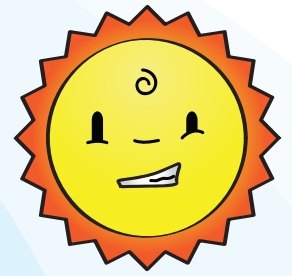


Sun Safety at School

St Ives Junior School's Policy



Overview

Our school is concerned about protecting staff and pupils from sunburn and from skin damage that can be caused by the harmful ultra-violet (UV) rays in sunlight. Skin cancer is the most common and the fastest growing form of cancer in the country. The South West, and Cornwall in particular, has the highest rates of incidence of anywhere in the country.

As sunburn and almost all skin cancer is caused by the sun it is entirely preventable. The school believes that by encouraging sun safe behaviour at school and teaching children and parents/carers about the risk of sunlight, we can prevent children from burning and contribute towards preventing skin cancer.

The experience of countries like Australia and New Zealand show the need to have a comprehensive approach to tackling sun safety at school. It requires commitment from everyone involved – pupils, teachers, staff and parents/carers.

Importance of sun safety in the school day

Pupils spend on average 200 days per year at school, which includes the peak UV times (11 am to 3 pm). Whilst at school many spend a lot of time outside (walking to and from school, waiting for buses, break, lunch time, queuing for lessons/canteen, trips, sports day etc)

Our Policy

(1) Using a high factor sunscreen (SPF 30+)

Parents/carers are asked to ensure all pupils arrive at school with sunscreen of SPF 30 applied on all exposed areas e.g. face, neck, arms and legs. A high factor sunscreen is recommended due to young children having such delicate skin and a higher factor than for adults is necessary to protect them, especially as breaks/lunch occur during peak UV times. All staff are expected to follow the same guidelines.

All parents/carers are asked to send children to school with sunscreen liberally applied each morning and teachers and support staff will help as necessary and encourage your child to re-apply at lunchtime before going out to play.

It is not our policy to provide sunscreen in

school due to possible allergic reactions by children to creams. Our expectation is that parents/carers will provide adequate and appropriate cream and clothing for their child/ren.

(2) Use of sun hats

Parents/carers are asked to encourage all pupils to wear sun hats everyday to, from and during school during April to September. During school hours all pupils, teachers and staff will, we hope, wear hats when outside.

Hats are best when wide brimmed and close weave, or if a cap is worn it should ideally have a flap at the back to cover the neck.

(3) Wearing clothes that protect the skin

All PE kit should be at least a T-shirt that covers the shoulders and upper arms, and ideally be a long-sleeved top that covers to the wrists. This level of coverage is also expected for any clothes worn during outdoor school trips and camps.

(4) Shaded areas - which we are currently looking into...

There are no specific guidelines for what type or area of shade should be provided for pupils although research through the South West Public Health Observatory and Cancer Research UK suggests an ideal of 2.5 m sq of shade per pupil. Clearly, this may not be achievable due to limited space or budget but the principle of an easily accessible shaded area for pupils is an important one. Benches and queuing areas particularly considered appropriate for shade provision. Summer shade seeks to reduce UV, reduce heat, reduce UV light while winter shade seeks to reduce UV.

It is recognised that indirect UV, depending on the surface type of the playground area depends on the levels of indirect UV. For example grass and softer surfaces reflect lower levels of UV than hard concrete surfaces.

Potential funding sources for an outside shaded area will be explored during 2011, including any grant funding or whole/match funding from education authority or other capital grant allocations.

(5) Sunsafe awareness among children

Support has been sought from NHS

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly's Health Promotion Service and their Sun Safety lead will provide specialist support on raising awareness among children through a school assembly and resources for lessons. In assembly we regularly discuss the need to put on sunscreen and wear hats as well as long sleeved clothing and collars - at length regularly.

(6) Preventing dehydration

Dehydration is an important factor to be constantly considered at all times in school and particularly during hot weather. We have fresh water drinking fountains throughout the school and pupils are encouraged to drink water throughout the school day, especially during the hotter summer months. We have two external playground drinking fountains in addition.

(7) Identifying high-risk groups

Some children are at greater risk of sunburn than others. Fair skinned, freckled children who burn easily are most at risk from over exposure to the sun and need to take great care when out in the sun. Babies 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. However, sun safety advice is relevant to all children as younger skin is particularly vulnerable to damage from the sun.

(8) Role of parents/carers/staff

Staff will set an example in all areas of the policy.

Parents/carers can help greatly by encouraging children to bring and wear a hat at school each day. Also by encouraging children to consistently wear longer sleeved shirts and longer shorts when outdoors.

Thankyou for your anticipated support

Note: This policy has been based on latest NHS guidance on sun safety and model policies for schools in protecting children from sun damage.