

St. Gregory's Catholic School Sun Policy

A School Sun Safety policy

The aim of the sun safety policy is to protect children and staff from skin damage caused by the effects of ultraviolet radiation from the sun. The skin of young children is delicate and the school believes that by encouraging sun safe behaviour and teaching children about the risks of sunlight, we can contribute towards preventing skin cancer.

The Sun Safety message focuses on the following

Staying out of the sun during the middle of the day, covering up with clothing and hats and using high-factor sunscreens.

School Procedures

We encourage children to avoid sunburn and over-exposure to the sun by:

- Seeking the shade particularly during lunch breaks and outdoor school trips.
- Wearing hats during play/lunch breaks.
- Wearing clothing that protects the skin - particularly for outdoor activities and on school trips.
- During school trips children will be encouraged not to remove tee-shirts and tops and so avoid over exposure to the sun. NB sleeveless tops (vests) expose vulnerable areas. Children should be dressed appropriately for trips.
- Using a high factor sunscreen (at least SPF 30+) the children are expected to bring sunscreen to school and administer it themselves and help each other when required.
- Writing to parents about the need to protect their children from the sun. School newsletters and the school website provide additional information.
- Ensuring children drink regularly and take precautions against the weather.
- During school trips children will be encouraged to drink water (not fizzy drinks) while travelling on transport.
- Holding outdoor activities in areas of shade where possible and encourage children to use shady areas during breaks, lunch times, PE, sport and trip
- Encouraging staff and parents to act as good role models by practicing Sun safety.
- Recommending that parents provide sunscreens and a hat, particularly for use on sports days and school outings. These should be high factor sunscreens (SPF 30 or more and 3***). Fair-skinned children may need a sunscreen with a higher factor (SPF 50).
- Supporting pupils on how to apply sunscreens properly - thickly and evenly. Most pupils will be able, with some direction, apply sunscreens themselves, therefore self-application is recommended.
- Supporting pupils in re-applying sunscreen regularly if out in the sun for long periods, especially after swimming.
- Actively encouraging pupils to stay out of the sun in the middle of the day and to stay in the natural shade.
- Educating the pupils throughout the curriculum about the causes of skin cancer and how to protect their skin.
- Trying to schedule outdoor activities at times other than the middle of the day when the sun's rays are most harmful.

- Working towards increasing the provision of adequate shade for everybody.
- Regularly reminding pupils, staff and parents about sun safety through newsletters, posters, parents meetings, and activities for pupils.
- Working with health professionals e.g. dermatologists, school nurses etc to seek guidance and support on sun safety matters.

The Responsibilities of Parents and Carers

Parents and carers have prime responsibility to provide their children with appropriate clothing and hats so that pupils can cover up and to provide a high factor sunscreen in the form of a lotion or cream (Sun Protection Factor /SPF 30+). Parents and carers and school have a collective responsibility towards sun safety. Prior to children attending school trips it is imperative that sunscreen is applied and children are equipped with the appropriate clothing.

The Responsibilities of Staff

The sun safety policy is about protecting staff as well as pupils. That means that staff should be encouraged to wear hats and seek the shade whenever possible, particularly those who spend more time outdoors – Staff on duty, the site manager and the dinner supervisors. At the same time, staff become positive role models.

Currently there is no legislation that prevents teachers and support staff from administering sunscreens where other controls cannot provide protection. Staff support and monitor the application of sunscreen. Children are encouraged to apply sunscreens themselves whenever possible.

School procedures must be adhered to especially in discouraging children from removing clothing that covers exposed areas e.g. backs.

Staff should not touch a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent and should be aware of those children for whom touching is unwelcome.

Staff who do help to apply sunscreens should do so only on the face, neck and arms to minimise the risk of abuse allegations. Support should only be given in an open area in the presence of another adult.

NB Staff are not required to apply sunscreen themselves.

First Aid Guidelines

In the unlikely event of pupils being harmed by the sun the following First Aid guidelines will be followed:

Sunburn: The children will be taken indoors and the affected area cooled with cold water and given plenty of fluids. In the case of blistering, seek medical advice.

Heat exhaustion: This is caused by exertion in and over exposure to high temperatures. Heat exhaustion is accompanied by dizziness, headaches, and muscular cramps in the lower limbs. The child may faint. The child will be taken to a cool place and given sips of cold water. If the condition worsens, seek medical aid. If the child becomes unconscious, place in the recovery position, and call for medical assistance.

Heatstroke: The signs include dizziness, nausea and flu-like symptoms. The child will have a temperature and look flushed although the skin remains dry. It is important to

reduce the child's temperature by taking them to a cool place, removing their clothing, and putting them in a half-sitting position with the head and shoulders supported. Wrap the child in a cold, wet sheet. If symptoms persist seek help, or if the child becomes unconscious, place in the recovery position and call for medical assistance.

Curriculum links

Learning about the sun and keeping safe in the sun is an important aspect of keeping children safe in school. Staff discuss the risk of UV exposure and ways of protecting against the sun's harmful rays. Sun safety is explored through opportunities that present itself in the curriculum.

Monitoring and review

- The governing body, in consultation with professional advisors, carries out regular risk assessments to ensure that the school is a safe environment.
- The head teacher implements the sun safety policy on a day-to-day basis, and ensures that all staff is aware of the details of the policy as it applies to them.
- The head teacher reports to governors annually on sun safety issues.

This policy will be reviewed at any time at the request of the governors, or at least every two years. This Policy should be read in conjunction with NICE guidelines. Please see Appendix 1

Signed *K.Bickley*

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Appendix 1

New NICE guidance on preventing skin cancer

Being out in the sun can be good for you – it provides both a good source of vitamin D and the opportunity to be physically active. However, prolonged exposure can significantly increase the risk of developing skin cancer. New NICE public health guidance published today encourages a balanced approach, helping to ensure that skin cancer prevention activities do not discourage outdoor physical activity, while encouraging people to use sensible skin protection.

The new guidance focuses on how the NHS and local authorities can help prevent skin cancer using public information, sun protection resources and by making changes to the natural and built environment.

There are two main types of skin cancer – non-melanoma and malignant melanoma. Non-melanoma is thought to account for around a third of all cancers detected in the UK, with an estimated 100,000 people affected. Malignant melanoma is the most serious and causes the majority of skin cancer deaths – around 2,500 per year¹. It is estimated that the NHS spends approximately £70 million on skin cancer each year². The main cause of skin cancer is exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun and artificially from sunbeds and lamps.

Professor Mike Kelly, Director of the Centre for Public Health Excellence at NICE said: “There is nothing wrong with short periods of exposure to sunshine, and it may in fact be beneficial. But prolonged exposure and sunburn can have dangerous consequences – a third of all cancers detected in this country are from skin cancer, including non-malignant and malignant melanoma. The incidence of malignant melanoma in Great Britain has more than tripled since the 1970s and yet many people still underestimate the prevalence of skin cancer.

“Through this guidance we hope to raise awareness of the risks of UV exposure and help people to protect themselves and others. Simple actions can greatly reduce the risk of developing skin cancer – opting to stay in the shade, wearing protective clothing in the sun, avoiding too much sun during the middle of the day and using sunscreen can all have an effect.”

Recommendations include:

Information provision: delivery:

o Commissioners, organisers and planners of national, mass-media skin cancer prevention campaigns should continue to develop, deliver and sustain these campaigns to raise awareness of the risk of UV exposure and ways of protecting against it; try to integrate campaign messages within existing national health promotion programmes or services to keep costs as low as possible. For example, Sure Start.

Protecting children, young people and outdoor workers:

o Ensure policies aim to prevent children and young people from getting sunburnt by encouraging them to seek shade when possible. When it is not possible, they should be encouraged to wear hats and other clothing or sunscreen to protect themselves. Policies should also encourage parents to provide their children with sunscreen and

guidelines should be provided on how to help children apply it (and how children can help each other to apply it).

Ensure policies encourage outdoor workers to wear clothing to avoid getting sunburnt (including a hat that shades the face and back of the neck, where possible). They should also be encouraged to stay in the shade when possible, especially during breaks and in the middle of the day (11am to 3pm). When it is not possible to stay in the shade or wear protective clothing, because of work requirements, they should be encouraged to wear a sunscreen with UVA and UVB (at least SPF 15) protection³.

Providing shade:

- When designing and constructing new buildings, consider providing areas of shade created either artificially or naturally (for example, by trees).
- When developing or redeveloping communal outdoor areas, check whether it is feasible to provide areas of shade. Shade could be created by constructing a specific structure or planting trees.
- For all new developments, ensure there is adequate access to areas of shade for people with a disability.

Professor Catherine Law, Professor of Public Health and Epidemiology, UCL Institute of Child Health and Chair of NICE's Public Health Interventions Advisory Committee said: "This new public health guidance focuses on preventing skin cancer caused by overexposure to UV radiation. The guidance includes some simple and practical recommendations which can prevent over-exposure. These include creating shaded areas when constructing new or redeveloping existing buildings. It also recommends that schools should encourage children and young people to apply sun screen and seek shade during breaks outside; and employers should encourage staff working outside to wear clothing that protects them from the harmful effects of the sun, such as a broad-brimmed hat that covers the back of the neck."

Sara Hiom, director of health information at Cancer Research UK, and guidance contributor said: "For most people, avoiding sunburn is one of the best ways to reduce their risk of developing skin cancer. Many of us like to make the most of the UK's rare sunny days and should be able to enjoy the sun safely. If we all make sure that our skin doesn't redden or burn in the sun, it could help to reduce the rocketing number of people who develop skin cancer every year. And that's the aim of Cancer Research UK's annual SunSmart campaign."

The new guidance will be specifically aimed at local authority planners, public health practitioners, pharmacists, GPs, school nurses, practice nurses and skin cancer specialists. It may also be of interest those working in the wider public, private, voluntary and community sectors and to members of the public.

Ends

Notes to Editors

About the guidance

1. The guidance is available on the NICE website (www.nice.org.uk/guidance/PH32) from 26 January, 2011.

Background information

2. Research by the British Association of Dermatologists revealed the vast majority of Britons believe that skin cancer accounted for less than 10% of all cancers in the UK, the actual figure is around 33%. The research also showed that nearly half the population cannot recognise the key signs of skin cancer, such as a mole which is getting larger or which has an irregular border or colour.

About NICE

1. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance and standards on the promotion of good health and the prevention and treatment of ill health

2. NICE produces guidance in three areas of health:

public health – guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention of ill health for those working in the NHS, local authorities and the wider public and voluntary sector

health technologies – guidance on the use of new and existing medicines, treatments, medical technologies (including devices and diagnostics) and procedures within the NHS

clinical practice – guidance on the appropriate treatment and care of people with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS.

3. NICE produces standards for patient care:

quality standards – these reflect the very best in high quality patient care, to help healthcare practitioners and commissioners of care deliver excellent services

Quality and Outcomes Framework – NICE develops the clinical and health improvement indicators in the QOF, the Department of Health scheme which rewards GPs for how well they care for patients

4. NICE provides advice and support on putting NICE guidance and standards into practice through its **implementation programme**, and it collates and accredits high quality health guidance, research and information to help health professionals deliver the best patient care through **NHS Evidence**.