



# Sun care

### The benefits of sunshine

At Little Squirrels we understand that sunlight is essential to us all, working to keep our bodies healthy. There are both direct and indirect benefits from being outside in the sunshine.

The direct benefits help our bones, immune system, and muscles develop and repair, keeping us healthy. Vitamin D is often known as the sunshine vitamin. When our bodies are exposed to Vitamin D through sunshine (or via foods or supplements), it helps them absorb calcium and phosphorus and fix Vitamin C to our bones.

### The dangers of the sunshine

At Little Squirrels 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.

Sunburn is the most common danger associated with sun exposure for children.

When a child or baby has been in the sun or heat for a prolonged period, they can develop heat stroke. Heat stroke is a serious condition and can result in hospitalisation. Practitioners are aware of how to spot the signs of and prevent heatstroke in children and babies. We also have a leaflet which we share with parents with sun safety information. Heatstroke does not necessarily need sunlight, as it is hot temperatures that children's bodies struggle with.

### How we manage sun safety

- ♥ We receive daily weather updates from the met office for our local weather temperatures, uv rating and pollen count, this means we can plan the day accordingly having these factors in mind.
- ♥ Practitioners will act as positive role models and set a good example by seeking out the shade whenever possible and wearing suitable clothing, hat and sun cream.
- ♥ Practitioners will talk to the children about the dangers of the sun and why being safe in the sun is so important.
- ♥ Children must have a clearly labelled sun hat which will be worn at all times whilst outside in sunny weather. This hat will preferably be of legionnaires design (i.e. with an extended back and side to shield children's neck and ears from the sun) to provide additional protection
- ♥ Children must have their own labelled high factor sun cream which must be applied before the child comes into the setting. This enables children to have sun cream suitable for their own individual needs. Staff must be aware of the expiry date and discard sunscreen after this date.
- ♥ Suncream will be applied every 2 hours and time recorded down on the suncream log sheet.

- ♥ Parents are requested to supply light-weight cotton clothing for their children suitable for the sun, with long sleeves and long legs.
- ♥ Children's safety and welfare in hot weather is the nursery's priorities so practitioners will work closely with parents to ensure all appropriate cream and clothing is provided.
- ♥ Practitioners will make day-to-day decisions about the length of time spent outside depending on the strength of the sun; children will not be allowed in the **direct** sunlight between 11.00am – 3.00pm on hot days.
- ♥ Children will always have sun cream applied 15-30 minutes before going outside in the hot weather and every 2 hours throughout the day.
- ♥ During time at nursery we will promote sticking to shady areas outside and have regular breaks indoors where there will be fans to help keep cool.
- ♥ Children are encouraged to drink cooled water more frequently throughout sunny or warm days and this will be accessible both indoors and out.
- ♥ Children are made aware of the need for sun hats, sun cream and the need to drink more fluids during their time in the sun.
- ♥ Shade will be provided to ensure children are able to still go out in hot weather, cool down or escape the sun should they wish or need to.

Policy updated by Kylie Jones and the Little Squirrels team **May 2026**.