

Sun Policy

At Royston Playgroup all staff are to ensure that children can enjoy the sun safely.

Through first aid training our staff understand not only can sunburn be painful and uncomfortable for children, but it can lead to more serious problems later in life. Skin cancer is currently the most common form of cancer in the UK, with rates still increasing. Around 100,000 new cases are diagnosed each year and seven people each day die from the disease.

It is very important to protect young children from excessive sun light exposure as it can cause problems later in life. Children need to be even more careful than adults when it comes to protecting their skin. Children's skin is thinner than adults', so it is more sensitive to the sun.

Be aware

Royston playgroup will try and avoid sunburn by staying out of the sun during the hottest hours of the day – between 11am and 3pm. Children will be brought back into the setting after 20 mins if the temperature reaches 30c.

Keeping children in the shade can also keep them safe. Children can safely enjoy being outdoors in sunny weather if they play in shaded areas or use sun protective clothing such as broad-brimmed hats, loose, long-sleeved tops and long skirts or trousers and sunglasses.

Trees and bushes will be left where possible to provide shaded areas to play in, a gazebo has been provided to create.

Sun-cream

Parents are advised to use a high factor sunscreen (at least factor 15 with UVA protection)

lotions with Sun Protection Factor (SPF) are safe to use on children from age six months and above. It is important to use sunscreen with a high SPF for young children to reduce the risk of sunburn at the time of exposure, as well as the risk of skin cancers when children are older. Its recommend lotions with SPF 30 or 50 for very sunny days.

Sunscreen should be reapplied every four hours, or more often if children have been swimming, sweating, or playing in water. Parents can send them in for children to use during the day. The sun cream lotion is to be kept in their bags with their name clearly marked. Staff should make sure not to forget certain parts, such as the ears, back of neck, hands, and feet as these are areas that can burn.

As Early years providers we request that parents supply their own preferred sun-cream which we will re- apply throughout the day. Where this is the case, parents must ensure that it is a suitable SPF, clearly labelled and in-date. It is fine to store it in a child's day-bag, to go home each day, or if it is to be kept on the premises, it can be stored in the child's bag as appropriate.

If we as a setting is to supply sun-cream, parents will be informed of the brand, SPF and how and when it will be applied. In both circumstances, providers should obtain written permission to apply the sun-cream as required. Verbal communication will be obtained before this is done.

Most sun-creams have a shelf-life of up to three years, but NHS Choices recommends that it is replaced each year. If parents supply their own, give them plenty of notice.

As a setting there is no need to record each application of sun-cream, unless it is a medicated product, sometimes used for children with a skin condition such as eczema, in which case it must be recorded as with any other medication.

Children should be shown how to apply sun-cream correctly and older children should certainly be encouraged to 'help' apply it to their own bodies, with practitioners going over the exposed areas of skin to make sure that no areas have been missed.

Practitioners should also be sun-safe, applying sun-cream, wearing sunhats, or covering up too. It may be tempting to 'catch a few rays' on a sunny day but remember that as 'role-models' to young children we should always lead by example.

Royston playgroup will observe with fair skin children who are playing with the sand as Children with very fair skin will need to be more careful in the sun. We will advise parents to dress them in protective clothing that covers their arms and legs, while also using a high SPF sunscreen. These children should also seek shade during the hottest hours of the day. Children with darker skin tones also need to be careful in the sun. Sunburn in darker skin may not look red but could simply be tender to touch or they may complain that it feels tight or itchy.

It is recommended parents provide children with sunglasses for the hottest days – they should look out for a CE mark on the glasses to ensure that they are offering sufficient UV protection.

Essential for healthy bone growth, vitamin D is an important nutrient for all growing children. It is usually sourced through a healthy, balanced diet and exposure to sunlight. However, in the UK it is difficult to get enough sunlight to prevent deficiency, so the Department of Health recommends that all children under five are given a daily vitamin D supplement.

Sunscreen can prevent the skin from making vitamin D, but sun protection should take priority so should still be used to prevent sunburn.

If parents are worried about their children's vitamin D levels, suggest they speak with their doctor who can give further advice.

Summary

Keep children out of the sun between 11am-3pm

Babies under six months should never be left in direct sunlight

Let children play in the shade instead

Royston playgroup will be responsible to put up tents, gazebos or awnings to allow for play in the shade

Children should wear brimmed hats and loose long-sleeved clothing

If splashing or paddling, children should wear longer-sleeved UV-protective swimwear. Or oversized T-shirts also provide good coverage

Use a high factor sunscreen (30 plus or 50 plus) applied every four hours — remember to put cream on necks, ears, feet, etc

You can ask parents to provide sunscreen, labelled with their child's name and kept in their day bag or drawer

You don't have to record the application of sunscreen unless it is a specially medicated sunscreen in which case you record as normal

Children need Vitamin D which you get from the sun, but sun protection takes priority, so you still need to apply sunscreen

Don't forget to lead by example and wear a hat and sunscreen yourself.

Dated July 2022