**Sun protection policy**

**Statement of intent**

At Smart steps, nursery safeguarding is at the forefront of everything that we do to ensure we provide the very best care our children deserve. Too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun causes sunburn, and skin damage and increases the risk of skin cancer. Sun exposure in the first 15 years of life contributes significantly to the lifetime risk of skin cancer.

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 UV. Staff should always act as positive role models and set a good example by seeking shade whenever possible, wearing appropriate clothing, and applying sunscreen.

At Smart Steps nursery we want all staff and children to enjoy the sun safely. We will work with staff, parents, and carers to achieve this through.

**Education**

* All children will be involved in a discussion, appropriate for their age and understanding, at the start of summer about sun protection and the risks
* All staff will be educated in the importance of sun protection and the risks involved in not protecting both themselves and others
* Parents and carers will be informed about our policy and given guidance on sun protection.

**Protection**

* Children will be encouraged to use the shaded areas during playtimes when appropriate
* Children to stay indoors between the hours of 10 am – 4 pm. This minimises exposure to the sun during peak times
* Curtains and blinds to be closed during the day to minimise the sun shining in, doors to be left open (stair gates closed) to allow the air to circulate through the building
* Air conditioning units are placed safely away from the children in each room
* Activities will be adjusted to help keep the children cool such as water & ice play

**Clothing**

* The children will be encouraged to wear clothes that provide good sun protection (sun hats etc)
* Parents/carers will be duly informed of the importance to provide the nursery with the appropriate clothing/headwear
* Staff should wear hats & sunscreen when appropriate to act as a good role model

**Drinking water**

* Children are encouraged to increase their water intake in hot weather and are encouraged to do so in outdoor areas also.
* Water will always be available to children throughout the day from individual water bottles which children will be able to access independently. (Both indoors and outdoors)

**Sunscreen**

* parents should apply the cream to their children before they come to nursery and staff will assist the child in re-applying it during the day when necessary.
* Sunscreen to be applied 20 minutes before the children go outside, this allows time for the cream to absorb.
* Staff to record on sun checks when protection was applied and to sign every 10 minutes till back indoors.
* Parents are asked to give written permission for sun cream to be applied to their children.
* Parents are required to provide nursery-appropriate sun cream for their children with their names clearly labelled.
* The sun cream must be in date and be a minimum factor 30
* Parents are welcome to leave the sun cream at the nursery for the duration of the summer, but this cream must be clearly labelled with the child’s name.

**Protecting children outdoors**

During periods of high temperature, the following steps should be taken:

* children should not take part in vigorous physical activity on very hot days, such as when temperatures are in excess of 30°C
* encourage children playing outdoors to stay in the shade as much as possible
* children should wear loose, light-colored clothing to help keep cool and sunhats with wide brims to avoid sunburn
* use sunscreen (at least factor 15 with UVA protection) to protect the skin if children are playing or taking lessons outdoors for more than 20 minutes
* provide children with plenty of water (such as water from a cold tap) and encourage them to drink more than usual when conditions are hot

**Protecting children indoors**

During periods of high temperature, the following steps should be taken:

* open windows as early as possible in the morning before children arrive, or preferably overnight to allow stored heat to escape from the building – it is important to check insurance conditions and the need for security if windows are to be left open overnight
* almost close windows when the outdoor air becomes warmer than the air indoors – this should help keep the heat out while allowing adequate ventilation
* use outdoor sun awnings if available, or close indoor blinds or curtains, but do not let them block window ventilation
* keep the use of electric lighting to a minimum
* switch off all electrical equipment, including computers, monitors, and printers when not in use – equipment should not be left in ‘standby mode’ as this generates heat
* if possible, use those rooms or other spaces which are less likely to overheat, and adjust the layout of the spaces to avoid direct sunlight on children
* oscillating mechanical fans can be used to increase air movement if temperatures are below 35°C – at temperatures above 35°C fans may not prevent heat-related illness and may worsen dehydration
* encourage children to eat normally and drink plenty of cool water
* a fluid intake sheet to be completed to monitor all children’s intake

**Heat stress**

Children suffering from heat stress may seem out of character or show signs of discomfort and irritability (including those listed below for heat exhaustion). These signs will worsen with physical activity and if left untreated can lead to heat exhaustion or heatstroke.

**Heat exhaustion**

Symptoms of heat exhaustion vary but include one or more of the following:

* tiredness
* dizziness
* headache
* nausea
* vomiting
* hot, red and dry skin
* confusion
* Heatstroke

When the body is exposed to very high temperatures, the mechanism that controls body temperature may stop working. Heatstroke can develop if heat stress or heat exhaustion is left untreated, but it can also occur suddenly and without warning.

**Symptoms of heatstroke may 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

**Actions to protect children suffering from heat illness**

The following steps to reduce body temperature should be taken immediately:

* Move the child to as cool a room as possible and encourage them to drink cool water (such as water from a cold tap).
* Cool the child as rapidly as possible, using whatever methods you can. For example, sponge or spray the child with cool (25 to 30°C) water – if available, place cold packs around the neck and armpits, or wrap the child in a cool, wet sheet and assist cooling with a fan.
* Dial 999 to request an ambulance if the person doesn’t respond to the above treatment within 30 minutes.
* If a child loses consciousness, or has a fit, place the child in the recovery position, call 999 immediately and follow the steps above until medical assistance arrives.

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Policy Amended on 15th July 2022

Managing Director sign: KButler