

POL 2-P14 Sun Safety

Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

This policy and procedure sets out how Affinity Education Group (Affinity) protects children, educators, and visitors from harm caused by sun exposure and extreme heat while children are in care.

It explains Affinity's approach to sun protection and managing extreme heat. It focuses on creating safe outdoor and indoor environments, guiding everyday decisions, and supporting healthy habits through consistent sun-safe and heat-aware practices. Supporting Affinity's responsibilities under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, including requirements to protect children from harm and hazards and to provide safe outdoor environments.

2. Scope

This policy and procedures apply to all educators, staff, students, volunteers, contractors, families, and visitors across all Affinity services, centres, and programs when children are in care and exposed to outdoor conditions, sunlight, high temperatures, or extreme heat. This includes everyday routines, outdoor play, indoor environments affected by heat, and excursions.

This procedure applies at all Affinity services throughout Australia. State-specific requirements apply when they are identified.

This procedure must be read together with the [POL2-P6 Excursions Procedure](#), [POL3-P1 Providing a Child Safe Environment Procedure](#) and relevant ProMapp processes. This does not cover medical treatment for heat-related illness or sun injury. Medical response and first aid requirements are addressed in the [POL2-P26 First Aid Procedure](#)

3. Definitions

The following definitions support consistent understanding of the terms used in this procedure.

Term	Definition
Extreme heat	Periods of unusually high temperature where normal routines or controls may not be sufficient to maintain comfort and safety, and additional precautions are required.
Heat stress	A physical response to high temperatures where the body has difficulty regulating heat, which may affect comfort, behaviour, and wellbeing.
Safe environment	An environment that actively prevents harm, supports wellbeing, and allows children to participate in learning and play safely.
Sun protection measures	Actions and controls used to reduce exposure to harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation, such as shade, protective clothing, hats, sunscreen, and adjusted routines.
Ultraviolet (UVR) radiation	Invisible rays from the sun that can damage the skin and eyes and increase the risk of sunburn and long-term skin damage.
Ultraviolet Index (UVI)	A measure of the level of UVR. The higher the UVI, the greater the potential for damage to the skin and eyes, and the less time it takes for harm to occur. Sun protection measures are recommended when the UVI is 3 and above.

4. Guiding principles

At Affinity, we believe that child safety is everyone's responsibility. We are committed to upholding the safety, rights and wellbeing of all children and promote a culture of child safety with a zero tolerance approach to child abuse and harm. Affinity ensures the Paramountcy Principle is applied in all aspects of our work. All decisions and actions related to the operation and delivery of education and care services must prioritise children's safety, rights and best interests above all other considerations.

The following principles guide how Affinity manages **sun protection and extreme heat** across all centres and services:

- **Children's health and safety come first** – Decisions are made to protect children from harm caused by sun exposure and high temperatures, with children's wellbeing always taking priority.
- **Informed, risk-aware decisions** – Daily choices about routines, outdoor play, and environments are guided by UV levels, weather conditions, and temperature to reduce risk before harm occurs.
- **Outdoor play is supported and protected** – Outdoor experiences are valued and encouraged, with sun and heat protection built in so children can play, learn, and explore safely.
- **Shared responsibility for safety** – Sun protection and heat safety are supported by everyone, including educators, leaders, families, and visitors, working together to follow agreed expectations.
- **Educators lead by example** – Educators model sun-safe behaviours by using sun protection measures themselves and responding calmly to heat and weather conditions, while supporting children to learn about sun safety through everyday conversations, role modelling, and age-appropriate learning experiences.
- **Care for vulnerable children** – Babies and young children receive extra protection and close attention, recognising that they are more sensitive to sun and heat and may need additional support.

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These principles underpin all actions described in this procedure and support professional judgement in everyday decision-making.

4.1. Risk-aware environmental safety approach

This procedure follows a risk-aware approach to environmental safety, recognising that children's wellbeing is shaped by their environment. Educators actively monitor sun exposure, temperature, shade, and surfaces throughout the day, and make early, responsive adjustments to spaces, routines, and experiences to reduce risk.

Through shared responsibility, educators, leaders, and families work together to maintain environments that protect children from sun and heat while supporting safe, meaningful play and learning.

4.2. SunSmart research-based approach

This procedure is informed by SunSmart research-based recommendations and is embedded in Affinity's practices to improve UV protection behaviours and improve policies and environments to reduce UV exposure.

Protect your skin by wearing a hat, clothing and sunglasses, apply sunscreen to any skin you can still see and enjoy shady areas when outdoors. Remembering to Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek and Slide.



5. Procedures

The procedures below explain the key actions that support safe, consistent, and compliant sun protection and extreme heat management across Affinity services. Each section describes what needs to be achieved in everyday practice and outlines the main actions that help keep children safe and comfortable. The focus is on supporting good decisions and consistent practice, rather than listing step-by-step instructions.

These procedures are designed to be flexible and responsive to changing conditions, such as weather, UV levels, and temperature. Detailed processes, tools, and role-specific steps are maintained separately in ProMapp and supporting documents.

5.1. Monitoring conditions and planning the day

Ensure children and educators are safe, supported, and protected from harm caused by sun exposure and extreme heat, while meeting legal requirements and maintaining clear accountability. These practices support child safety, wellbeing, supervision, and compliance, and guide consistent decision making as set out in the ProMapp process [3.4.07 Manage Outdoor Environments](#)

Key expectations:

- daily conditions are considered when planning routines and experiences by checking any of the following sources:
 - Cancer Council Australia's free [SunSmart app](#)
 - The Bureau of Meteorology - <http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/uv/>
 - The weather page of Australian daily newspapers – hard copy or online
 - Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency - <http://www.arpsa.gov.au/uvindex/index.cfm>
- outdoor play is scheduled with sun and heat risks in mind;
- plans are adjusted when conditions change;
- educators share a common understanding of the day's expectations.
- Information regarding the daily UV rating and recommended times for sun protection will be displayed at the centre

State and territory sun protection considerations

Services follow the most current local UV advice when planning outdoor activities. State and territory-specific considerations that support daily planning are outlined in the table below.

State/Territory	Local sun protection approach
Australia Capital Territory	- Sun protection is used when the UV rating is 3 or above, based on daily recommendations. - Sun protection may not be needed during June and July; however, daily UV alerts are checked, especially in alpine areas.
New South Wales	UV levels and daily sun protection times guide planning for routines and outdoor play.

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	For excursions and outdoor events, sun protection measures are planned in advance and remain available throughout the activity.
Northern Territory	- Sun protection measures are required all year round due to consistently high UV levels. - Outdoor activities are planned to reduce exposure during peak UV times, particularly between 9am and 4pm.
Queensland	- Sun protection measures are required all year round, as UV levels are consistently high. - Outdoor activities are planned with careful attention to sun protection times to minimise exposure during peak UV periods.
Victoria	- Sun protection is required whenever UV levels reach 3 or higher. - Daily sun protection recommendations for the local area are followed. - Outdoor play is encouraged year-round, with protection used when needed.
Western Australia	- Sun protection measures are required when UV levels are 3 or above throughout the year. - Outdoor play is supported year-round, with appropriate protection in place when required.

5.2. Creating sun-safe environments, safe outdoor play and learning

Ensure children and educators are safe, comfortable, and protected from harm caused by sun exposure and extreme heat, while meeting compliance requirements and maintaining clear accountability for environmental safety and align with the [POL3-P1 Providing a Child Safe Environment Procedure](#).

Ensure children can participate in outdoor play and learning safely, comfortably, and in line with sun protection and extreme heat requirements, while supporting children's wellbeing and development.

Key expectations

Measures	Responsible	Minimum expectation
Environment review	Educators	- indoor and outdoor environments are monitored and regularly reviewed for sun exposure, heat, and hot or reflective surfaces - consider shade, airflow, surface temperature, and access to cool areas when using spaces and make changes when conditions increase risk - risk assessments should be completed for outdoor environments and be reviewed regularly, particularly during changes of seasons or changes in the outdoor environment following 3.4.07 Manage Outdoor Environments
Outdoor Play	Educators	- outdoor play and learning experiences are planned and delivered in ways that balance children's enjoyment, learning, and physical activity with the need to protect them from sun exposure and heat outdoor experiences are planned with consideration of sun exposure and heat risk; - Educators consider daily conditions and adjust the timing, location, and type of outdoor experiences so children can continue to explore, play, and learn in safe and supportive ways and use shaded or cooler areas and adjust experiences as needed; - children's comfort, energy levels, and cues are observed and responded to
Learning	Educators	Educators will act as role models and consistently demonstrate sun safe practices as outlined above including the use of hats, protective clothing and sunglasses (optional), applying sunscreen and seeking shade.

Exceptions

When weather conditions or environmental risks make outdoor play unsafe, outdoor experiences may be reduced, adapted, or moved indoors until conditions improve.

5.3. Using sun protection measures

Ensure children, educators, and visitors use appropriate sun protection measures to reduce the risk of harm caused by sun exposure, while supporting children's comfort, participation, and wellbeing.

Key sun protection requirements

Measure	Responsible	Minimum expectation	Support and adjustments
Hats	Children, educators, visitors	- Hats must protect the face, ears, and neck during outdoor activities. - Examples include wide-brimmed, bucket, or legionnaire-style hats.	Where a child does not have a suitable hat, they are encouraged to remain in shaded areas.

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		Caps and visors alone do not provide adequate sun protection.	- Where this is not practicable, other sun protection measures are used based on the conditions on the day. - The service provides a selection of spare hats for children, which are laundered after each use.
Clothing	Children	Children are required to wear sun safe clothing including: - Loose fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible - Clothes made from tightly woven yet cool fabrics. - Shirts/tops with sleeves/collars and knee length or longer shorts/pants or skirts	Where clothing does not provide adequate protection, outdoor play is redirected to shaded or cooler areas and families reminded of our sun safe practices The service may have sun-protective clothing available for children to support adequate coverage where needed.
	Educators	Educators must comply with the POL 4-P4 Educator Dress Code Procedure.pdf , including wearing approved sun-protective uniform items when outdoors.	
Sunglasses	Children and educators	Sunglasses may be worn to protect eyes during outdoor activities. Close-fitting, wrap-around styles offer better protection. Sunglasses meeting Australian Standard AS 1067 (Category 2 or higher) or an Eye Protection Factor (EPF) rating of 9 or 10 provide appropriate UV protection.	Use of sunglasses is supported where appropriate and safe for the activity and the child's age and development.
Sunscreen	Children and educators	The service provides a SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with a high level of sun protection for use by children and educators and available in rooms and spaces (depending on age will depend on whether it is available at child height for supported self-use) Sunscreen is applied 20 minutes prior to sun exposure and outdoor activities and is reapplied at least every two hours, or more often during water activities. Sunscreen use is supported in line with family permissions provided through enrolment information.	- Families may provide an alternative sunscreen where a child has allergies or individual needs. - Children are supported to use sunscreen in age-appropriate and respectful ways, with educator support over 3 years of age, for children under 3 years sunscreen should be applied by Educators using appropriate hand hygiene protocols required. - For babies 6 months or younger avoid using sunscreen <i>See 5.5 Additional care for babies and young children.</i> - Sunscreen remains available for use during the day, including when children are outdoors or attending excursions, in accordance with service practice - Sunscreen application can be recorded in StoryPark or FRM 2-F26a Daily Information Sheet.docx
Shade	Educators	Outdoor experiences should ensure there are shaded areas available: - Natural shade such as trees with dense foliage - Other shade such as shade sails, sunshades or umbrellas can be used	

Exceptions

When a child cannot use a standard sun protection measure due to medical, cultural, or individual needs, alternative measures must be used to ensure the child remains protected from sun exposure.

5.4. Additional care for babies and young children

Ensure babies and young children (under 12 months) are given extra protection from sun exposure and extreme heat, recognising their increased vulnerability and limited ability to regulate body temperature or communicate discomfort. These practices support child safety, wellbeing, supervision, and compliance and reflect Affinity's commitment to providing safe environments for all children, particularly those most at risk.

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Key actions

The key actions below outline the high-level steps that must be followed:

- direct sun exposure is limited, particularly for infants (e.g. Keeping inside during the middle of the day, when outside stay completely in shade, ensure they are dressed in protective clothing) prioritising shaded and cooler areas for babies and young children during outdoor experiences;
- adjust the timing, duration, or location of play to reduce sun and heat exposure;
- respond promptly to signs of discomfort, fatigue, or heat stress.
- avoiding the use of sunscreen for babies aged six months or younger (or as recommended by recognised authorities).

Exceptions

When suitable shaded or cool environments cannot be provided, outdoor experiences for babies and young children must be reduced, adapted, or postponed until safe conditions can be ensured.

5.5. Managing extreme heat conditions

Ensure children, educators, and visitors are protected from increased risks during periods of extreme heat, where usual controls may not be sufficient to maintain safety and wellbeing.

This applies when weather conditions move beyond normal daily variation and pose a heightened or extreme heat risk. During these times, services take additional and more conservative steps to reduce heat exposure. Educators monitor conditions closely, adjust routines and environments early, and prioritise children's comfort, hydration, and rest to prevent heat-related harm.

Key strategies and expectations

Strategies	Responsible	Minimum expectation	Support and adjustments
Implement changes to play experience	Educators	• Outdoor play is reduced, relocated, or paused where risks cannot be adequately controlled • Implement safe water play experiences with the children. Please refer to POL2-P23 Water Safety Procedure for safety considerations. • Children to remain in cool, shaded, or well-ventilated environments for longer periods • Minimise outdoor exposure during the hottest part of the day, and also outside of these times, during heat waves, as required • Encourage calm and quiet play to limit exertion, where possible.	
Regular testing of outdoor surfaces	Educators	Testing the temperature of outdoor surfaces prior to allowing children access	If temperatures exceed 45C shoes must be worn. If surface temperatures exceed 50C children must only be in heavily shaded areas or indoors.
Indoor environment	Educators	Setting air-conditioners to 24C for comfort, not for being cold. Open windows and use ceiling fans for cross-breeze and ventilation Avoid overcrowding in rooms to minimise excess body heat. Monitor temperatures of play environments, particularly where surfaces attract and retain heat e.g. dark flooring, vinyl mats, metal framed equipment, and restrict play from these areas, as necessary	Setting the AC too low makes the unit work overtime and can increase the risk of unit burnout and a shorter lifespan of the unit.
Hydration and food		• children are closely observed for signs of heat-related discomfort or distress • Ensure fresh, cool drinking water is available at all times and encourage all centre users to maintain hydration and opportunities for rest. • For centres providing food, plan cool or uncooked meal options such as sandwiches to limit extra heat by ovens and stoves.	

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Exceptions

When extreme heat creates conditions that cannot be safely managed through routine adjustments, activities or experiences may be postponed, adapted, or cancelled until safe conditions can be restored.

5.6. Responding to signs of heat stress

Ensure children are identified and supported promptly when showing signs of heat related stress, illness, or discomfort, to prevent harm and protect their health and wellbeing. Follow [POL2-P26 First Aid Procedure](#) and relevant Promapp process [3.3.06 Administer First Aid](#)

Key expectations:

- educators remain alert to changes in children's behaviour, appearance, or activity levels that may indicate a response to heat;
- early signs of heat-related discomfort or distress are taken seriously and responded to without delay ;
- educators act calmly, reduce heat exposure, and adjust environments or routines rather than waiting for symptoms to worsen
- children are supported to move to cooler, shaded, or indoor environments as needed; and
- responses are appropriate to the child's age, development, and individual needs.

Key symptoms and treatment

	Symptoms	First aid treatment
Heat exhaustion	• Looking unwell and more irritable than usual • Pale and clammy skin • Sleepy and floppy • Fewer wet nappies or toilet use than usual • Dark urine (normal is light straw colour) • Refusing to drink • Intense thirst (but as the baby gets weaker, he/she may drink less) • Dry skin, mouth and eyes (no tears when crying) • Soft spot on baby's head (fontanelle) may be lower than usual	• Move to a cool area and remove all extra clothes • Give baby or child drinks (unless unconscious and not able to swallow) ○ A breastfed baby with heat exhaustion should be offered the breast as much as possible. Cool boiled water may be considered, particularly for babies over six months old or those already receiving other fluids ○ A bottle-fed baby with heat exhaustion should be offered an extra bottle and cool boiled water ○ An older child with heat exhaustion should be offered water or diluted fruit juice (1 part juice in 4 parts water) • Cover the child or baby with cool damp cloths, compress or sponge down with water • Seek medical advice if deemed necessary
Heatstroke	• As above plus, • Rising body temperature • Red, hot and dry skin • Rapid breathing • Vomiting • Confusion • Coma (not responding when touched or called)	Immediately call 000 and ask for an ambulance • Move to a cool area and remove all extra clothes • If the baby or child is conscious and able to drink, give small sips of cool fluids • Bring their temperature down using any method available (sponging with cool water, cool bath, or covering with cool damp cloths) • If unconscious, lay the child on their side (recovery position) and check they can breathe properly. For babies less than a year old, a different recovery position is needed. Cradle the infant in your arms with their head tilted downwards to make sure they do not choke on their tongue or vomit. Support their head with your hand • Perform CPR if needed

Adapted from NSW Health*

Escalation and support

When a child shows ongoing, worsening, or concerning signs of heat stress, or when there is uncertainty about the child's wellbeing, the matter must be escalated to the Nominated Supervisor, and the following actions must be taken:

- review the child's condition and current environmental factors; and
- determine whether further monitoring, environmental adjustments, or supports are required.

When heat stress requires first aid or medical treatment, manage the response in accordance with the [POL2-P26 First Aid Procedure](#) and [POL2-P24 Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Procedure](#).

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5.7. SunSmart Centres

Affinity supports centres to register to become a SunSmart Program member on their state SunSmart website. For centres who have SunSmart status, this policy must be reviewed and submitted to Cancer Council for renewal in the period recommended in each state and territory.

Apply and renew SunSmart Status

This link contains all states and territories links to apply to join or renew the SunSmart Program:

<https://www.generationsunsmart.com.au/sunsmart-registration/>

SunSmart Resources for centres

Resource	Location for more information
Information Sheets for Early Childhood Education	https://www.sunsmart.com.au/advice-for/schools-early-childhood/early-childhood-resources/early-childhood-family-notice-information-sheets
Posters and Signs	https://www.sunsmart.com.au/advice-for/schools-early-childhood/early-childhood-resources/early-childhood-posters-signs
Online learning courses	https://www.sunsmart.com.au/advice-for/schools-early-childhood/online-learning-courses
Learning Experiences for Children	https://www.sunsmart.com.au/advice-for/schools-early-childhood/early-childhood-resources/learning-experiences
Videos	https://www.sunsmart.com.au/advice-for/schools-early-childhood/early-childhood-resources/early-childhood-videos

5.8. Escalation and support

When there is any uncertainty or concern about sun exposure, heat risk, or the safety, comfort, or wellbeing of children, including the suitability of sun protection measures, the matter must be escalated to the Nominated Supervisor, and the following actions must be taken:

- review conditions, risks, required controls and individual child needs;
- agree on appropriate changes to routines, environments, or practices;
- provide guidance and support to ensure safe, inclusive, and responsive practice is maintained.
- report any incidents following [3.3.12 Report Incidents and Complaints by Centres](#).

6. Roles and responsibilities summary

The following table provides a summary of role responsibilities that align with the procedures and ProMapp processes referenced.

Role	Responsibilities
Approved Provider / Service Operator	• Ensure systems, policies, and resources are in place to support sun protection and extreme heat management. • Meet legal and regulatory obligations relating to children's health, safety, and wellbeing. • Ensure adequate shading over areas for both active and passive outdoor play for centres
Educators and centre-based staff	• Follow this procedure in everyday practice. • Monitor weather conditions, children's comfort, and signs of heat-related stress. • Support children to use sun protection measures appropriately. • Adjust routines, environments, and experiences to reduce sun and heat risks. • Escalate concerns promptly when children's safety or wellbeing may be affected. • Communicate with families about sun safe practices in general and specific expectations within the service (e.g., wearing protective clothing). • Role model and consistently demonstrate sun safe practices as outlined above including the use of hats, protective clothing and sunglasses (optional), applying sunscreen and seeking shade.
Families	• Follow the service's sun protection expectations. • Support children to attend the service with appropriate sun-safe clothing and hats where required. • Provide relevant information or permissions relating to sunscreen use, allergies, or medical needs.
First Aid trained staff	• Provide first aid where required in line with the First Aid Procedure. • Support response and monitoring where heat stress or heat-related illness is suspected.
Nominated Supervisor / Centre Manager	• Implement this procedure and support educators to follow it consistently. • promote sun safe practices with all children, families, educators and staff within the service. • monitor the UVI daily, identify when and how any sun protection changes need to occur, and communicate this to educators and staff • Information regarding the daily UV rating and recommended times for sun protection will be displayed at the centre

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	- Make or support decisions to modify routines, environments, or activities during high or extreme heat. - Respond to escalations, provide guidance, and ensure appropriate action is taken. - Regularly check sunscreen stock levels expiration dates to ensure adequate sunscreen is provided
Visitors and contractors	Follow the service's sun protection expectations while on site, including use of appropriate sun protection measures during outdoor activities.

7. Related legislation and internal documents

The following legislation, regulations and internal documents inform and support this policy/procedure, ensuring compliance with legal requirements and consistent implementation.

Legislation	Section 2A Section 167 Regulation 100 Regulation 113 Regulation 114 Regulation 116	Regulation 168 Regulation 169 Regulation 170 Regulation 171 Regulation 172
Policy/Procedure, Process	POL2-P6 Excursions Procedure POL3-P1 Providing a Child Safe Environment Procedure POL2-P26 First Aid Procedure POL2-P24 Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Procedure POL2-P25 Supervision Procedure POL3-P4 Risk Assessment Procedure POL 4-P4 Educator Dress Code Procedure.pdf POL2-P23 Water Safety Procedure	3.4.03 Assess and Manage Risk 3.6.24 Plan and Conduct Excursions 3.6.26 Plan and Conduct Incursions 3.4.07 Manage Outdoor Environments 3.3.12 Report Incidents and Complaints by Centres. 3.3.06 Administer First Aid
Supporting Documents	GUI 1350 Safety Bear Booklet Sun Safety.pdf	FRM 2-F26a Daily Information Sheet.docx
Learning Resources	AEG 547 Safety Starts with Me – Sun Safety	
External Resources	https://www.sunsmart.com.au/protect-your-skin https://cancerqld.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2024-Policy-Guide-Sun-Protection-Schools-and-Early-Childhood-24040.pdf	

8. Version history

The version history table below records updates to this document, including approval dates and a summary of changes made.

Version Control	Date	Author	Description of Change
1	Oct 2013	AEG	Update ECSNR
1.2	Dec 2014	AEG	Update ECSNR
V2.16	Feb 2016	AEG	Revision and formatting
V12.16	Dec 2016	AEG	Add extreme heat and name change
V8.17	Aug 2017	AEG	Minor amendment
V2.18	Feb 2018	AEG	NQS
V8.18	Aug 2018	AEG	Minor amendment
V8.19	Aug 2019	AEG	Scheduled review
V9.19	Sept 2019	AEG	Minor amendment WA
V9.20	Sept 2020	AEG	Scheduled review
V9.21	Sept 2021	AEG	Scheduled review
V9.22	Sept 2022	AEG	Scheduled review
V11.23	Nov 2023	AEG	RACI table and references, surface temperature
V9.24	Sept 2024	AEG	Added links to register and renew SunSmart
V5.25	May 2025	AEG	Updated sunscreen reference and outdoor play
V15	May 2025	AEG	Major amendment - Document updated to refreshed policy/procedure structure. Aligned with ACECQA Sun Safety Guidelines and informed by SunSmart resources

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