



Sun Safety for Children

Policy and Procedures at Eyemouth ELC Hub

Rationale for the policy

The Care Inspectorate Quality Framework sets out the expectation that all ELC settings provide high quality care for all children and minimise unnecessary risks of harm. This is also set out in HGIO ELC where all ELC practitioners are expected to actively promote the wellbeing of children and keep children safe. The Health and Social Care Standards also set out an expectation that children are protected from harm while also being entitled to play outdoors every day and in a natural environment different from their own. This is further echoed in the national standard for Early Learning and Childcare.

As a result of these expectations, consideration needs to be given as to how to provide young children with the highest standards of care in the context of keeping them safe in the sun.

What are the risks for children associated with playing outdoors daily from March to October (even when it is cloudy)?

- Children's skin is much more sensitive to UV levels than adult skin.
- Sunburn in children increases the risk of skin cancer in later life.
- Looking at the sun can cause permanent eye damage.
- Sunscreen washing off when playing in water leads to inadequate protection.
- Water-play reflecting light increases exposure.
- Energetic play can lead to heat exhaustion, heatstroke and dehydration.

Children are at higher risk of sunburn in the UK if they have:

- pale, white or light brown skin.
- freckles or red or fair hair.
- many moles.
- a skin problem relating to a medical condition.
- a family history of skin cancer.
- some medical conditions.

How do we reduce the risk of harm?

From March to October in the UK, children should:



- cover up with suitable clothing such as light-coloured loose clothing.
- wear a wide brimmed hat such as a bucket hat or cap with neck flap to shade the neck, face and ears.
- spend time in the shade, particularly from 11am to 3pm.
- wear at least SPF30 sunscreen to areas not protected by clothing, including the legs, arms and feet (if not covered by clothing), face, neck, ears and backs of hands.
- avoid looking directly at the sun.
- wear sunglasses.
- have access to drinking water.
- have their energetic play limited.

Procedures for preventing sunburn:

Applying Sunscreen

- Between March and October, we will use the met office website or app to check UV levels on a daily basis, even on cloudy days (*see appendix 1 for UV level guide*).
- **Children MUST stay indoors if UV levels are classified extreme.**
- Children must be kept indoors or in the shade between 11am and 3pm on days when UV levels are classified very high.
- Children must be kept indoors or in the shade around midday on days when the UV levels are classified high.
- Children may need shade around midday on days when UV levels are classified moderate.
- Sunscreen **MUST** be applied on days when UV levels are moderate, high or very high.
- Sunscreen **MUST** be applied by a practitioner. If a child would like to be involved in applying their sunscreen, the practitioner must ensure appropriate coverage and application.
- Parents will be asked to provide ELC with a labelled bottle of sunscreen (at least SPF 30) for their child. *Please note that certain brands, such as Nivea, may contain nuts so this may be something you ask parents to avoid using.*
- Parents will be asked to apply sunscreen at home or when they arrive with their child at ELC in the morning. If at home they will be asked for the time they applied it and this will be recorded on the record sheet.
- ELC will have its own supply of sunscreen to use when parents have not provided it and we will inform parents of the ELC brand of sunscreen so they can confirm it can be used on their child (some children have allergic reactions to particular brands). This permission will be recorded in the child's care plan.



- Sunscreen will be applied to all areas of skin exposed to the sun.
- Sunscreen takes at least 30 minutes to reach full effectiveness so children will be kept indoors until 30 minutes after application. We will manage this routine by making sure the children have suncream applied as soon as they enter the setting, and monitoring the time they go out into the garden, making sure it is at least 30 minutes after suncream application.
- Sunscreen should be re-applied every two hours while outside, or 30 minutes before going back outside if after 2 hours.
- At Eyemouth ELC Hub, we will apply sunscreen as a general rule at the following times: when the children first come into nursery between 8am and 9am, at least 30 minutes before they go outside, and then at 2 hourly intervals as appropriate thereafter.
- We will monitor individual children's sunscreen re-application times by noting it on the sunscreen monitor sheet (*see appendix 2 Record of Sunscreen Application at Eyemouth ELC Hub*) in main playroom.
- If a child has been engaging in water play outside, we will re-apply sunscreen and encourage them to stay in the shade for 30 minutes.
- If a child refuses to have sunscreen applied, a practitioner will stay with them in the shade, making sure they are wearing a loose, long sleeve top, light, loose long trousers, wide brimmed hat and uv certified sunglasses. We will then speak with parents to develop a plan of action.
- We will prevent cross-contamination of sunscreens by having separate labelled bottles of sunscreen and staff washing hands or changing gloves between applying sunscreen to different children.
- We will store named sunscreens in a labelled box in the nursery out of reach of children.
- We will take sunscreens on outings in the sunscreen bag.

Wearing appropriate clothing

- Between March and October, parents will be asked to provide a suitable sunhat for their child.
- ELC will have its own supply of sunhats to use when parents have not provided one for their child.
- We will check that children are wearing suitably loose clothing to cover most of their body when UV levels are moderate, high or very high.



- If a child refuses to wear a sunhat or keep their sunhat on, we will keep them inside or in the shade and will speak with parents to develop a plan for moving forward.

Procedures for preventing sun burn, heat exhaustion, heatstroke and dehydration:

- During March to October, the temperature in the ELC outdoor area should be checked.
- If the temperature is over 30 degrees centigrade (guidance from National Education Hub, February 2024 [Advice for schools and other education settings during a heatwave - The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)) in the ELC outdoor area then we will risk assess the context and action all or some of the following as appropriate:
 - Use of naturally occurring shaded areas for play.
 - Creation of shaded areas, for example, using tarpaulins, where children can play outdoors but be able to be out of direct sun light.
 - Actioning procedures listed above for wearing appropriate clothing and sunscreen.
 - Ensuring children have independent access to fresh drinking water to stay hydrated. Ensuring children are taking regular planned time for drinks.
 - Ensuring children have reduced time playing outside in the sun.
 - Ensuring children have regular breaks in-doors out of the sun.
 - Ensuring children's energetic play in direct sunlight is reduced.
 - Identifying alternative in-door spaces for energetic play.
 - Ensuring staff are aware of the symptoms of dehydration, heat stress, heat exhaustion and heat stroke, observe children carefully for these and take action immediately should they observe these.

Opportunities for learning about sun safety to reduce the risk of harm:

- Parents and staff will act as good sun safety role-models by applying sunscreen, wearing hats and long sleeved loose clothing outdoors, drinking water and staying in the shade with children between 11am and 3pm.
- Staff will involve children in conversations about sun safety.
- Children can be involved in learning about sun safety procedures and checking temperatures and UV levels.

Procedures for responding to over-exposure to sun and UV levels:

- Children should be brought in-doors and cooled down immediately.



- Accident must be reported to parents and logged in the accident file.
- Parents may need to be advised to seek medical advice for their child.
- Depending on the nature of the accident, a care inspectorate notification may need to be submitted.

Responsibility for monitoring the content of this policy and the procedures at Eyemouth ELC Hub: SEYO and EYO

- The policy should be reviewed annually, making reference to, for example:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/sunscreen-and-sun-safety/>

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/learn-about/weather/types-of-weather/temperature/uv-levels>

Additional note:

Staff

- Staff must take individual responsibility for keeping themselves protected from the sun when outside with children by applying sunscreen, wearing appropriate clothing and staying hydrated.
- The setting may need to make adjustments to how staff working outside are deployed to allow for necessary breaks from the sun over the course of the day.

Policy and Procedures read, understood and agreed:

Name: _____ date: _____

To be reviewed February 2025


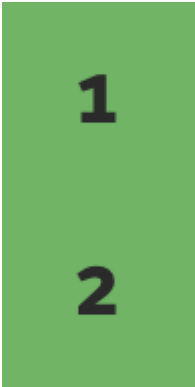



Created on: February 2024

Next review date: February 2025

Created by: SBC Early Years Team and SEYO (Eyemouth ELC Hub)

Appendix I

UV index	UV summary	Exposure category	Advice
		No significant UV	It's safe to stay outside.
		Low	You can safely stay outside. Consider sunscreen in direct sunlight.



3

4

5

M

Moderate

Take care during midday hours and do not spend too much time in the sun unprotected. Sunscreen advised.

6

7

H

High

Seek shade during midday hours, cover up and wear sunscreen.

8

9

10

VH

Very high

Avoid being outside or seek shade from 11am to 3pm. Shirt, sunscreen and hat are essential.



No data

[illegible]

[illegible]



Appendix 3

Heat related medical conditions in children (information downloaded from NHS website 12 February 2024 [Heat exhaustion and heatstroke - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk))

The signs of heat stress are:

- Children may seem out of character and show signs of discomfort and irritability. These signs can include those listed below for heat exhaustion and will worsen if left untreated leading to heat exhaustion and/or heatstroke. Take the children indoors to a cool area and give them water to drink.

Heat exhaustion and heatstroke

Heat exhaustion does not usually need emergency medical help if you can cool down within 30 minutes. If it turns into heatstroke, it needs to be treated as an emergency.

Check for signs of heat exhaustion

The signs of heat exhaustion include:

- tiredness
- dizziness



- headache
- feeling sick or being sick
- excessive sweating and skin becoming pale and clammy or getting a [heat rash](#), but a change in skin colour can be harder to see on brown and black skin
- cramps in the arms, legs and stomach
- fast breathing or heartbeat
- a high temperature
- being very thirsty
- weakness

The symptoms of heat exhaustion are often the same in adults and children, although children may become irritable too.

If someone is showing signs of heat exhaustion they need to be cooled down and given fluids.

Things you can do to cool someone down

If someone has heat exhaustion, follow these 4 steps:

1. Move them to a cool place.
2. Remove all unnecessary clothing like a jacket or socks.
3. Get them to drink a sports or rehydration drink, or cool water.
4. Cool their skin – spray or sponge them with cool water and fan them. Cold packs, wrapped in a cloth and put under the armpits or on the neck are good too.

Stay with them until they're better.

They should start to cool down and feel better within 30 minutes..

Signs of heatstroke include:

- High body temperature – a temperature of or above 40°C (104°F) is a major sign of heatstroke
- red, hot skin and sweating that then suddenly stops
- fast heartbeat
- fast shallow breathing
- confusion/lack of co-ordination
- fits
- loss of consciousness



Contact 111 if:

- you or someone else have symptoms of heat exhaustion that you're struggling to treat or you need advice about

You can call 111 or [get help from 111 online](#).

Immediate action required: Call 999 now if:

You or someone else have signs of heatstroke, including:

- still unwell after 30 minutes of resting in a cool place, being cooled and drinking fluids
- a very high temperature
- hot skin that's not sweating and might look red (this can be harder to see on brown and black skin)
- a fast heartbeat
- fast breathing or shortness of breath
- confusion and lack of coordination
- a seizure or fit
- loss of consciousness

Put the person in the [recovery position](#) if they lose consciousness while you're waiting for help.

- Call the parent or emergency contact
- Advise parent to seek medical advice
- Inform Care Inspectorate if necessary