

Activities involving exposure to strong sunlight

Health warnings regarding the risks of exposure to strong sunlight necessitate care regarding the health and wellbeing of young people.

Working in partnership with parents and carers, actions to avoid sunburn injuries during outdoor activities include:

- Participants should have available some form of head cover, such as a peaked 'baseball style' hat, that gives shade to the face, especially the nose. In conditions of very strong direct sunlight, the hat should have a brim that provides shade for the tops of the ears and the back of the neck.
- Participants should have available clothing that offers full limb cover, and should only expose legs and arms to the sun for short periods of time.
- Participants should not be permitted to go on extended land-based expeditions wearing only shorts and T-shirts. During water based activities participants should not be permitted to undertake extended periods of activity wearing only swimming costumes or shorts and vests or short sleeved T shirts. It is in circumstances such as these that cases of severe sunburn occur.
- Participants should be encouraged to wear sun glasses during water based activities on bright sunlit days, because the damage to eyes arising from exposure to bright sunlight reflected from water and sails can be significant.
- Groups involved in activities on snow or other reflective surfaces, even on overcast days, should wear sunglasses or goggles, head cover appropriate to the conditions, and use photo protective sun block creams that give adequate levels of protection to the face, particularly under the chin, the nose, ears and lips.
- The risk of sunburn from diffused sunlight reflected from water and snow even on overcast days exists at any time of year. Leaders should have special regard to the risk of burns to areas of pale skin not normally exposed to sun, such as under the chin, and the backs of legs and arms. The precautionary use of photo protective creams should not, therefore, be abandoned because the sun is not visible.
- Participants in land based activities out of doors during the summer months, especially when abroad, should be advised to wear photo protective creams, and to regularly re apply the protection to exposed areas of skin in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Persons responsible for groups involved in activities out of doors during the summer should have with them high factor photo protective sun cream of a non allergic variety as a part of the first aid provision.
- The occurrence of severe sunburn should be regarded as a reportable accident and should be recorded in the appropriate accident report forms. It is important that such records are kept because the incidence of avoidable sunburn injuries may in future have legal implications.

In addition to following the advice above, the following Daily Protocol will be in place.

- Parents and carers will be asked to ensure their child/children bring a sun kit to school – a hat and high factor photo protective sun cream of a non allergic variety.
- Pupils of all ages will be reminded to apply cream regularly, with staff taking responsibility for application for pupils from Pre-5 to P4. Older pupils will also be reminded to apply cream but be expected to do this themselves with supervision appropriate to age. Parents and carers will be asked to complete permission slips prior to staff applying cream to pupils.
- The school First Aid kits will include high factor photo protective sun cream of a non allergic variety which can be given to pupils who do not bring their sun kit on an excursion.

Education

- Visual reminders are in place in Pre-5 and colleagues talk with children about sun care
- Sun care is part of the Health Education programme.