

Sun Safe Policy

Aim

At Nära Nurseries we are committed to ensuring that all children are fully protected from the dangers of too much sun/UV rays. Severe sunburn in childhood can lead to the development of malignant melanoma (the most dangerous type of skin cancer) in later life. Nära Nurseries are aware of the importance of sun protection and want all staff and children to enjoy the sun safely.

This policy has been developed using Sun Safe Nurseries guidance and resources. For further information please visit: <https://www.sunsafenurseries.co.uk/>

This procedure also supports the Nära Nurseries Working and Caring for Children During a Heatwave Risk Assessment.

Policy Rationale

Whilst we recognise that some sun is good for us, over-exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation (UVR) is an important safeguarding issue for nurseries.

During the warmer months of the year, usually from April to September, children are exposed to UVR from the sun, often when penetration is at its strongest (between 11am and 3pm). Without adequate protection, a child's delicate skin can easily burn, causing cumulative and irreparable damage. This can significantly increase their risk of developing skin cancer in later life. Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the UK with rates of the disease rising faster than any other cancer. 86% of skin cancers are caused by over-exposure to UVR, so it is almost entirely preventable. Sun exposure in the first 15 years of life contributes significantly to a person's lifetime risk of skin cancer, highlighting the importance of nurseries and parents working together, to increase knowledge and influence behaviours, to ensure children are protected against UVR and learn how to enjoy the sun safely.

This policy outlines our commitment to:

- **PROTECTION:** providing an environment that enables children and staff to stay safe in the sun.
- **EDUCATION:** learning about sun safety to increase knowledge and influence behaviour.
- **COLLABORATION:** working with parents, the management structure and the wider community to reinforce awareness about sun safety.

PROTECTION

Clothing & Sun Hats

Clothing is one of the most effective barriers between our skin and the sun and should always be considered the first line of defence against UV exposure. We actively encourage parents to ensure children are dressed in suitable clothing and that shoulders are covered during warmer months.

- Ideally clothing should cover as much skin as possible.
- Shoulders should always be covered as they can easily burn.
- A closer weave fabric will provide better protection and a UPF (ultraviolet protection factor) rated fabric will provide best protection.
- Sunglasses are optional.

We will actively remind parents to ensure they provide an appropriate sun hat for use as required throughout the day and will make available additional/spare sun hats for all outdoor play activities, in the event that a parent is unable to provide one.

Sun hats provided by both parents and nurseries should be:

- Either broad-brimmed, bucket style or legionnaire to adequately shade the face, neck, ears and cheeks.

- Baseball caps are not recommended because they do not provide shade to the neck, ears or cheeks.

We ensure children wear their sun hat outdoors when UV levels reach 3 or above, and will use Sun Safe strategies to encourage children to cover up such as 'No hat, play indoors'

Sunscreen

Sunscreen should be applied to areas of exposed skin that are not covered by clothing to protect it from Ultraviolet Radiation. Without adequate protection, a child's delicate skin can easily burn, causing cumulative and irreparable damage. This can significantly increase their risk of developing skin cancer in later life.

Each nursery will provide sunscreen for the children. This sunscreen is available for parents to patch test upon request. Where children require an alternative sun cream, parents/carers should supply this, clearly labelled with the child's name, date opened and 'within date' as per the manufacturer's guidelines. Children will not be able to play outside without sunscreen.

- Staff must check the child's registration form to ensure that parental consent has been given to apply Nursery sunscreen.
- Staff must use the **Application of Sunscreen Form**
- If the parent/carer has applied the sunscreen before nursery, please ask them to sign the **Application of Sunscreen Form** before leaving their child.

All sunscreen should be:

- A minimum Sun Protection Factor (SPF) 30
- Labelled 'Broad-Spectrum' to provide both UVA and UVB protection and labelled with a UVA symbol (minimum 4 stars)
- Applied generously to exposed skin 20 minutes before going outdoors when UV levels reach 3 or above
- ALL sunscreens should be reapplied at least every 2 hours and more often if sweating/towelling
- Sunscreen should be stored in a cool, dry, accessible place, out of the reach of children.

Remember to check expiry dates as sunscreen becomes less effective over time. If an expiration date is not displayed, look for an open jar symbol which will have a number next to it (i.e. 9M or 12M) - that's the number of months you can safely use the sunscreen after opening.

Monitoring UV levels and providing shade

The UV Index is a forecast of the amount of skin damaging UV radiation expected to reach the earth's surface at the time when the sun is highest in the sky (around midday). The UV Index can range from 0 (at night) to 11 or 12.

- The met office UV index forecast identifies the strength of the ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun during the day, allowing us to take the necessary precautions to help reduce the impact of UV on the children's health. Even on a cloudy day the UV rating maybe high and the right precautions are required.
- We are committed to monitoring UV levels daily during warmer months to ensure appropriate sun safety measures are implemented when necessary
- The nursery management team **must** check the temperature, UV rays and the strength of the sun throughout the day so that staff can make decisions about the length of time the children can spend outdoors. UV readings can be found at <https://www.sunsafenurseries.co.uk/uv-forecast/>

- This must be recorded and displayed for staff and parents to see using the **Sun Care UV and Temperature check form**.
- A child each day is selected to be the UV monitor and we display the daily UV level to engage the children and reinforce the importance of sun safety on a daily basis during warmer months
- We provide shaded areas outdoors where children can congregate for outdoor play and activities. Such shade is provided either by the nursery building, outdoor shelter(s), trees and/or we have temporary structures i.e. gazebos, etc. for use during outdoor play.
- We conduct shade assessments to consider future needs and are committed to improving shade solutions where necessary
- We encourage children to play in the shade as much as possible when UV levels reach 3 or above, particularly between peak UV hours (11am-3pm)
- Babies are always kept in the shade where possible
- We monitor and limit time children spend outdoors according to UV levels and during peak UV hours (11am - 3pm).
- Children should not be outdoors in the sun between 11am and 3pm when the UV rays are high.
- A UV Index reading of 6 to 7 means high risk of harm from unprotected sun exposure. Protection against skin and eye damage is needed. The UV index does not exceed 8 in the UK.

Drinking Water:

- Children are encouraged to increase their water intake in hot weather and are encouraged to drink water during outdoor play times.
- Fresh water will always be available outside.

EDUCATION

- We ensure all staff role model good sun safety behaviours such as applying sunscreen and wearing a sun hat when UV levels reach 3 or above
- We are committed to ensuring all staff are actively involved in the implementation of this policy and that they consider the UV forecast and sun protection/ control measures when planning outdoor play or activities
- We are committed to educating children on the importance of sun safety and regularly reinforcing this during warmer months to influence behaviours and embed key messaging.
- Children should be made aware of the importance of sun hats, sun cream and the need to regularly drink water during the day.
- Children will be taught the 'Slip, Slop, Slap' Song which will help them remember the basic Sun Safe message
- Children will be read 'George the Sun Safe Superstar', an illustrated, rhyming story that educates children on the importance of Sun Safety and staff will regularly reinforce the sun safe messaging through discussion.
- The safer sun song and story book can be found here: <https://www.sunsafenurseries.co.uk/resources/>

COLLABORATION

- Sun safety will be promoted through working with parents, staff and the wider community to improve our understanding and provision to avoid the harmful effects of too much exposure to ultraviolet light (UV).
- We communicate our policy and actively remind parents of the required support through a range of channels e.g. our website, Friday Feedback, social media, signage and displays.
- We provide parents with sun safety and skin cancer awareness information to promote support and raise awareness of prevention and early detection across our parent/family community.