of parents/carers)
- ◆ Nominate staff to have responsibility for monitoring sun safety on a day to day basis
- ◆ Monitor that all procedures are being followed
- ◆ Ensure that all staff are familiar with Child Protection procedures and their implications for this policy

Nursery Staff

- ◆ Follow agreed nursery policies and procedures
- ◆ Be aware of Child Protection issues when applying sun screen and follow all agreed Child Protection policies and guidance
- ◆ Undertake training as necessary
- ◆ Teach children how to protect themselves from the sun in order to reduce the risk of skin cancer
- ◆ Engage children in activities that promote safe sun behaviour
- ◆ Liaise with parents/carers in order to work together for the protection of children
- ◆ Act as good role models for children, for example by wearing hats and sunscreen when outside
- ◆ Ensure that parents have signed consent forms for their child to wear sunscreen and have it applied by staff, if necessary
- ◆ Ensure that children are not allowed out to play unless they are wearing sun cream and are suitably clothed, when appropriate
- ◆ Ensure children have access to (additional) drinks in hot weather
- ◆ Report any difficulties with these procedures to the manager

Parents

- ◆ Understand that, as the child's main carer, they have prime responsibility for their child's health and welfare
- ◆ Be aware of the Sun Protection Policy and Guidance

- ◆ Work with staff to jointly ensure that children never get burned - ensure children are suitably dressed for sunny weather between April and September
- ◆ Apply sunscreen cream to their child at the start of the session
- ◆ Provide minimum SPF25 (or higher) sunscreen cream for nursery use, labelled with their child's name
- ◆ Sign consent form for staff to apply sunscreen cream as and when necessary

Sun Safety Code

Cover Up - wear loose, cool clothing to keep the sun off your skin; wear a hat with a wide brim, T-shirt and wraparound sunglasses; **make sure you never burn**

Protect Children - sunburn during childhood can lead to cancer in later life; keep babies out of the sun completely and remember that children burn more easily

Stay in the Shade - especially during the hottest part of the day, from 11.00am to 3.00pm and during the months of April to September

Use a Sunscreen - SPF25 or higher on any exposed skin; use it an hour before going outside and reapply it frequently and generously

Sun Protection Guidelines

Covering Up

- ◆ Staff and children should ensure that they are adequately covered when in the sun
- ◆ Wide-brimmed (or legionnaire style - with neck protection) sunhats will be provided for children who do not have their own; children will be encouraged to wear them outdoors
- ◆ Staff will be encouraged to wear hats when in the sun in order to provide a good role model for children
- ◆ Ensure nursery/school 'uniform' includes hats, collars
- ◆ Have spare clothing for children to wear if not appropriately dressed (e.g. tee-shirts to ensure their shoulders are covered)
- ◆ Allow children to wear UV protective sunglasses

Avoiding the Sun

- ◆ Think about creating a suitable outdoor environment
- ◆ Provide plenty of shade, for example through planting trees for long-term shade and installing structures such as gazebos or canopies (which can be retractable, fixed or removable), tables with umbrellas etc

- ◆ Move seats and equipment to shady areas
- ◆ Timetable outdoor events and activities to avoid the midday sun where possible
- ◆ Timetable children to be outside for only very short periods of time during the hottest part of the day
- ◆ Wherever possible give children a choice of indoor or outdoor play

Using Sunscreen

- ◆ Ensure SPF25+ sunscreen is available to children at nursery
- ◆ Parents to provide the sunscreen in a labelled bottle, wherever possible (nursery to stock cream for children who do not have their own)
- ◆ Date and label the sunscreen with the child's name
- ◆ Encourage parents to apply it to their children before they leave them at nursery (parents can take responsibility for this where children only attend for half a day)
- ◆ If children are at nursery all day: re-apply sunscreen regularly and particularly at midday; encourage and supervise older children applying it themselves with the help of mirrors; staff re-apply it where children cannot do it for themselves
- ◆ Use about a teaspoon of cream for a baby, a dessert spoon of cream for a child and a table spoon measure for an adult; spread it evenly over exposed areas of skin, pay particular attention to areas that burn easily such as the ears and neck; rub it in well

NB Please Note: sunscreen cream needs to be replaced annually as its strength is reduced to 50% after 12 months; children with eczema can have their sunscreen cream prescribed by their GP.

This policy should be reviewed annually.